

Snohomish County Executive  
**AARON REARDON**



Priorities in Action



Latest News & Upcoming Events

Friday, October 31, 2008

[www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org)

 **Department switch saves county jobs slated for cuts**

Innovative and collaborative efforts between Snohomish County departments and the Executive's Office will save the jobs of nearly 25 county employees.

In May, the county's Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) expected mid-year cuts to claim nearly 25 positions. But through an agreement with the county's Public Works Department, those employees were loaned to Public Works to assist on a backlog of road and surface-water projects.

The program worked so well that the county intends to do it again during the 2009 budget cycle, County Executive Aaron Reardon said Wednesday.

"This is a positive for many individuals who initially were told they would lose their jobs," Reardon said. "It shows collaborative efforts by county departments, and it has garnered support from members of the County Council."

The county will move almost another 25 employees from PDS to Public Works through a mixture of new positions recommended by Reardon in his proposed budget and the creation of additional loaned positions. The County Council has approved the switch.

The move will allow Public Works to accelerate its transportation improvement program and mandated requirements for surface-water management. But more importantly, the switch will reduce the number of positions being cut from PDS in 2009 from 85 to 60.

"Layoffs are never easy and this is a way to reduce those numbers," said PDS Director Craig Ladiser. "We're excited to be able to save these jobs."

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**How are we doing?**

Did you know that you can track how well the County is meeting its performance goals?

The SnoStat system tracks how well the County is delivering services, the

PDS has been hit exceptionally hard by the nationwide economic downturn. The county department funds the majority of its positions from permit fee revenues, but a lagging building industry has seen those revenues drop by about 40 percent.

The planning department is working with other county departments to see if more PDS employees can be moved to safer positions. The county airport is in negotiations for at least one position.

“We are proactively moving forward with assistance to employees impacted by cuts proposed in the 2009 budget,” Reardon said. “This is one example of efforts that have led to additional stability and job security in two of the largest county departments.”

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## County urges residents to prepare for fall/winter floods

*Executive declares Oct. 26-Nov. 1 as Flood Preparedness Week*

County Executive Aaron Reardon has declared the week of Oct. 26-Nov. 1 as Flood Preparedness Week in Snohomish County, urging residents to ready themselves and their families for inclement weather this fall and winter.

October is the beginning of the flood season for Snohomish County, usually running through the end of March. During the remaining days of October and the month of November, residents should prepare for potential flooding.

“I encourage all county residents to get involved in their community’s flood awareness and safety efforts and to learn more about safety preparedness,” Reardon said. “A little effort now could mean a lot less worry later.”

Since 2006, three presidential declarations of disaster have been issued for Snohomish County – two for flooding and one for a serious windstorm. Snohomish County historically experiences catastrophic flooding on average every two to four years.

During the past decade, large floods have occurred about once every three years with minor flooding happening annually. Flooding in Snohomish County can occur as flash floods, tributary flooding, urban flooding and tidal flooding.

The county’s Department of Emergency Management has been coordinating with cities, emergency agencies and relief organizations to prepare for this season’s flood events.

costs of those services, and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Simply visit our [SnoStat website](#).

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And please be sure to [visit me on the web!](#)

Sincerely,



Aaron Reardon

“Training now means we’ll be ready if a flood event actually occurs,” said John Pennington, the county’s Emergency Management director. “Cooperation with the multiple agencies throughout the county will ensure we limit the amount of damage and personal property loss during a flood.”

The American Red Cross of Snohomish County also has arrangements with more than 200 facilities in Snohomish County where emergency shelters can be opened during any flood event.

According to the American Red Cross, there are several steps individuals and families can take to prepare. Among them are stocking an emergency kit, creating an emergency plan and keeping informed of conditions.

“Preparedness is the key to lessening stress and trauma that can be brought on by a flood,” said Chuck Morrison, executive director of the Red Cross’s Snohomish County Chapter. “I urge all residents of Snohomish County to also be ‘Red Cross Ready’ by having an emergency preparedness kit of items needed when disaster strikes, an emergency plan of what to do and to stay informed.”

Further information on flooding and flood safety can be found at:  
[www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/Departments/Public\\_Works/Divisions/SWM/Services/River\\_Flooding/default.htm](http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/Departments/Public_Works/Divisions/SWM/Services/River_Flooding/default.htm)

[www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep\\_floodsafe.shtml](http://www.emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep_floodsafe.shtml)

[www.snohomishcounty.redcross.org/index.php?pr=Preparedness\\_Links](http://www.snohomishcounty.redcross.org/index.php?pr=Preparedness_Links)



## **Extra patrols stress safe Halloween driving**

During this Halloween’s weekend parties and festivities, the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office and other law enforcement from throughout the Puget Sound will be conducting “Surround the Sound” traffic safety patrols.

“Surround the Sound” patrols have been conducted for more than 10 years and will be operated this holiday in Snohomish, Whatcom, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Kitsap, Jefferson and Clallam counties.

Officers are urging drivers to be particularly careful Friday evening when many children will be trick-or-treating.

Snohomish County law enforcement will be watching for drivers who have been drinking as well as people who drive aggressively, exceed the

speed limit, fail to wear seatbelts or commit other traffic violations.

This activity is coordinated by community Washington State DUI/Traffic Safety Task Forces and is supported by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

For more information, contact Tracy McMillan, coordinator of the Snohomish County DUI/Traffic Safety Task Force, at 425-388-7229.

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## **County will retrofit vehicles, prevent pollution**

A state grant will allow Snohomish County to retrofit part of its diesel fleet, further reducing the county's overall pollution emissions.

The county will retrofit 24 diesel vehicles through the state Department of Ecology's Heavy Duty Diesel Retrofit Grant Program. The grant is worth \$57,299. Since 2005, emission-reduction improvements have been made to an additional 109 diesel vehicles.

Snohomish County continues to be a leader in fleet emission control, and was recently honored as the third best government green fleet in North America by 100 Best Fleets, a national award co-sponsored by Government Fleet Magazine and other fleet organizations.

"We have the opportunity to set the right tone for future generations to follow," County Executive Aaron Reardon said. "Whether through emissions reductions, waste disposal, transportation policy or recycling, we are setting Snohomish County on a greener path."

The county also scored in the top 100 overall by 100 Best Fleets for its innovation and efforts to improve efficiencies in government fleets. Judging is based on accountability, technology implementation, collaboration, creativity, efficiency, staff development and other criteria.

Snohomish County's fleet management continues to reduce vehicle emissions and improve environmental practices. Today, about 70 percent of the county's diesel fleet is operating on B20 biodiesel, reducing carbon emissions by 640 metric tons annually. The county is on target to convert its entire diesel fleet to B20 biodiesel by 2010 and will convert to B40 biodiesel by 2014.

The county also is working with farmers to locally grow and produce the biofuel used in the vehicles. Through federal, state and local funding, Snohomish County recently purchased a canola dryer, which runs off methane gas produced by a closed county landfill.

“Working in partnership with our community, we are reducing our impact on the environment, as well as our greenhouse-gas emissions, while saving taxpayer dollars and improving our local economy,” Reardon said.

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