

# Grays Harbor County Emergency Management

## Preparedness on the Harbor

Volume 4, Issue 4

July - August 2018

“Moments  
of Misfortune”

Outdoor Burning  
Restrictions

Defend Your Home

Bear & Cougar  
Country

Summer Camp

Open Water Safety

Summer  
Opportunities

Contacts &  
info



### ***MOMENTS OF MISFORTUNE - Part 4***

By Chuck Wallace

This is Part 4 of a 6 part story appearing in the Grays Harbor County Preparedness on the Harbor Newsletter through the November/December 2018 edition.

Parts 1 - 4 can be found at:

<http://cms5.revize.com/revize/graysharborcounty/Emergency%20Management/Story/Moments%20of%20Misfortune%20Parts%201%20-%204.pdf>

As dawn approaches, the muffled and distant noises of the ongoing events, begin fading from my ears. Struggling to listen, I believe I hear an [AHAB Siren](#) wailing in the distance, but the contemplations within my mind, take precedence to what I hear. I'm unable to struggle against the heaviness upon me; my arms and legs pinned, helpless under the debris squeezing the life from my body. My memories, fleetingly come to life, as if in narrative within my own head, as the weight of the bricks upon my chest begins to diminish thought and feeling from my body.

Panic begins to overtake me, with the realization I am completely helpless under this debris. No one can hear me and I'm being suffocated by the weight of the bricks. I am sweating from every pore on my body. My heartbeat has increased considerably and is pounding in my head, but I notice each succeeding heartbeat is occurring one fraction of a second slower. Each is less intense than the previous one, as the weight of the bricks upon my chest, begins to reduce the ability of my heart to beat and my lungs to expand. I'm going to die here.

I attempt to shout for help once again. My lips form words but, I'm unable to force their escape from my mouth. Struggling mightily, I form the words, "H..e..l..p," but am unable to produce a sound.

Each time I exhale, I lose more and more ability to fill my lungs. I suck at the air, struggling to admit the shallowest dust filled breath, into the diminishing space available in my lungs.

B...r...e...a...t...h...e. With eyes darting about the semi-darkness of dawn in the room, attempting to focus and refocus, I begin losing my ability to determine between what is real or hallucination, as life slowly and silently, departs my body. With a final moment of clarity, I struggle and strain once more, trying to draw air into my lungs, B...r...e... My chest cannot comply. It is unable to expand. The muscles in my torso collapse from exhaustion. They can no longer able to hold back the weight of the bricks. My mind is expiring, as each remaining molecule of air, is forced from my lungs by the heaviness atop my chest.

Each moment seeming an eternity, I bear witness to my life dwindling away. As my body slowly succumbs to the crushing suffocation, my mind focuses on my wife and kids, and how I will miss them. My thoughts appear distant and flicker like an old movie projector casting glimmering film shadows upon a wall. Please, I don't want to forget them...., but I'm unable to see their faces in my mind's eye – Shar, Katie & Janie.

I struggle to gasp for air one last time, but cannot. My last moments have arrived, as the final few grains of my existence empty into the lower chamber of mortality's hourglass. The end is upon me.

Suddenly, the suffocating weight of the bricks is abruptly removed from my chest. I involuntarily and frantically inhale, rapidly filling my lungs with life reviving air, mingled with a heavy curtain of brick dust, agitated by the incident. I become barely conscious enough to recognize a scream. Laughter and cheering echo around me. I feel hands sweeping across my eyes and face, followed by a blinding beam of light, channeling deep into my eyes, as I hastily gulp down more reviving, choking breaths.

Continued on page 6



Grays Harbor County  
Department of Public Services  
**Office of the County  
Fire Marshal**

100 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 31  
Phone: (360) 249-4222  
Montesano, Washington 98563-3614  
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#### NEWS RELEASE

Friday, June 29, 2018

Contact: Grays Harbor County Fire Marshal's Office (360) 249-4222

### Outdoor Burning Restricted in Grays Harbor County

**MONTESANO** — Effective 12:01 A.M. Monday, July 1, 2018, Grays Harbor County Fire Districts and Fire Departments in cooperation with the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA), will be enacting restrictions on all outdoor burning. All residential burning, along with land clearing and silvicultural [forest practices] burning will be prohibited until further notice.

Recreational campfires are allowed if built in improved fire pits in designated campgrounds, such as those typically found in local, county, and state parks and in commercial campgrounds. On private land, campfires are permitted with the landowner's permission if built in the following approved manner:

- The campfire shall be no greater than 3-feet in diameter and constructed of a ring of metal, stone or brick 8-inches above ground surface, with a 2-foot-wide area cleared down to exposed soil surrounding the outside of the pit.
- The campfire shall have an area at least 10-feet around it cleared of all flammable material and at least 20-feet of clearance from overhead flammable materials or fuels.
- The campfire must be attended at all times by a responsible person at least 16-years old with the ability to extinguish the fire with a shovel and a 5-gallon bucket of water or with a connected and charged water hose.

Completely extinguish campfires by pouring water or moist soil in them and stirring with a shovel until all parts are cool to the touch. The use of self-contained camp stoves is encouraged as an alternative.

#### For more information on local fire restrictions

**Grays Harbor County:** Fire Marshal's Office at (360) 249-4222

**Fire Districts:** Emergency pages of the local telephone book

**City Fire Departments:** Government pages of the local telephone book

**Washington State Department of Natural Resources:** Pacific Cascade Regional Office at (360) 577-2025 or Olympic Region Office at (360) 374-2811

**Olympic Region Clean Air Agency:** 1-800-422-5623

**Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest:** (360) 565-3121

**Washington State Parks:** (360) 902-8844

#### For daily updates on burn restrictions

Contact DNR at **1-800-323-BURN** or visit the website at [www2.wadnr.gov/burn-risk](http://www2.wadnr.gov/burn-risk) then click on fire information in the far right corner.

Contact ORCAA at **1-800-422-5623** or visit their website at [www.orcaa.org](http://www.orcaa.org).

## 12 Steps to Defend Your Home from Wildfire

Studies show that as many as 80 percent of homes lost to wildland fire may have been saved if brush around the homes were cleared and defensible space created around structures. There is no better time than now to prepare and educate your family, friends and neighbors. Make sure everyone knows what to do to protect people and homes in case of fire.



- Rake leaves, dead limbs and twigs. Remove leaves and rubbish from under structures and remove vines from the walls of the home. Clear all flammable vegetation.
- Thin a 15-foot space between tree crowns, and remove limbs within 15 feet of the ground.
- Remove dead branches that extend over the roof.
- Prune tree branches and shrubs within 15 feet of a stovepipe or chimney outlet.
- Ask the power company to clear branches from powerlines.
- Mow grass regularly.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbecue. Place a screen over the grill - use nonflammable material with mesh no coarser than one-quarter inch.
- Regularly dispose of newspapers and rubbish at an approved site. Follow local burning regulations.
- Place stove, fireplace and grill ashes in a metal bucket, soak in water for 2 days; then bury the cold ashes in mineral soil.
- Store gasoline, oily rags and other flammable materials in approved safety cans. Place cans in a safe location away from the base of buildings.
- Stack firewood at least 100 feet away and uphill from your home. Clear combustible material within 20 feet.
- Review your homeowner's insurance policy and also prepare/update a list of your home's contents.

<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/firewise>

**Outdoor Burning Rules for  
Unincorporated Grays Harbor**

**For Burning Regulations inside city limits  
contact your local Fire Department.**

## Do's and Don'ts in Bear Country



### To avoid encounters with black bears while hiking or camping:

1. Keep a clean camp. Put garbage in wildlife-resistant trash containers.
2. Store food in double plastic bags and, when possible, place the bags in your vehicle's trunk or in wildlife resistant food lockers. Double wrapped food may also be placed in a back pack or other container and hang it from a tree branch at least 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet out from the tree trunk. Never store food in your tent.
3. When camping, sleep at least 100 yards from your cooking area and food storage site.
4. Hike in small groups and make your presence known by singing or talking.
5. Keep small children close on trails.



### If you come in contact with a Bear:

1. Stay Calm and avoid direct eye contact, which could elicit a charge. Try to stay upwind and identify yourself as a human by standing up, talking and waving your hands above your head.
2. Do not approach the bear, particularly if cubs are present. Give the bear plenty of room.
3. If you cannot safely move away from the bear, and the animal does not flee, try to scare it away by clapping your hands or yelling.
4. If the bear attacks, fight back aggressively. As a last resort, should the attack continue, protect yourself by curling into a ball or lying on the ground on your stomach and playing dead.

## Do's and Don'ts in Cougar Country



### While recreating in cougar habitat, you should:

1. Hike in small groups and make enough noise to avoid surprising a cougar.
2. Keep your camp clean and store food and garbage in double plastic bags.
3. Keep small children close to the group, preferable in plain sight just ahead of you.
4. Do not approach dead animals, especially deer or elk; they could have been cougar prey left for a later meal.

### If you Encounter a Cougar:

1. Stop, stand tall and don't run. Pick up small children. Don't run. A cougar's instinct is to chase.
2. Do not approach the animal, especially if it is near a kill or with kittens.
3. Try to appear larger than the cougar. Never take your eyes off the animal or turn your back. Do not crouch down or try to hide.
4. If the animal displays aggressive behavior, shout, wave your arms and throw rocks. The idea is to convince the cougar that you are not prey, but a potential danger.
5. If the cougar attacks, fight back aggressively and try to stay on your feet. Cougars have been driven away by people who have fought back.



The Department of Fish and Wildlife responds to cougar and bear sightings when there is a threat to public safety or property. If it is an emergency, dial 911.

- \* If you encounter a cougar or black bear problem, and it is NOT an emergency, contact the nearest regional Department of Fish and Wildlife office between 8am and 5pm, Monday through Friday. In Grays Harbor County the number to call is (360) 249-4628.
- \* If you need to report a non-emergency problem when Department of Fish and Wildlife offices are closed, contact the Washington State Patrol or nearest law enforcement agency.

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/living/mammals.html>



# SUMMER CAMP



Your approach to summer camp safety should be no different than your approach to school safety. So whether you are preparing to send your child to summer camp or looking into possible programs, take a look at the summer camp [safety checklist](#) below:

**Review the Camp** - Think about touring the camp, speaking with a reference, and doing a little background investigation to determine whether the camp is accredited and if it adheres to safety and health standards as mandated by the state and/or city.

**Camp Staff** - Consider asking about the screening process, as well as staff experience and training. Are staff members subject to background checks and/or drug tests? What types of training are staff required to participate in and what types of certifications do they have? For example, are they familiar with first-aid and CPR? What about emergency training and behavior management? If there are swimming activities are there certified lifeguards?

**Emergency Plans** - Perhaps one of the most pressing concerns: do you have emergency plans in place? Ask about the types of emergency preparedness plans in place and communication procedures. What types of threats is the camp prepared for? How will parents be notified? Are there reunification plans in place?

**Field Trip Safety** - Ask about methods of transportation and how field trips are managed. Will camp members split into groups? How do group supervisors/ chaperones communicate with each other? What is the adult to child ratio? Is there a buddy system? What is the protocol for a lost camper?

**Sun Safety** - During the summer children are subject to sunburns and heat exhaustion, how will the camp mitigate this issue? Remember that some camps don't allow staff members to touch campers, so consider packing a spray-on sunscreen or asking beforehand.

**Food Safety** - What types of snacks/meals are typically served and how does the camp accommodate campers with food allergies? Does the camp have EpiPens and are there medical staff onsite prepared to deal with food allergy emergencies?

**Medical Staff** - Are there licensed medical professionals on site? What kinds of issues and procedures are they prepared to deal with? Don't forget to inform them of any medical issues and instructions.

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*As you review the checklist, remember to voice any concerns you have with your camp director.*

# Open Water Safety Checklist



Click [HERE](#) for How to fit a Lifejacket

## Tips for Families When Visiting Oceans, Lakes and Rivers

**Watch kids when they are in or around water, without being distracted.** Keep young children and weak swimmers within arm's reach of an adult. Make sure older children swim with a partner every time.

**Choose a Water Watcher.** When there are several adult present, choose one to be responsible for watching children in or near the water for a certain period of time, such as 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, select another adult to be the Water Watcher.

**Teach children how to swim.** Every child is different, so enroll children in swim lessons when they are ready - consider their age, development and how often they are around water.

**Make sure kids learn water survival skills. Children should be able to do these five things:**

1. step or jump into water over their head and return to the surface.
2. Turn around in the water and orient to safety
3. Float or tread water.
4. Combine breathing with forward movement in the water.
5. Exit the water.

## WATER SAFETY





# Summer Opportunities !

For Upcoming Trainings & Events click [HERE](#)

Grays Harbor County



Presents...  
A Community Awareness  
Informational Program  
~~~~~  
Infant/Child/Adult CPR

Location: Ocean Shores Elementary School 300 Mount Olympus AVE SE Ocean Shores WA

Date: July 28 2018

How to sign up: Please email [OSTLCERT@AOL.COM](mailto:OSTLCERT@AOL.COM) List all names of those attending and which time you/your group would like (8am or noon session)

Suggested donation of \$10 per adult at the door. (children age 10-17 free) All donations go to training and equipment for your county CERT teams.

Note: this is a community informational course. You WILL NOT be issued a two year card but you will receive a participation certificate for attending.



## 4TH ANNUAL NORTH BEACH COMMUNITY FAIR

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4TH  
11AM TO 4PM  
at Pacific Beach Elementary School

Come and meet the different groups, services, organizations and foundations here for You!

There will be food, a Gym-side sale with vendors, Community softball game at 2pm Dunk tank, Bouncy house & fun booths too!

Also, help us to raise funds for supplies for our North Beach

All Ages Community Softball Game, bring your equipment if you can!

Regular vendors & garage sale spots contact are \$25 contact school 360-276-4512

For other vendors, organizations groups & info email [InfoGHFD8@gmail.com](mailto:InfoGHFD8@gmail.com)



# MOULAGE MAYHEM BURNS AT THE BEACH

Saturday June 30th & Sunday July 1st

This 2 day, Special "Advanced Only" Class Retreat, is all about the burns!  
Featuring Multiple Instructors and Techniques!

\$30 includes:

Handouts, Class Supplies, Cool Kit Takeaways, Lunch Both Days!

Topics Include:

Contact Burns, Chemical Burns, Mystery Burns, Acid Burns, Latex Burns, A Cucumber Connection, Creating the Blister & Puss Effect, Bubble Wrap, Marbles With Latex & Silicone, and Many MORE!!!

Kit Exchange Program:

**ALL Must Register by June 16th** You can opt in for the Kit Exchange! Bring a small item to go into a kit for each person in the program. You get multiple items back! Contact Laurell or Stephanie for more details on the exchange!

Please let us know if you have any food allergies!

On Saturday, the GHFD8 has a free pancake breakfast from 8am to 11am.

To RSVP Contact  
Laurell Sprague

[moulagemayhem1@gmail.com](mailto:moulagemayhem1@gmail.com)

or

Stephanie Allestad

[GHFD8ChocoFireLady@gmail.com](mailto:GHFD8ChocoFireLady@gmail.com)

Please send checks to:

Stephanie Allestad

PO Box 261,

Pacific Beach WA 89571



## Tuesday, August 7th



POLICE \* COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Check with your local fire or police department for event locations and time.

## (Moments of Misfortune Continued from page 1)

I'm able to roll to my left side as I choke and gasp as my demise from this world begins to reverse. Many hands are gripping my arms and legs, trying to hold me still, as I gasp and gag on the dense brick dust filled air.

I hear different voices saying, "Well, look what we have here! He's alive! Hey, they're both alive! Come on let's get them out of here."

I'm placed onto a hard, unforgiving, spine board and someone attaches the most uncomfortable cervical collar around my neck. It feels so tight, I'm sure my eyes are bulging. I hear people speaking to me, but I'm doing all I can to just breathe. Bright lights pierce my pupils as I'm carried out of the home and laid outside on the front lawn. Still coughing incessantly, my lungs struggle to reopen and fill, as they cough out the viscous brick dust that has clogged each one. I celebrate the moment I'm able to draw in a long, deep, breath of fresh, clean, cool air, without choking. With each deep breath I take, I can think again. I can see more clearly. I can also feel my body beginning to ache, almost like having a deep bruise all over. I can feel everything again, including how very uncomfortable it feels to be laying on this spine board. As my senses and strength return, I notice how foggy and misty it is outside this morning. I get a slight chill laying on the spine board without a blanket and begin feeling extremely uncomfortable. I can't take how this spine board and collar feel. My back is killing me. I begin reaching to remove the straps and collar.

"Jack, is that you?" I look to see who is speaking to me, but need to close my eyes because of the light shining from to his helmet. "It's me Matt. It is you. How do you feel?"

Pulling at the cervical collar straps, I reply, "I'm trying to keep from being blinded, take your helmet off."

He complies and attempts to stop me from removing the straps and cervical collar. "Jack, you should keep that on until someone can check you out. You might have broken something."

I tell him, "I thought I was a goner in there, but right now, I actually feel pretty good, other than a few bruises and the gunk in my lungs." Hacking more brick dust up, I say, "I need to get this stuff out of my body." Adding, "How did you get here?"

Matt responds, "I belong to a [CERT](#) team here in the tri cities area, Aberdeen, Hoquiam & Cosi. We were called out a few hours ago. We've been checking many homes for quite a few blocks, trying to provide help to people we find. Luckily you had the sheetrock and the cabinet over your body. We lifted it up and the majority of the bricks just fell away. When you gasped for air, it scared us all half to death. Did you hear Julie, one of the women with us scream? She thought you weren't alive and was bent over you, checking for a pulse in your neck. When you took that breath, we all jumped about five feet in the air and Julie screamed like you were Dracula waking from the dead. She ran out cursing you and crying. It was pretty funny... but I suppose not so much to you."

Still tugging at the collar straps, I sincerely tell him, "Look Matt, I'm really glad you guys showed up." Coughing I say, "I thought it was the end of me. I couldn't move or breathe."

He looked at me and winked, "Don't worry about it man. That's why we all do what we do. You are a bright spot in our searches today. You're alive. Yeah, both of you are alive. That's always good"

I respond, "You don't have to tell me."

I finally release myself from the collar and move my head from side to side.

"Ohhhh man," I exclaim, as the muscles stretch and pull in my neck. "I feel like Walter Brennan from The Real McCoys."

Matt responds, "Who's that?"

I tell him, "It's an old TV show from the late 1950's and early 60's. The guy played the older father, walked with a hitch in his step and..."

Matt, looking very puzzled says, "Never heard of it." Then asks, "Are you ok?"

I say, "Yeah," as I chuckle to myself, "Just stiff."

I continue releasing the straps of the spine board. Matt begins helping.

I slowly roll to my side and work my way onto my knees. "Help me up will you?"

Matt grabs me under my right upper arm and assists me to stand. Everything hurts like I've been run over by a truck, but I'm not telling him that. He'll make a fuss and they'll put me back on that spine board. That's not going to happen.

"Oomph," I let out a series of small gasps, as I begin stretching my arms and legs, working my hips and neck more. I cough and choke again, feeling pain everywhere. "Ahhh, oooooh ho ho ho." After a minute or two, the stiffness starts leaving my body, but the constant pain from the crushing bruises on what feels like every inch of my body resonates.

Matt asks, "Are you sure you're ok?"

I nod yes, as I continue to take deep breaths, choking and hacking out the brick dust. I never knew air could feel this good.

Mat inquires, "Is this where you live?"

I reply, "No, I was helping to check on neighbors. That's when I found that guy over there, Joe, in his living room with his wife."

Joe is strapped upon a spine board laying on the front lawn. A person with a CERT vest is tending to him.

Still bent over from hacking and coughing, I ask, "Hey, a guy was helping me check properties. He took Joe's wife outside to sit in their car to get out of the elements and away from the house. I think it was that Ford where the crowd is standing. The roof and chimney came down on me while I was inside with Joe. I was yelling for the guy to come help, but he never did. He said he was putting Joe's wife, Pearl in the car, and would be coming right back to help me."

Angrily I continue on, "I can't believe he left me. Did you see him anywhere? He was wearing a Seahawks sweatshirt. Matt, I almost died in there, because he left us."

Matt looks into my eyes and says, "Jack, he didn't make it."

Astounded, I ask in disbelief, "What? What are you talking about?"

Matt continues, "Neighbors found a guy next to the car in a Seahawks sweatshirt, with a massive head wound, and flagged us down as we were checking homes on this block. There was an older woman and a small dog in the car next to him, but she was kind of out of it, maybe dementia. He was barely alive when we got here. He was able to tell us what happened, but he died a few minutes later. We tried [CPR](#), but his head wound was really bad. There was just nothing we could do. We called for assistance, secured the scene and we moved on to search the home where we found you two, after others arrived to help."

I feel like I'm losing my mind. "What? What are you talking about? He only had to put her in the car and come back. Are you sure it's him? That it's Bill? He's wearing a Seahawks sweatshirt?"

Matt states, "We're sure it's him. We found his wallet."

Very concerned, I look at the crowd around the car and ask, "Is he still there?"

Matt discloses, "No. We contacted our command post and they relayed the information about his death via ham radio to the authorities. We were asked to bring his body to the command post. We flagged a guy down with a pickup and he took your friend's body to our command post with two of our members."

Extremely disturbed by the news, I continue to query him, "What about his wife? Did anyone tell his wife? They only live a half block away."

Matt replies "The command post dispatched another team to inform his wife and bring her to their location to be with his body. I heard they were heading to the command post with her about thirty minutes ago." Adding, "I know there are a few medical professionals on another CERT team there. Hopefully, they'll be able to assist her to deal with his passing."

He looks at me and states, "I'm sorry you lost your friend." Dumbfounded, I continue to tell Matt. "I asked him to come help me. I can't believe it. Oh my god! It's my fault he's dead. Oh my god."

Matt tries to console me, "It's not your fault. You didn't do anything. He told us he fell during an aftershock and hit his head on the curb. It's just one of those things. You couldn't have prevented it."

I continue on, "What do I say to his wife? He was with me! This wasn't supposed to happen."

Matt interrupts, Jack, it didn't happen because of you. It's just one of those things. Like fate."

I'm speechless. I feel responsible. I feel horrible. I asked Bill if he wanted me to take Pearl to the car, but he volunteered to do it. It might have been me laying there. Maybe not. Oh god. My mind is spinning. What do I say to his wife?

Matt asks, "Jack, are you ok?"

I look at him, and nod that I am, and say, "This is unbelievable. Joe and I almost died. I was angry at a guy just helping out, and he ended up getting killed. It's not right Matt."

Matt offers, "Life isn't about right or wrong. It just happens. It isn't supposed to be any particular way. There isn't a script to follow. Some people live and others don't survive. Life is about continuing to move forward because we can't change what has already happened. We can only live for what is happening now and for the future.

Suddenly, my mind vividly clears. My wife and kids!

I panic and exclaim to Matt "Oh my god! Shar, my girls! I need to get back to them to see if they're alright."

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Matt answers a call on the Walkie Talkie he's carrying. He looks up at me and says, "Jack, I need to get my CERT partner and continue down the street." He adds, "Where is your wife?"

Still hacking up the dust, I say, "We live two blocks away. I left her in our car with my daughter and our dog when I started searching homes, but that was hours ago. I haven't talked to her since I left."

Still hurting all over, I start checking my pockets, front to back, then back to front.

Annoyed I say "Jeez, I lost my phone. It's probably under the bricks in Joe's house." Anxiously adding, "I need to get back to my family and let them know everything is ok."

Matt says, "We'll go with you to be sure everything is alright. Are you sure you don't want to be seen by an EMT or Paramedic? They're with us here."

I respond, "No, I'm good. I just want to get back to my house to check on my family."

~~~~~  
Still shaken by the news about Bill's death, I begin walking toward my home with Matt and another CERT Team member. Every step I take is painful. I notice car traffic is bumper to bumper driving up the street. Crossing at the intersection, I observe an RV has crashed into the front of a tree on the block next to me, causing traffic to stop. There are many standing beside their cars watching the events unfold. I don't see any response vehicles though, but there are many people tending to the scene. I also see two people in CERT jackets.

Matt says, "There are many people attempting to drive away from here, but the [earthquake](#) has brought the bluff down in Aberdeen and created other landslides. They say many areas in the tsunami [inundation zone](#) are [flooded](#). There's no place to really go. I've seen a few cars driving around, two, maybe three times. It's almost like they are driving in circles trying to find a way out."

Astounded at what I heard, I interrupt Matt, "Wait, are you saying we had a [tsunami](#)?"

He adds, "That's what I hear. I haven't seen anything, just reports over the radio. They say South [Aberdeen](#) has been inundated about 3 blocks into the city from a small wave. The reports say the entire area has either low flooding or earthquake damage affecting most main streets. There have also been some reports of [Westport](#) and [Ocean Shores](#) not being drivable at all."

Looking at the cars waiting to move on, I see most are full with people, adults, children and a few dogs. A few have overloaded trunks, with what appears to be furniture, suitcases, blankets and other personal belongings, tied shut.

I continue probing him, "Are many people hurt?"

Matt responds, "There aren't many reports of people hurt. It appears most in the low lying areas did the right thing and headed for high ground. Our CERT command post has set up in Sam Benn Park. They have [ham radio](#) capability and reported there are about 150 people in the park, asking if help is coming." He adds, "I don't think anyone is coming though. From what I hear, there is no way to get here, and if they could, what could they do? People can't drive anywhere, except in circles and the ambulances are cut off. Hopefully people are at least a bit prepared with [Go Kits](#) or some type of container with food, water and items to keep warm."

I respond, "I thought all of that prep stuff was a waste of time. Maybe just be ready for a power outage for a few days, but a major earthquake...and a tsunami? I can't believe it really happened."

Matt adds, "From the reports I hear over my radio, it really happened. Luckily our CERT team is all local to the tri cities area. We were able to mobilize and get here on foot to help those in need."

Matt chats with many people carrying personal belongings up our street toward the park. As I listen to the conversations, they talk about their homes being flooded or damaged from the earthquake. Most say there are many more people displaced, but only a few have injuries that they know of. They claim the aftershocks have really unnerved everyone though. These groups of people have decided to come to Sam Benn Park, because of information circulating in the damaged area and on the areas of high ground, that there might be some assistance there.

Matt tells them the command post for the CERT teams of the tri cities is there. If they continue on, they could contact the CERT members there, who may be able to provide more specific information obtained via [ham radio](#) communications.

Continuing our walk, virtually every property has observable damage. Shattered windows, collapsed chimneys, cracks on the walls, and broken fences surrounded properties. Tents and lawn chairs are scattered on numerous lawns. People are camping out. The sound of [generators](#) cuts through the light breeze of the early morning, carrying the smell of coffee up the street. Thank god the majority of the people living in the county are avid outdoors people. They're pretty much at home living out of a tent. I notice some people have large plastic containers with food and water they're sharing with neighbors. Every so often, I can hear a radio transmission on an [All Hazard Weather Radio](#), one of the people on the block is monitoring.

Most people are concerned about leaving their property. They tell us they don't want to leave their home, because someone might break in and take their belongings. Many are also afraid to go back into their home, because of the aftershocks. They don't want to get trapped inside or risk injury. I wonder what they will do if no assistance comes soon. I worry even more about what I will do with my family. We aren't prepared at all, and my inaction and procrastination has put us in this predicament.

~~~~~  
We finally make it to my property, Shar and both of my daughters, Janie and Katie, are sitting on the hood of our car drinking bottled water. Kailani is tied with a rope and her leash to the tree in our front yard. There are two other young women about the same age as Janie, standing with them. Kailani is announcing my arrival by barking and crying. Sharon looks up and as she recognizes me, slides from the hood of the car and runs up to me, hugging me as tight as she ever has. The pain is almost unbearable and I let out a loud groan.

Half crying she says, "We were afraid something happened to you," pulling me tighter as she hugs.

I grunt again, trying to back away from her to alleviate the immense discomfort I feel.

Then, she pushes me back, looks into my eyes, and immediately begins firing off question after question, "Are you alright? You're filthy. How did you get like that? Why didn't you text or call us? We've been trying to contact you for hours. Where have you been?"

I look at Matt and shake my head indicating no, don't say anything. If she knew I nearly lost my life she would go crazy. It will be hard enough dealing with what is happening now.

I respond by saying, "I was helping other people. I couldn't contact you because I lost my phone someplace. Adding, "The phones are out, I couldn't have called anyway."

She continues, "We have been frantic worrying about you since the last aftershock. Janie and her friends came here on foot about 3 hours ago. They are ok, but her friend's home was impacted by the tsunami and flooded into the first floor. She said they also had some pretty significant earthquake damage."

I ask, "Are all of you alright?"

Shar responds, "We're good. We had some beef jerky and ..."

I stop her mid-sentence, "Where did you get that?"

Shar looks at me, raises her eyebrows and says, "Janie's friends Lauren and Kim, the tall girls over there, brought their Go Kits with them, and shared everything with us. They have water, some snacks, blankets, ponchos and even a first aid kit. Unlike us, who have two old blankets, a small flashlight and a crushed, half used box of tissues."

Matt joins into the conversation, "Be glad you have something. I think we're all going to need food and water over the next few days."

I look at Matt with a, "really, did you have to say that?" look. It'll be bad enough dealing with things as they are and you just said that? Come on man, give me a break here.

Matt he gets a message on his Walkie Talkie which I can't understand and provides a short answer.

He tells us, "I need to see if anyone else needs help down the street. You're going to need some place to stay overnight. I was told most roads are not passible. Most are blocked with downed wires and trees. There are quite a few landslides and there are no traffic lights or power anywhere in the county.

Shar jumps in, "I'm not leaving my home until I get my belongings. Look around. Everyone is afraid to leave. They know someone will be sneaking around tonight. I'm not going to let them steal my stuff."

Matt looks at me, shrugs, and raises his eyebrows. He offers, "Well, my partner and I need to move along. We'll stop by in a while to see if you need anything."

I say, "Thanks so much Matt. You have no idea how much I appreciate what you and your team did for me."

Matt responds, "We're just glad you're ok. I'm sorry about the other guy."

I say, "Yeah, me too."

Shar jumps in, "What guy?"

I respond, "I'll tell you later."

She continues, "What happened? What guy?"

I say, "It's not anything, I'll tell you later."

Matt turns and says, "I'll stop by later to check on how you're doing."

I call out as he walks away, "Thanks man."

The ground rumbles and shakes slightly with another small aftershock, lasting only a few seconds.

I can hear my neighbors calling out, "Here comes another. Hold on."

Another yells across the street, half-jokingly, "Oh, that wasn't nearly as bad as the others."

Everyone looks at one another to see if there will be any reaction, but all continue going about what they are doing, sensing there is no danger from this tremblor. It seems kind of strange that, even with all of the damage to their homes, some still can find a bit of humor during all of this turmoil.

Shar is adamant about protecting our belongings. I walk to the front of the house and look inside the front door, determining I want no part of entering my home again, especially after what happened to me earlier. I walk around back and see my shed is open and relatively stable. Picking through the items, I'm in constant pain as I lift, pull and move. I find our old tents and a few folding chairs in the damp, musty enclosure.

Walking back to the front with two folding chairs, I hear noise almost like people cheering, coming from down below, in the area they say the tsunami impacted. I try looking toward the area, but with the low haze, it's hard to see anything very far away. The noise is kind of faint in the breeze and the mist has changed to a light drizzle. I tell Shar we have our camping equipment, and ask her what she will want to do if no help comes for a few days?

I tell her "We have no food, probably not enough water and it's supposed to rain harder later today, into the end of the week."

She stubbornly says, "I'm not leaving my home open for someone to get inside and steal everything we have."

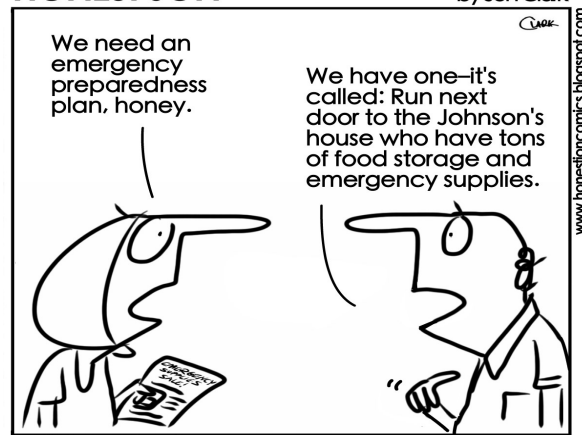
I emphatically say, "Where would they go if they did take everything? The roads don't lead anywhere right now."

Suddenly, I hear a voice calling out, yelling; almost screaming at us. Matt is running up the street. "Jack. Everyone. We need you! We need everyone, come help! A second tsunami just swept by down below. Many people were walking near the flooded area helping some of the victims of the first tsunami. The second wave took them by surprise. There was no notice. People were running for their lives. I'm sure all have not made it far enough up hill to escape the wave. I saw the water running over Market Street pushing cars around. Hurry please! Come down and help us. Hurry!!

END OF PART 4

## HONEST JON

by Jon Clark





# Contacts & Info

All Hazards Alert Broadcast (AHAB) Siren testing occurs the first Monday of every month at noon.

Friends Landing

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## Article & Photo Credit

*Back cover photo  
Friends Landing*

*"Moments of Misfortune"  
by Chuck Wallace*



**ATTEND** the Grays Harbor Citizen Corp meetings the second Wednesday of every month at 9am, in the Grays Harbor County Forestry Building.  
**310 W Spruce St Montesano, WA 98563**

*Meet with other county agencies and organizations working on disaster preparedness in our county. Check out their Facebook page too.*  
[www.facebook.com/GraysHarborCitizenCorps](http://www.facebook.com/GraysHarborCitizenCorps)

**SIGN UP** for the Grays Harbor Emergency Notification System to receive Emergency & Disaster information on winter storms, earthquakes, flooding, from Grays Harbor **Emergency Management**  
[http://cms5.revize.com/revize/graysharborcounty/departments/emergency\\_management/DEMNotificationRequest.php](http://cms5.revize.com/revize/graysharborcounty/departments/emergency_management/DEMNotificationRequest.php)

**LIKE** the Grays Harbor Emergency Management Facebook page at  
[www.facebook.com/pages/Grays-Harbor-County-Emergency-Management](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Grays-Harbor-County-Emergency-Management)

**FOLLOW** Grays Harbor Emergency Management @GHCDEM on Twitter

**VISIT** the Grays Harbor Emergency Management website at  
[http://cms5.revize.com/revize/graysharborcounty/departments/emergency\\_management/index.php](http://cms5.revize.com/revize/graysharborcounty/departments/emergency_management/index.php)

## Upcoming Events

August 23rd-25th

### Basic CERT Class

Instructor led and hands on training

September 22nd

### Emergency Cooking Made Easy

HANDS ON  
Demos-Recipes-Samples

October 6th

### Save the Date

Emergency Preparedness EXPO

## Upcoming Meetings

### Citizen Corps & LEPC

July 11th - 9:00am  
Commissioners Large Meeting Room  
**ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!**