



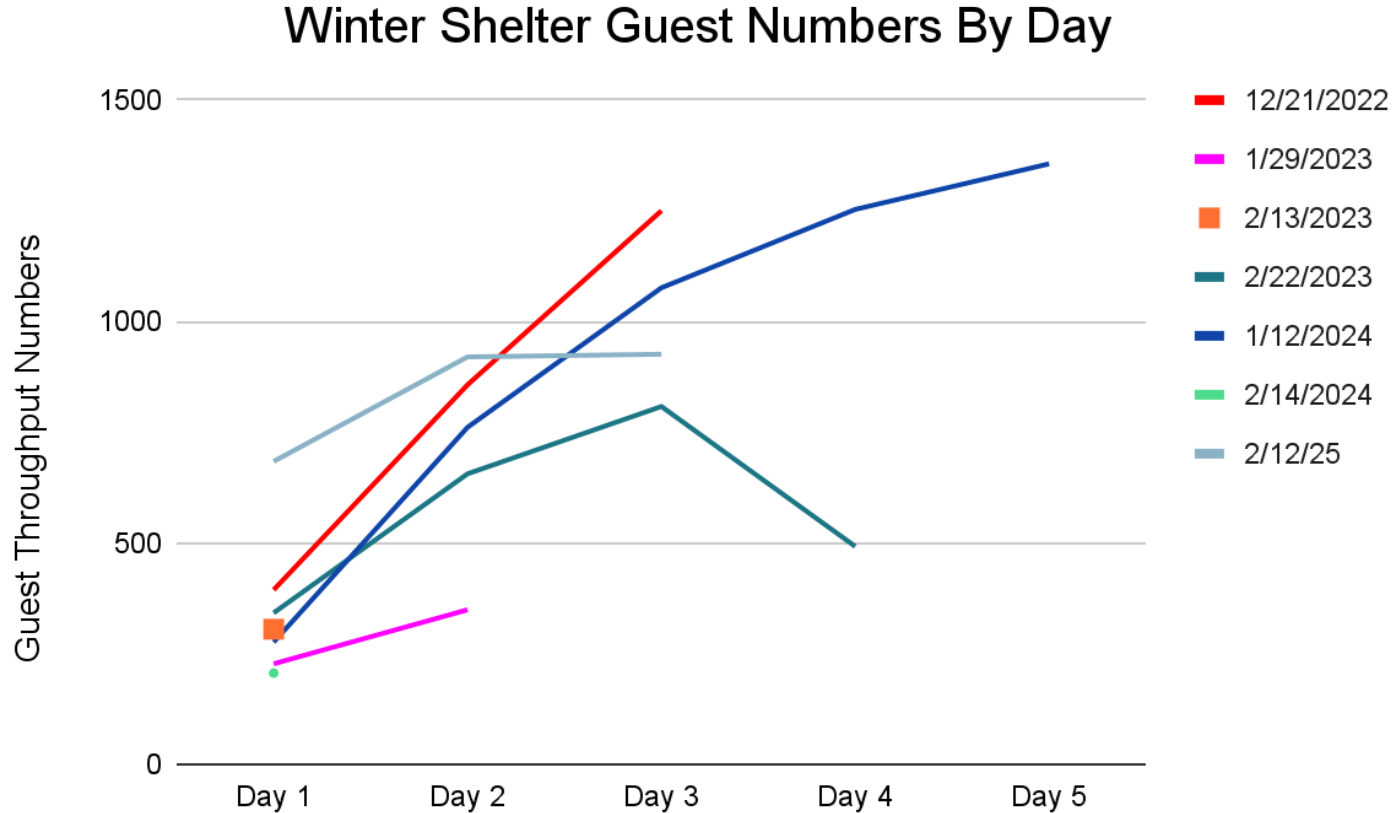
Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management

Chris Voss
Director

Multnomah County
February, 2025

Shelter Performance Measure

Goal - Maintain capability to provide supplies for 1,300 persons.



LOGISTICS DIVISION

EMERGENCY SHELTER ACTIVATIONS

Logistics Responsible for:

- Facilities Management
- Staffing Recruitment
- Supplies & Materials
- Resource Requests
- Food, Beverages & Meals
- Transportation & Delivery
- Communications/IT
- Demobilization

Prepared to immediately respond to **support ongoing life-saving emergency shelter services** for the **most vulnerable** in our County

For 2022-2024, Logistics provided and supported:

15 Severe Weather Shelter Emergency Activations

76 Shelters Opened

17,000+ Shelter guests served

27,000+ Meals served to shelter guests

11,000+ Shelter Staffing Shifts recruited

830+ Pallets of Supplies & Materials delivered

420,000+ Square Feet of Protective Flooring Installed



Severe Cold, Severe Heat, Wildfire

1. Underserved populations are disproportionately impacted by emergencies.
2. We don't have the luxury not to respond.
3. Our Program includes:
 - People
 - Places
 - Stuff



Questions that should be asked

- **What is the States Capability to Respond?**
 - **How Many People can they Serve?**
 - *Multnomah County goal is 1,300 people*
 - **How Quickly can they Respond?**
 - *Multnomah County requires 72 hours to ramp up to 1,300 people, but 4 locations for approx. 400 people, are supplied right now.*
 - **Can the State run shelters without support from other organizations?**
 - *Multnomah County provides approximately 60% of the staffing and 100% of the supplies*



County receives high marks for response to wildfire

But audit finds office must be prepared for bigger disasters

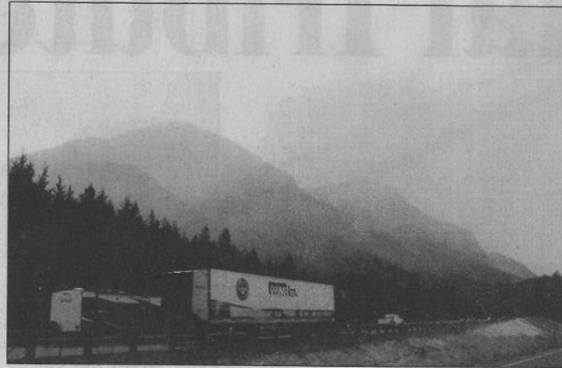
By NICK BUDNICK
The Tribune

Multnomah County officials appear to have done a good job responding to last year's Eagle Creek Fire that quickly spread to 20,000 acres, a new audit has found.

But the county Office of Emergency Management also needs to do more to ensure officials are prepared for the next disaster, according to the report.

The county "is not a first responder organization like law enforcement or fire, but rather plays a coordination and cooperation role for those first responders," wrote County Auditor Steve March, in an introductory note to the county board accompanying the audit. "Overall they fulfilled that role well for this event and have made progress in developing needed emergency management capacity at the county."

But the audit found that the county should "work to become more prepared for larger events, which seems to be the



The Eagle Creek fire spread to 20,000 acres in the first few days. Multnomah officials helped set up shelter and evacuate affected communities. TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

upcoming trend," including more trained staff, improved tracking of expenses, and better planning to ensure public services.

The Eagle Creek Fire began last September when a 15-year-old set off fireworks in the Columbia River Gorge, sparking a fire that burned for months, spreading to about 50,000 acres, including in eastern Multnomah County.

An oppressive smoky haze filled the Portland area, and Multnomah County played an important role in the first two weeks of the fire in helping to

set up shelters, inform residents and coordinate agencies' response. The county set up an impromptu emergency operations center in a conference room at the Troutdale Community Policing Center building of the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office.

The audit released by March confirms what appeared to be the case back then — things went well, and agencies cooperated according to plan.

"Though Multnomah County did not have a role in fighting the fire, the county notified residents of evacuations, oper-

were impressed with the office's leadership, effort and proactive approach.

Still, the county could do better at planning as well as training more staff who participate in emergency response, the audit found, adding that "some partners were particularly concerned about the county's capacity to staff the EOC."

The report noted that the county aims to have 250 county staff trained and ready to work in the EOC, but the county's contact list is currently half that number, and it's unclear how many have received training.

Also, the county could have asked for more federal reimbursement for its expenses, the audit said.

Chris Voss, who leads the county's emergency office, thanked auditors in his response, saying that the county needs more resources to prepare for emergencies, but it's making progress.

History of mismanagement

Multnomah County's recent good marks in emergency response marks come after years of complaints a decade ago — first reported by the Tribune — that the agency was not doing enough to protect the public.

In 2008, the county director of emergency management, George Whitney resigned after

Portland's then-Mayor Tom Potter and then-County Commissioner Lisa Naito complained of bullying and incompetence, as well as inadequate emergency preparation and the possibility that money had been misspent.

As the new audit put it, "For many years, the County struggled to maintain credibility in the emergency management function. The Office had suffered from minimal staffing, high employee turnover, and a lack of leadership, with only brief periods of stability and sound leadership, since its inception in 2002.

"As a result, local government and even County partners did not rely on the Office in the past. Since the hiring of the current director in 2015, the Office's credibility has increased, according to partners with whom we spoke. Many partners now value the Office's experience and leadership. The Office developed an equity lens that has been useful to partners, and the County has built its ability to provide shelter during emergencies. Concerns about employee turnover and staffing capacity remain, but the September 2017 Eagle Creek Fire response offered an indication of the Office's capability to respond to a significant emergency."



Questions

