San Simeon Earthquake
San Luis Obispo County

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Informal Agenda:

- Demographic overview of San Luis Obispo County
- Overview of certain effects from the earthquake
- Overview of primary response & recovery efforts
- Challenges and Improvements
- Issues: Items of interest
County Demographics

- 3,326 square miles, population of ~256,000

- Largest city population: San Luis Obispo, 44,000. Paso Robles population is about 27,000. Unincorporated area is about 108,000

- Geography ranges from coastal area to low range mountains, to almost desert type plains
STRONG SHAKING—SNAPPED TREES

Photo: Lew Rosenberg, SLO County
STRONG SHAKING—URM BUILDINGS

Photo: Lew Rosenberg, SLO County
SAND BOILS—FARMLAND

Photo: Rick Gorman, Earth Systems Pacific
LATERAL SPREADING

Photo: Lew Rosenberg, SLO County
LANDSLIDE—FROM ABOVE

Photo: Lew Rosenberg, SLO County
LANDSLIDE—ON THE GROUND

Photo: Lew Rosenberg, SLO County
LANDSLIDE—ROCKFALL

Photo: Lew Rosenberg, SLO County
Overview of Response and Recovery

Actions

- EOC Activation (29 minutes for County EOC)

- Interagency Coordination (Red Phone, situation status: dams, roads, power plants, schools, utility systems, cities, communication systems, etc.)

- EOC staffing by various agencies

Photo: California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Response and Recovery: Sampling of Initial Actions

- **Paso Robles Downtown:** 11:18 AM – 8:45 PM dedicated almost exclusively to search, rescue, & perimeter control

- **City of Atascadero:** City Department Heads

- **9-1-1 Centers Prioritized Calls**
Overview of Response and Recovery
Actions (Continued)

- Public Information:
  Local verses National and International

- Immediate Information verses emergency information
Overview of Response and Recovery

Actions (Continued)

- Very few fires: note on related concerns
- County Fire Interagency Resources
- Initial emergency phase over by 11:00 P.M.
Overview of Response and Recovery Actions (Continued)

- Paso Robles Sulfur Springs Problem

- Initial recovery period: safety inspections, building issues, Preliminary Damage Assessment

- Longer term recovery issues: damage assessment, second PDA, FEMA, State, SBA
Challenges & Improvements

- Federal & State Preliminary Damage Assessment

- Push to obtain countywide damage information:
  use of commercial answering service,
  misunderstandings related to info gathering

- Push to obtain a federal major disaster designation through “the system” and politically
Second Preliminary Damage Assessment
Residence, Unincorporated
Rural Templeton, San Luis Obispo County

Photo: County of San Luis Obispo
Challenges & Improvements

- Building Inspection Coordination
- Damage Assessment Coordination Issues
- Damage Assessment Staffing: Interjurisdictional, lessons learned related to needed resources
Damage assessment documentation methods varied by jurisdiction, making obtaining a complete area wide summary challenging.
REAL-TIME GPS/GIS

- Field mapping...a good thing, however an indication of a damage assessment issue
Challenges and Improvements

- Emergency information: 1) EAS issue; 2) Additional information for local media
Challenges and Improvements

- Training Issue: An established emergency management system was in place, however many people were not aware of the system and its concepts related to earthquake response.

- The training issue is generally recognized as a resource limitation, not a fault or blame situation.

- However, overall response efforts generally went well due to non-earthquake emergency management training.
Issue: Business Damage Assessment
Challenges and Business Recovery Issues

- Paso Robles: Acorn Clock Tower and Pan Jewelers, 12:31 PM December 21, 2003

Photo credit: Bill Jennings, “Paso Robles Press and Gazette”. Photo courtesy of the “Press and Gazette”
Issue: Business Inventory Recovery, and Business Access Issues

Acorn Building, Paso Robles

Photo Credit: City of Atascadero
Securing unsafe areas resulted in perimeter control with fencing, and private security forces.

Photo: City of Paso Robles
Issue: Locating vehicle owners to make sure all are accounted for
Coordination Issue: Political/Elected Officials

- Involvement and needed coordination for local elected officials, state representatives, congressional representatives, and a U.S. Senator.

Local: City Council Members, County Board of Supervisors, Mayors
Issue: LAC verses DRC

- Major disaster declared by President Bush on January 13, 2004

- Prompt follow up contact after the declaration: Local Assistance Centers vs. Disaster Recovery Centers

- Working with FEMA on the number of DRCs; finding locations for DRCs
Issue: Damage Assessment Information and Public Records Act Request

- Related to both damage assessment information for PDA purposes and citizens and businesses calling for structural inspections
- County opinion of an exception for the public good
- Other information posted on city Web site
Issue: Private Water Systems/Supplies
Disrupted: Single Dwellings, Mobile Home Parks

Private verses Public Issue?
Atascadero City Hall: Challenge of relocating entire city hall function
Paso Robles City Hall Parking Lot

Issue: What to do with that hot spring water?

Photo: City of Paso Robles
Paso Robles City Hall Parking Lot: Dealing with 1,000 GPM of sulfur hot springs

Photo: City of Paso Robles
Non Structural Failure

- Incidental information: Fire sprinkler system failure (only a few), sidewalks, numerous breakage of fragile items, TVs, and other items.
More earthquakes likely
Shake maps underestimated shaking
Liquefaction affects farms and cities
Landslides widespread
Cooperative efforts between agencies
GIS/GPS useful for mapping
Emergency Management Summary

- In general, response & recovery went as well as could be expected

- Big challenges included damage assessment, initial issue of demonstrating a need for federal disaster assistance

- One big improvement will be to increase information provided to local media, as best as possible