Natural Disasters

Linda Gonzalez

Walden University

Natural Disasters

The community I selected is Kitsap County in the state of Washington that is located north of the Kitsap Peninsula. The county is situated between the Hood Canal and the Admiralty strait, which is close to the ocean enabling water activities such as transport and fishing. The region is a high-risk area due to the proximity to the water source that was used to introduce biological attacks of small pox in the European War. The underlying oceanic plates are in constant motion causing collusion with the continental plates that lead to rapid minimum quakes.

The natural disasters prone to the area include earthquakes and dangerous flooding when the sea level rises at times. The county is densely populated ranking third in terms of persons per square mile in the state of Washington. The large population density dating back to the 19th century causes distribution of people to occur in a cluster settlement. The local community consisting of Native Americans has permanent housing that need to be safeguarded from the frequent earthquakes and other natural disasters.

In Kitsap County, the primary natural disaster is earthquakes that regularly disrupt the activities in town. The quakes are minor tremors that cannot bring down whole buildings like in other regions but the constant minor shakes are still dangerous. The emergency managers in the county are aware of the injuries that face workers and residents when structural components such as furniture or heavy items fall on them in the process of a tremor. The town is also faced with frequent pipe bursts and gas leaks along with electricity disruption when cables are knocked down by the quakes.

The gas leaks from pipe bursts are causes of fire in the town that result to more damage after the quakes settle down. The quakes may not last long but they have a visible impact on the town infrastructure such as roads and houses. The rapid shakes weaken the foundation of the house forming cracks on the wall and concrete floor. The tarmac roads in the region are also difficult to manage since every shake forms potholes and cracks as well. In some instances, when the earthquakes have a higher seismic reading, landslides and surface raptures can occur. The impact of landslides and raptures is more significant than the shakes due to the higher damages involved.

The community emergency management agency, advocate for an all-hazards preparedness plan. The all-hazards preparedness approach is viewed by the federal government as the most efficient way of handling natural and man-made disasters in the United States and as a result has been made mandatory for all response agencies according to Adini et al (2012). The main benefit from an all-hazards approach in the case of earthquakes is the time and cost efficiency for the public management of disasters. The national response agencies for all disasters minimize the impacts of earthquakes in Kitsap by acting swiftly and in time. In this way, fewer damages are incurred as the injury risk to human beings is greatly lowered since a plan of action is set in place.

 The response to earthquakes from an all-hazards approach minimizes injury by swift action as discussed above but has weaknesses as well. The initial impact of the earthquake is not handled and as a result damage is still incurred. The implementation of the preparedness plan also requires a collaboration of various public managers, which makes it challenging when cooperation fails between the different agencies. The public preparedness is still beneficial to Kitsap County for the all-hazards approach is essential for responding to terrorist attacks as well.

Reference

Adini, B., Goldberg, A., Cohen, R., Laor, D., & Bar-Dayan, Y. (2012). Evidence-based support for the all-hazards approach to emergency preparedness. *Israel journal of health policy research*, *1*(1), 40.