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### Several DOC Facilities Suffer Effects of Recent Storm

Several Department of Corrections offices and facilities were damaged or disrupted during the large storm that hit Western Washington early last month. Many DOC staff members donated food and other items to help fellow employees and community members affected by the storm.

The storm produced heavy rains, flooding, landslides, high winds, major road closures, and extensive damage to many homes and businesses around Washington, including several DOC facilities.

Most seriously affected was Stafford Creek Corrections Center (SCCC) in Grays Harbor County, where the main road leading to the prison was blocked and emergency generator power was used for over six days due to extensive damage to the county's power grid. Since SCCC food service staff could not report for work the first day, 12 inmates and correctional officers stepped in to prepare meals. Staff members worked day shift to swing shift on overtime, filling in for those unable to get to work—like many staff at other facilities.

"Many DOC employees demonstrated their commitment and dedication by remaining at critical posts when others were unable to relieve them due to the storm," said Interim DOC Secretary Eldon Vail. "I truly appreciate the generosity and dedication DOC employees always display during difficult times such as this."

The storm damage extended from power and telephone outages, to flooding, landslides, and structural damage. Clallam Bay Corrections Center suffered damage to electronic security systems, skylights, and the sewage treatment plant. At Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women (MCCCW), the septic tank washed away and will have to be replaced.



Tracy Grunenfelder and Michelle Watson loading car with donated items

MCCCW also rented equipment to dry the flooded living unit and water damaged gym.

Fortunately, staff at all facilities maintained security throughout the storm, and the public was not at risk. The institutions quickly returned to near normal operations, reducing the potential costs.

Other facilities impacted by the storm include Cedar Creek Corrections Center and Olympic Corrections Center. Additionally, several Community Corrections field offices were temporarily closed due to the storm, including Aberdeen/Montesano, Chehalis, Raymond, and Shelton.

In just a short time, volunteers from DOC facilities collected seven truck loads of donated goods. The supplies were delivered to the Red Cross, United Way distribution sites, shelters, Salvation Army, and individual families in the affected areas.

DOC facilities and employees who assisted those in need included: Olympia Main Field Unit, Cedar Creek Corrections Center, Olympia Central Unit, Tri County Field Unit, Field Administration Staff, Indeterminate Sentence Review Board, Port Orchard Field Unit, Peninsula Work Release, Longview WR and Field Officer, Vancouver Field Units, Bremerton Field Unit, DOC Headquarters, Correctional Industries, and SW Region Business office

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## Correctional Peace Officer Foundation Assists Two CCCC Employees

The Washington chapter of the Correctional Peace Officers (CPO) Foundation visited two Cedar Creek Corrections Center (CCCC) employees to offer support and financial assistance after learning of the unexpected loss of their beloved daughter.

Correctional Sgt. Bill Schrock and Fiscal Technician Denise Schrock lost their daughter, Megan Bates, earlier this year to a sudden illness. As a result her two children, ages 3 and 5, were left without a mother.

The Schrock's now have temporary custody of their two grandchildren and hope to adopt them in the near future. Although they are extremely thankful for family members and friends who have helped them along the way, they were still in need of additional financial assistance during their time of mourning and hardship.

When Training Manager Robert Scott learned of the Schrock's loss and need for financial assistance, the CPO Foundation came to mind--as he recently attended a conference with the foundation this fall. Scott contacted the CPO Foundation and found that the Schrock family qualified for CPO's catastrophic assistance.

"At first we were quite surprised by CPO's donation and then very thankful for their assistance," said Bill Schrock. "We have heard of the foundation, but didn't know much about them—they are a great organization to belong to."

CPO's Washington Representative Dee Dee Wernet visited CCCC in November to personally present the Schrocks a check to financially help them and their two young grandchildren, including one who unfortunately has been coping with medical issues since birth.

"The Schrock family was very appreciative and receptive of the financial assistance CPO provided," said Wernet.

CPO provides financial assistance to the next of kin of any DOC staff member who has been killed by an offender in the line of duty. They also provide financial assistance to staff members, such as the Schrock family, when faced with an extremely difficult time in their lives. Catastrophic assistance is available to any DOC employee who is faced with a hardship that is out of the ordinary, such as a death of an immediate family member who is living at home, terminal illness, a house fire, or a natural disaster.



Kehli, Denise, and Bill Schrock with grandkids and CPO Representative Dee Dee Wernet

## **New Cost Saving Laundry Program at Ahtanum View Correctional Complex**

A creative solution for providing laundry services at Athanum View Correctional Complex (AVCC) is saving the state money and providing an offender with valuable vocational skills.

As a part of AVCC's collective bargaining agreement, it became a requirement for the facility to provide its laundry services to wash the custody staff's new uniforms.

Superintendent Terry Antles weighed his options for laundering the uniforms. He first checked with local cleaners and discovered it was very expensive to send uniforms out to be laundered.

After crunching the numbers, Antles found it would be more cost effective to wash the clothes in-house. AVCC was also in contract with a private company to wash bedding, towels, and other linens. Having industrial laundry equipment at AVCC would allow the facility to take over those laundry services and save even more money.



Laundry Operator Charles Habbitt

Once the decision was made and start-up money approved, Plant Manager Steve Hansson and his crew provided the plumbing, electrical, and set up for the industrial equipment. The washers, dryers and presses were assembled in a corner of the Correctional Industries (CI) building.

"The process was relatively problem free," says Antles.

Although he wasn't aware of it at the time, moving into the CI building was a great decision. In October, CI took over laundry services and hired an offender to run the operation as part of his vocational programming.

Learning job skills is a key part of the re-entry initiative. The offender, Charles Habbitt, is working to earn his vocational certificate while he single handedly washes all of the uniforms and linens.

"I can tell you it gets a little hectic sometimes," says Habbitt of his job. "I like working by myself. I'd much rather do this job than sit around all day".

AVCC has met the goal of washing uniforms and linens and has recently added state issued offender clothing.

"I am proud of the way this operation came together," says Superintendent Antles. "Plus, in the spirit of re-entry, it's provided an offender an opportunity to learn a valuable skill."

The laundry project has been so successful there is talk of expanding it and employing another offender.

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## **Three DOC Employees Work Quickly to Catch Sex Offender in Violation**

Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie D. Knezovich recently commended three DOC employees for their swift action in apprehending a Level 3 sex offender who sexually abused a seven-year-old girl.

On Nov. 11 Sheriff Knezovich notified Community Corrections Supervisor Todd Wiggs of the alleged sexual abuse that was earlier reported by the child's mother. Wiggs confirmed the offender's status and supervision restrictions, which included no contact with minor children. Wiggs began an investigation and two hours later he and Community Corrections Officers Bob Bromps and Jeremy Taylor located the sex offender at his house.



The offender now faces a new criminal charge of child molestation in the first degree. In a commendation letter to Acting Field Administrator Debra Connor, Sheriff Knezovich said, "The Officers' quick professional attitude and response in this incident certainly can be credited toward making this a safer community."

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## The STAR Program Helps WSP Offenders Apply for College and Jobs

Several Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) offenders are obtaining jobs and working towards successful re-entries to society, thanks to Sally Kearsley, a volunteer for the Successful Transition and Re-entry (STAR) Project.

Kearsley is a retired educator who has been involved in the STAR Project since it began at WSP in 2005. She also serves as president of STAR's board. She and her partner, Chris Young, assist offenders in the minimum and medium units build job resumes and fill out college applications. Kearsley estimates 250-300 resumes have been completed through the program to date.

"Kearsley was one of the founding board members of the STAR Project and has put a lot of work into the program," said Executive Director Janet Narum. "She is at WSP nearly every afternoon, meeting with offenders and preparing them to go home—I don't know what we would do without her volunteerism."

Currently, Kearsley and Young are assisting 40 WSP offenders prepare for release. Several are interested in attending college once released—most are interested in 2-year degree programs and certificates—and are in need of financial assistance. Kearsley and other STAR mentors help the offenders fill out Federal Student Aid Forms (FAFSA) and are available to answer their questions.

Since offenders often are overwhelmed once released from prison, STAR mentors also aid them with every day activities such as: applying for food stamps, obtaining library and identification cards, transportation to Department of Social and Health Services offices and even grocery shopping.

The STAR mentors' assistance in school and job applications and help with every-day-activities helps prevent joblessness as well as homelessness.

"My work with the STAR Program over the years has been very heartening," said Kearsley.

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Sally Kearsley,  
President of the STAR  
Program's board

## New Labor Relations Manager Announced

The Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) is pleased to announce Todd Dowler has been appointed the new Labor Relations Manager.

As Labor Relations Manager Dowler administers and manages the Labor Relations Program which consists of three bargaining units. Nearly 7,000 DOC employees are represented by bargaining units. The Labor Relations Manager also establishes and maintains good labor-management relations and assists management on labor related matters.

Dowler has an extensive background with DOC and has more than 13 years experience in Human Resources (HR). Positions he has held in DOC include Acting Programs Manger, Labor Relations Consultant and Regional Human Resource Manager. Before joining DOC Dowler worked for two Fortune 500 manufacturing companies as an HR Manager.

Dowler's started the new position December 1.

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