

## Board Meeting interruption...

The earthquake hit as people were beginning to arrive, a half-hour before the meeting was scheduled to start. Staff, Board members, their families and other attendees were scattered throughout the building. Our plans and focus quickly changed to evacuating the building safely, locating each other and staying warm outside as aftershocks rattled the city and surrounding areas. Many people (our Board, staff, U.S. Coast Guard and guests among them) provided coats, gloves and warm blankets to those in need. When hotel maintenance found out our Board Member Rob Lindsey from Kodiak was a skilled diesel mechanic and electrician, he was recruited to try to revive the hotel generator, which he did until it died again and couldn't be revived. We piled into cars and Café Paris which was just across the street and whose owners generously opened the doors and distributed water and snacks sent over by the Sheraton's staff. All the while, our Executive Director, Mike Munger, was trapped with three other men between floors in a hotel elevator. Thankfully, they were ultimately successful in freeing themselves. We are grateful there were no injuries and all are accounted for. When the building was deemed safe to reenter, several of the Coast Guardsmen and our Director of Administration, Jerry Rombach, performed the extraordinary service of climbing 13 to 15 flights of stairs to retrieve some personal belongings and computers that had been left behind in the conference room. People with items in locked rooms had to wait until later that afternoon.

While dealing with our immediate concerns in Anchorage, we were also in touch with Cook Inlet oil industry operators to gather updates about potential damage to facilities and infrastructure. We have been able to confirm that Hilcorp, Marathon, Glacier Energy, and BlueCrest Energy's facilities are intact and operational, with several facilities sustaining very minor damage, and no pollution incidents.

Though our plans for our Friday Board Meeting were cancelled, we were able to accomplish several activities the day before, on Thursday. These included updating our five-year strategic plan and receiving what turned out to be a very timely presentation from Alexandria Trainer, Emergency Program Manager for the Anchorage Emergency Operations Center, about how to be best prepared for an emergency in Alaska. (More details below.)

## The Board gets a timely message on emergency preparedness

Alexandria Trainer with the Anchorage Emergency Operations Center explained the importance of being prepared for emergencies and having an emergency kit at the ready. And she gave us some things to get started, including an emergency blanket, which came in very handy following the earthquake (see photos). Alexandria also led the Council and staff through a tour and explanation of the workings of the Anchorage Emergency Operations Center which is located at 1305 E Street in Anchorage. The EOC, which may have received some damage from the quake, is the primary coordination center for emergencies and disasters that require a multi-agency response. There are stations for each agency so that they can work together to develop and maintain a common operational picture to effectively and efficiently respond to an emergency or disaster that happens within the Municipality of Anchorage, such as the earthquake.



Staffing levels depend on the severity and scale of the situation and what's required to adequately respond. With a Response Level 1 or lower, for example, the EOC staff monitors conditions and activates information sharing networks to ensure contact with involved agencies. Level 2 or higher means that specific municipal agencies and partners may gather at the center to develop a common operational picture. More than 100 people gathered at the EOC on the day of the earthquake, and all the stations were filled.