

Recovery progress in Southcentral

Madeline McGee
Anchorage Daily News

Anchorage is still in a state of civil emergency in the aftermath of Friday's 7.0 earthquake, and will remain that way until the Monday night unless the Anchorage Assembly votes to extend the declaration.

In the meantime, infrastructure repairs are continuing throughout Southcentral Alaska as agencies work to get public services back online. Here's where things stand.

Road and lane closures

- The Minnesota Drive northbound ramp to International Airport Road is closed to traffic.

- One lane is open on the Seward Highway between the Tudor Road and 36th Avenue ramp. The left two lanes are closed. DOT advises commuters to avoid this area.

- The Eagle River Loop Road Bridge, or the Briggs Road Bridge, is closed as crews work to remove a compromised pedestrian tunnel nearby. The bridge has been inspected and has structural concerns, says the Alaska Department of Transportation said.

- Two lanes are open to traffic on the Glenn Highway Northbound Eagle River Bridge. The far left lane remains closed there. Expect speed reductions.

- On the Glenn Highway near Mirror Lake, between miles 23 and 25, southbound and northbound traffic can expect one-lane detours. Plan on substantial delays.

- Approach is open to one lane on the Glenn Highway Northbound Palmer Flyover.

- On the Seward Highway between miles 114 and 104, rockfall is still an ongoing issue because of continuing aftershocks, DOT said. The transportation department advises drivers not to travel or stop there. The area near Mile 109 is especially active, and the department asks people not to gather water from the pipe there.

Gas

Enstar Natural Gas has, for the most part, cleared out its queue of gas leak calls. The spokeswoman said Hobson said Monday afternoon. As of Monday morning, the company had 15 remaining "no gas" calls from residents who wanted trucks for leaks after turning off their own gas lines as a precaution. This is down from 1,400 total calls received throughout the weekend, Hobson said.

People Mover
Anchorage's People

Mover bus system resumed charging its usual fare Monday after a week-end of free bus rides. All routes are normal except for a detour on Route 20 at Third Avenue near the Anchorage Correctional Complex, the transportation department said.

Health care

Providence Alaska Medical Center, Alaska Regional Hospital, Alaska Native Medical Center and Mat-Su Regional Medical Center have all resumed normal operations, the hospitals confirmed Monday. At Alaska Native Medical Center, all clinics in the Healthy Communities Building are being temporarily housed in the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center on Diplomacy Drive.

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Trash and recycling

Free residential trash drop-off will remain available through Saturday at the Anchorage Regional Landfill and the Central Transfer Station from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Girder Transfer Station also reopened Monday, but users will be charged regular disposal fees there.

Solid Waste Services resumed its usual trash and recycling collection Monday. Those with extra trash may leave bags next to their roll carts, and collectors will pick up those bags at no additional cost, the department said. The Anchorage Recycling Center is open and accepting all recyclables. Total Reclaim is also open and accepting electronics recycling, including televisions.

Alaska Railroad

Repairs continued through Monday on the Alaska Railroad running north between Anchorage to Fairbanks. Tim Sullivan, a spokesman for the railroad, said he expects the first freight train to head north to Fairbanks at 5:30 p.m. Monday.

Parking downtown

EasyPark, the parking services agency operated by the Anchorage Community Development Authority, will offer free parking in all its downtown parking garages and lots through Friday. The parking garages, including the Transit Center, have been inspected and are safe to use, the agency said.

Drivers will still need to pay for street parking. Street parking enforcement will begin at 9 a.m. Tuesday.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A DISASTER RECOVERY GRANT FOR EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE

Residents of Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Kenai Peninsula whose property was damaged by Friday's 7.0 earthquake may be eligible for funding to cover the cost of recovery, state officials said Monday.

The funding will cover damages to homes, vehicles and essential personal property, as well as medical and dental expenses incurred because of the earthquake. The grant program is part of the state disaster declaration put in place Friday by then-Gov. Bill Walker.

Homeowners and renters with homes that are damaged and uninhabitable may also be eligible for state Individual Assistance Temporary Housing.

Residents can apply for a grant online at readyalaska.gov. The State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will also be activating an assistance hotline at 1-855-445-7131 at 8 a.m. Tuesday. In-person registration may also be available, but the state has not specified when that might happen.

EARTHQUAKE

As cleanup continues in Anchorage schools, only one — in Eagle River — deemed unsafe

Michelle Theriault Boats
Anchorage Daily News

On Monday, Anchorage School District families got a clearer picture of the post-earthquake status of schools, and some new options for child care during the weeklong district-wide closure.

Here's the latest:

Damage and reopening of individual schools

With a massive, city-wide cleanup underway, the school districts released the first school-by-school information on damage sustained in Friday's 7.0 earthquake.

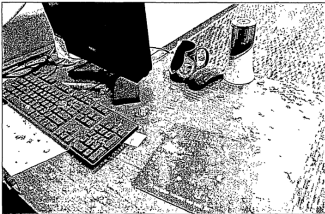
Using a color-coded list that designates schools green, yellow or red, the district put 17 schools on green status, meaning they are safe and staff can re-enter. By the end of Monday, the majority of schools were on yellow status, meaning they were damaged and repairs or cleanup was ongoing.

Only one school, Eagle River Elementary School, was designated red, meaning it was unsafe to enter. School officials have said the school, built in 1961, may have sustained structural damage.

The district also released videos and photos of damage in schools, including hard-hit Eagle River Elementary, Hanshaw Middle School and Dimond High School.

The video shows bricks that fell off Eagle River Elementary, standing water at Hanshaw, along with fallen ceilings. It shows big pieces of a huge wall-mounted sculpture heaped on the floor at Dimond High School, along with tables of open laptops wet or covered in debris.

Decisions such as when teachers and students can get back into classrooms



A teacher's desk at Bartlett High School is covered in debris after Friday's 7.0 earthquake.

to do things like grab wallets and phones abandoned during earthquake evacuation procedures and evacuate classroom pets will be made by individual principals, district spokeswoman Catherine Esary said Monday.

Child care options

Meanwhile, the families of 48,000 district students started an unexpected weeklong school break.

For some, that meant bringing children to work. For others it meant reeling on family, friends or a new crop of paid day camps that local nonprofits and businesses are offering for the week.

A handful of businesses and organizations stepped up to offer day camps during the week.

Camp Fire Alaska, a major provider of before-and-after-school child care to Anchorage children, announced Monday that they would be operating emergency child care for children already enrolled in the program from 7

EARTHQUAKE DIGEST

The division is working with affected jurisdictions to establish Disaster Assistance Centers where needed.

—Madeline McGee, ADN

DOT WARNS AGAINST TRAVELING, STOPPING ALONG STRETCH OF SEWARD HIGHWAY

State officials reiterated warnings Monday against traveling between miles 104 and 114 on the Seward Highway in the wake of Friday's big earthquake, saying aftershocks were increasing the risk of rockfall in the area.

That stretch includes Mile 109, the location of a popular water pipe. The pipe protrudes from a 3-inch hole in a rock face and draws a steady stream of visitors throughout the year.

In explicit warnings Monday, DOT officials said people should not stop there. The pipe was barricaded off to discourage visitors.

"Please do not gather water at MP 109," DOT officials wrote in a situation report Monday. "This area is particularly active."

—Devlin Kelly, ADN

a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday through Friday at Huffman Elementary School and Nunaka Valley Elementary School.

Free lunch

The district announced sites for children to receive free lunch between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. at 10 locations through Friday.

Those sites are: Willow Elementary, Nunaka Valley Elementary, Fairview Elementary, Mountain View Elementary, North Star Elementary, Central Middle School, Muldoon Elementary, Alaska Native Cultural Charter School and Grekside Park Elementary.

Students can opt to sit in buses that will be at the sites if they want, otherwise they will need to take the food to go, the district said. The district said it may adjust food service times Friday to accommodate deliveries required for school to resume Monday.

Day care

The city was still

learning the status of Anchorage's 223 licensed child care centers and in-home day cares, said Natasha Pineda, the director of the Anchorage Department of Health and Human Services.

Licensing workers were trying to make contact with every center in the city to see if they are open or not, or have damage. It varies, she said.

"A lot of them are open, but some are not."

While Anchorage School District schools have all been inspected by engineers for safety, each child care center or home will make the decision about when to reopen on their own, Pineda said.

Inspectors will be rechecking every facility's safety in upcoming inspections, she said.

For the most part, people seem to be rolling with the post-earthquake situation as best they can, she said.

"This is not normal circumstances," she said.

EARTHQUAKE

Alaska Railroad should be getting back on track

Elwood Bremer
Alaska Journal of Commerce

The first Alaska Railroad trains were set to travel between Anchorage and Fairbanks by Monday night following Friday's 7.0 magnitude earthquake that damaged the tracks running between Alaska's largest cities.

Alaska Railroad Corp. spokesman Tim Sullivan said Monday afternoon that service on the railroad's northern route was expected to resume later Monday "due to the hard work of a hell of a lot of people."

On Saturday, it was unclear when the tracks would be reopened as the quake had rendered at least three areas "impassable," Sullivan told the Anchorage Daily News at the time, as inspections were ongoing.

On Monday, he said at least a half-dozen areas of damage were identified, including the three that required immediate repairs to reopen the route.

"Those three are now passable," Sullivan said.

"There will be folks going over them beforehand to make sure that they're in good shape; folks will be going over them after the



Alaska Railroad crews inspect and repair stretches of track rendered impassable after Friday's earthquake.

trains to make sure they're still in good shape — that we don't see any difference in them after the trains go through and that will be the case for quite some time."

In addition to areas where the gravel bed subsided, there were other areas where the tracks shifted but can still be used with caution

at slower-than-normal speeds, he added.

As is the case with many construction projects in Alaska, there is a lot the railroad can't do to repair its tracks in the winter so some of the work will have to wait until spring, according to Sullivan.

The tracks south of Anchorage to Whittier and

Seward did not sustain as much damage.

A message on the Alaska Railroad website said the reservations and ticketing operations would reopen Tuesday at 7 a.m.

The earthquake also caused a pipe to burst in the railroad's Anchorage Operations Center, which will require significant

work to repair, but the railroad's other facilities in Anchorage sustained only minor damage.

Summer is the busy season for passenger service, but the Alaska Railroad has tried to increase its winter ridership in recent years by offering off-season fare discounts along with holiday, aurora-viewing and other themed trains.

In all, the railroad has passenger service on 482 miles of track from Fairbanks to Whittier and Seward.

The railroad has also been a primary supplier of fuel to the Interior since Flint Hills Resources closed its North Pole

refinery in the spring of 2014.

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