

ATTACHMENT 10

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Risk of catastrophic landslide forces evacuations near Wenatchee

VIDEO: Residents on hillside near Wenatchee evacuate

2 minutes left



Residents who live on a hillside near Wenatchee are evacuated tonight.

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By: Alison Grande

Updated: March 18, 2016 - 11:42 PM

WENATCHEE, Wash. — The Chelan County Sheriff's Office is warning residents in the Wenatchee Heights area about the risk of a massive landslide.

Huge cracks are developing in the ground in a neighborhood near the Mission Ridge Ski Area. Water and power have been shut off to the Whispering Ridge Neighborhood.

The Chelan County Public Utility District notified the county after a geotechnical firm they hired raised concern that the soil is unstable, and a landslide can occur without warning.

The county went door to door to warn residents. The residents most at risk live on Whispering Ridge Road and Squilchuck Road, according to the Chelan County Sheriff's Office.

Two houses have been red-tagged, deemed unsafe to live in. The ground has shifted enough to cause structural damage. Other residents on Whispering Ridge have been advised to evacuate as well as residents in six houses in an area below the potential slide area.

The county says the recent storms and snow melt caused by rising temperatures are adding to the risk; The record rainfall has the ground more saturated than it has been in decades, according to the Chelan County Sheriff's Office.

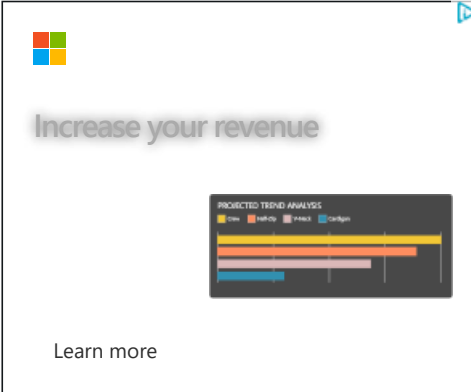
In the last week, the shifting ground has damaged the water line more than once. The county didn't think it was safe to put heavy machinery in the area to fix the line, so the water is shut off.

Neighbors who live in Whispering Ridge are so concerned they fear an "Oso-like catastrophic landslide".

Chelan County has hired another geotechnical firm to do an even larger assessment of the area. That team is not onsite yet. When they arrive, the assessment will be limited, because they will be unable to bring in heavy equipment, according to the Chelan County Sheriff's Office.

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