

A Dangerous Landslide

One night in March 2014, mud broke loose from a tall hillside near the town of Oso, Washington. The giant mass of wet soil moved downhill quickly. It eventually covered thirty nearby houses with mud and dirt. Many people were hurt.



Landslide is the word many people use to describe this kind of emergency. This landslide happened when very heavy rains soaked the ground near Oso.

At the beginning of any muddy landslide, wet ground breaks loose. As the mud moves, it may rip bushes, boulders, trees, and other things out of the ground.

Landslides can cause serious damage. A big landslide could bury homes and badly injure people in its path. Landslides can also dump huge amounts of wet dirt onto roads and highways. This added enormous weight could wreck cars and might even cause the road to collapse.

If a landslide happens near an area that includes buildings, it could break water lines, gas lines, or electrical lines. That kind of damage could also start fires.

Scientists are trying to figure out how to help people be safe in areas where landslides occur. The best thing, experts say, is to have a plan for what to do if this kind of moving-earth emergency happens.

Adopted from: <https://www.readworks.org/article/A-Dangerous-Landslide/>