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County crews respond to wind damage in dozens of locations *Freak storm fells more than 500 trees around county*

It was a dark and stormy night for Snohomish County Road Maintenance crews in the wake of Tuesday afternoon's surprise windstorm. Wind gusts up to 55 mph brought down trees and power poles at some 50 locations around the county [see attached map], darkening traffic signals, snarling traffic and leaving more than 150,000 residential and commercial customers without electricity.

The majority of the downed trees were reported east of SR 9 between Monroe and Granite Falls, although locations from Everett to Gold Bar, Bothell to Stanwood also reported windfalls. The most severe damage was reported in the Silver Lake, Mill Creek, North Creek, Hartford, Machias, Dubuque, Three Lakes, and Lake Roesiger areas.

At least 500 trees fell on roads around the county, including two that fell across two lanes of southbound I-5, delaying traffic four hours in the south Everett-Lynnwood area. Road Maintenance responded by sending 26 crew members out into the weather until nearly midnight last night, with one sign maintenance crew called back at 2:30 this morning. One sign truck was damaged when it was struck by a tree branch while traveling 35 mph.

"Most of the trees went down into power lines, so our crews couldn't touch them until they saw PUD there and they cut the power," says Donna O'Brien of the Road Maintenance Division. "They had to follow along behind PUD crews and clean up trees and debris afterwards."

By mid-morning Wednesday, all the blocking trees had been removed from county roads, but significant amounts of wood debris still littered roadways around the county.

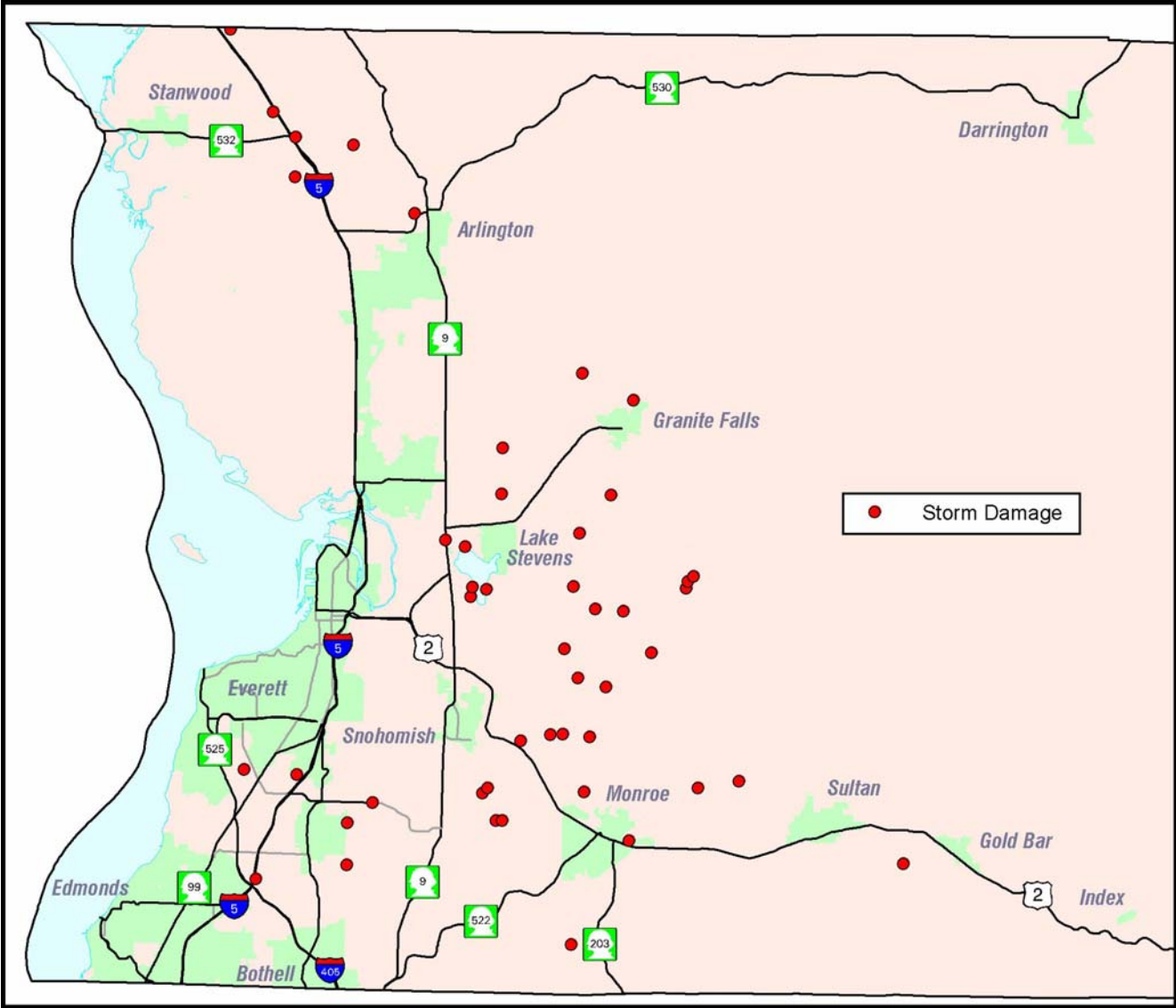
Signal Maintenance had one on-call crewmember out all night, as many of the county's 129 traffic signals went dark. "Crews kind of had to wait around until the power came back on," says Charlie Mathison of the Signal Shop. "Some signals didn't go back into normal operation, so signal techs had to visit seven or eight that didn't come back online." One signal controller in Bothell was damaged and needed to be replaced.

As of noon Wednesday, two signals remained dark, while some 25,000 Snohomish County homes were still without power, according to Snohomish County PUD.

See the following map on page 2:

The April 27 windstorm caused damage at some 50 locations around Snohomish County

Storm Locations:



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