EMergent News

Engaging You, Engaging the Community

BOOTS ON THE GROUND: *"Epic Snowfall"*

By Dale Robinson, Emergency Management Coordinator, Erie County Department of Public Safety

Erie is known for receiving lots of snow, in fact our average seasonal snowfall total is about 101 inches. But 5' of snow in a three day period is taxing even for snow-hardened "Erities." The forecast for the four to five day period was for up to 32" of snow which seems like a lot of snow but spread over several days it amounts to "just winter in Erie."

It snowed 34" in Erie just on Christmas Day (thank you to all those people who wished for a white Christmas) but there were no major issues like interstate closures. A little after 4:30 a.m. I received a call from our 9-1-1 center. There were reports of several vehicles stranded on State Route 5 that runs parallel to the Lake Erie shoreline. I asked for dispatch to dispatch the county CERT team to assist in the operations. Now lake effect snow is odd. One area can get "hammered" and receive feet of snow and a mile down the road can be bare. Still clearing the sleep from my eyes I wasn't thinking that I was going to have issues getting out of my house. As I tried to open the door I was greeted with about a foot snow against my storm door. I looked out into the driveway and yard and shook my head in disbelief. *(continued on following page)*

PAIMT Response Trailer

🔍 INSIDE

Ready PA

ERIE COUNTY *(continued from previous page)*

I started my trek to the garage to get the snow blower, since it was going to be futile try and drive out, even in a four wheel drive truck. The one thing I have concluded over the years in emergency management is that when things go wrong "Mr. Murphy" will probably be showing up to make it worse. Of course that is about when the pull cord on my snow blower came off when trying to start it. Like everything in emergency management redundancy is important so I used the electric start and started the seemingly impossible task of clearing the driveway to get out. The 9-1-1 Center called about 30 minutes after their original call to state that all vehicles on Route 5 were un-stuck. The CERT team was cancel and I called my EMA staff to advise them and told them to keep digging that we would probably have to go into the EOC at some point. A little over two hours later I was able to get out of my driveway onto the street had a few tire marks visible.

The PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and the PA State Police (PSP) requested that the County EOC activate at 9 am to be in the position to handle any road closures on the interstate quickly. I live 15 minutes away from the EOC on a good day, on the morning of December 26th it had snowed an additional 19" overnight and was still coming down like a hoard of white locus. The trip into the EOC was a very slow two hour trip.

With the Christmas holiday, everyone being home, and schools closed for the week, many people did, have to go anywhere

Officially we only had handful of "road closures" but reality was if you didn't have four wheel, all-wheel drive, chains and some serious ground clearance on your vehicle you couldn't move. As plows pushed the snow past side streets in the City of Erie they would literally plow those streets shut with at least a three foot high mound of snow. Cars parked in front of houses were completely covered in snow.

As the old saying goes "timing is everything." With the Christmas holiday, everyone being home, and schools closed for the week, many people didn't have to go anywhere. The City of Erie and Millcreek Township (borders the City of Erie to the west and to the south with a population of 52,000) both declared "Snow Emergencies" which only allows vehicles with chains or 4-wheel drive on certain roads.

ERIE COUNTY (*continued from page 2*)

> **LESSONS LEARNED**
>
> **1. Work With the Private Sector.**
> By having a relationship with local businesses, Erie County was able to obtain donations of snow shovels.
>
> **2. Coordinate the State and Local Partners.**
> Coordination with other agencies through the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center (CRCC), Erie County was able to obtain addition resources.
>
> **3. Redundancy.**
> Although in this instance, the redundancy was an electric start on a snow blower, it is equally important to have redundancies built into your emergency plans.

Our mall and movie theater closed for two days thus helping to keep people home as well. The public really cooperated with staying off the roads however this was a double edge sword in that plows in the City of Erie could not get down side streets in the residential areas since everyone stayed home and did move their vehicles.

While in the EOC and working with our partners from PSP, PennDOT and PEMA via phone we requested PA National Guard resources to assist the ambulance services in the City and Millcreek,

For more information, contact :

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Erie County
https://www.eriecountypa.gov

plus additional resources to help transport essential personnel to area hospitals and nursing homes.

With a three day total of 65.1" and a six day total 83.8" snow we had only minor issues. Beside the timing with school and many people staying home, the snow itself was very light and have very little water content (1" of water for every 24" of snow). Some homes had furnace vents plugged by the snow. Assisting with snow removal for the elderly and special needs was also an issue and we worked with Team Rubicon to bring in highly motivated people to help clear walkway to the house and the driveways and wheelchair ramps too. The County reached out to 2-1-1 who took calls from people looking for assistance. The Civil Air Patrol also sent teams up to assist with snow shoveling.

The County reached out to the EMSCO Group, a local company that manufactures snow shovels. The EMSCO Group donated over 60 snow shovels. We have all heard the saying about Community as a Whole planning and response and it was great to see our local

private sector (EMSCO, Lowes, Wegmans, Subway) and non-governmental organizations (West Ridge Fire Department and First Alliance Church) as well as volunteers from Team Rubicon and Civil Air Patrol respond to help the Erie Community in our time of need.

SPOTLIGHT - SAVILLE TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (Perry County)

The SPOTLIGHT is a feature to showcase success stories in emergency management. This first spotlight is provided by Tony Ambricco, Saville Township, EMA.

In the autumn of 2015, after working eight months as the Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator for Saville Township, Mr. Tony Ambricco was appointed to the position of Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC). Mr. Ambricco's goal for the township is to be a model for disaster planning by preparing for worst and hoping for the best. Saville Township is located in Perry County and has a population of 2,502.

Through word-of-mouth, Mr. Ambricco was able to assemble a team of nine citizens interested in the readiness of not only the township, but also its citizens. In December of 2016, with the help of this dedicated team, Saville Township sent a survey to all residents of the township. The survey was a major step for the township to complete revisions of its emergency management plan and included establishing a list of special needs and vulnerable residents which was integrated into its resource and notification manual of the emergency management plan.

The team also sent letters to local business owners requesting services such as pharmacies for emergency prescription refills; grocery stores for emergency food and water; and hardware stores for emergency equipment. These businesses were also added onto the resource and notification manual.

In addition to the update to the emergency management plan and through the cooperation of the township supervisors, township residents, and the emergency management team, the following accomplishments were achieved:
1. Identified for potential hazards the township could face, both natural or man-made.
2. Established and equipped a dedicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that was not in a flood plain and could sustain the team for an extended period of time. With the guidance of PEMA's EOC manual and extensive talks and planning with the Township Supervisors, this important part of the plan became achievable
3. Purchase of a backup generator
4. Purchase of a computer, printer, and facsimile machine for the EOC
5. Purchase of security cameras
6. Purchase of a base radio station along with 6 portable radios
7. Purchase of hard hats, safety vests, flashlights, and go bags for the field for every team member
8. Arrange for enough food and supplies to sustain the team for three days
9. Printed maps specific for Saville township
10. Purchase a status board
11. Purchase a refrigerator, microwave, and a coffee maker for the EOC
12. Drafting the updated Emergency Management Plan (took approximately one year to complete)
13. Hold quarterly team meetings and training provided by the PEMA Central Area Office (Damage Assessment, Weather Awareness, Red Cross Shelters, CART)
14. Participate in the Perry County Animal Response Team (CART)
15. Township Supervisors have established a small yearly budget for emergency management from the Township Supervisors

Mr. Ambricco would like readers to know that many townships, villages, and boroughs cannot afford to set-up, equip, and staff an EOC. The Saville Township Emergency Management Agency has acquired the funds and equipment for these accomplishments over the past two years. He wishes that grant funding would be available to assist small municipalities like his.

For further information, contact Tony Ambricco, Emergency Management Coordinator, at (717) 438-3536, by email at team.bricco@yahoo.com, or at the Saville Township Emergency Management Agency website at http://www.savilletwp.com/emergency-management/
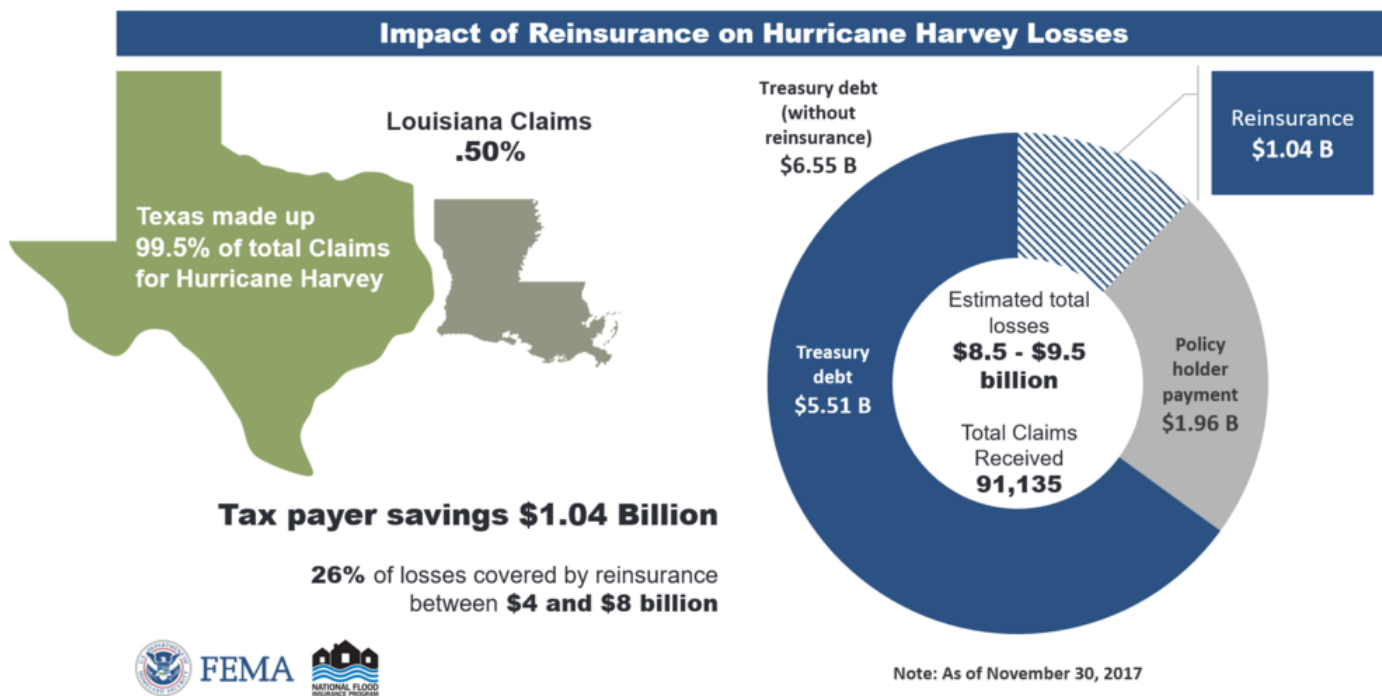
NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM REINSURANCE PROGRAM TRIGGERED BY HURRICANE HARVEY

Historically, FEMA paid the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) claims of insured flood survivors using insurance premiums, available surplus, borrowing capacity from the U.S. Treasury, and in some cases direct Congressional appropriations. In 2017, FEMA added a new risk management tool — reinsurance — to protect the NFIP from large financial losses. As a result, the NFIP has an additional tool within its financial framework to manage losses that result from major events such as Hurricane Harvey.

In January 2017, FEMA made a historic cornerstone placement of reinsurance to establish a multi-year reinsurance strategy. Reinsurance is an important risk management tool used by insurance companies and public entities to protect from large financial losses. Insurance providers pay premiums to reinsurers. In exchange, reinsurers provide coverage for losses incurred by insurance providers up to a specified amount.

Under the 2017 Reinsurance Agreement, FEMA transferred $1.042 billion in flood risk to the private reinsurance markets. This extends the NFIP's flood claims-paying ability by protecting against a portion of its potential losses. During the calendar year, when NFIP losses exceed $4 billion, the NFIP will receive $0.26 for every dollar of losses between $4 and $8 billion, up to a maximum of $1.042 billion.

In early November, FEMA surpassed $4 billion in paid claims to insured flood survivors of Hurricane Harvey, triggering the NFIP 2017 reinsurance placement. FEMA sent an initial proof of loss to reinsurers on December 5, 2017, requesting the entire $1.042 billion in reinsurance.

Impact of Reinsurance on Hurricane Harvey Losses

Louisiana Claims .50%

Texas made up 99.5% of total Claims for Hurricane Harvey

Tax payer savings $1.04 Billion

26% of losses covered by reinsurance between $4 and $8 billion

Treasury debt (without reinsurance) $6.55 B

Reinsurance $1.04 B

Treasury debt $5.51 B

Estimated total losses $8.5 - $9.5 billion

Total Claims Received 91,135

Policy holder payment $1.96 B

Note: As of November 30, 2017

PEMA HOSTED THE FEMA ADVANCED ACADEMY PROGRAM

2017 Pennsylvania's National Advanced Academy Alumni

In 2017, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency hosted FEMA's National Emergency Management Advanced Academy which included four weeks of classroom instruction (160 classroom hours) and the completion of an individual research paper.

The classroom portion of the training:
- Reinforced the qualities needed to manage an emergency management program
- Addressed both strategic and critical thinking
- Reviewed and analyzed case studies, and,
- Touched on legal challenges and effective communication.

At the completion of the academy, a graduation ceremony was held to recognize Pennsylvania's first graduating class of FEMA's National Emergency Management Advanced Academy.

Graduates of the 2017 Advanced Academy

Bekanich, Steven, PEMA
Bingaman, Aaron, Penn State University EMA
Cohick, Kirsten, PEMA
Gillette, Angel, PEMA
Godin, Jason, PEMA
Hepschmidt, Kurt, Wheatfield Township EMA
McGroarty, Thomas, PA Department of Health
Nalesnik, Mark, Carbon County EMA
O'Hanlon, Mark, FEMA, Region III
Polachek, Catherine, PA Department of Health
Singer, Susan, PA Department of Health
Wilson George, Bucks County EMA
Zarnick David, PEMA

The National Emergency Management Advanced Academy reinforces the qualities needed to lead emergency management programs, provides relevant management theories and concepts, and utilizes appropriate case studies. The Academy is designed for Emergency Management mid-level managers with a minimum of three years of experience in an Emergency Management position wanting to advance their skillset. Students learn skills critical to performing emergency management responsibilities, such as: program management and oversight, effective communication at all levels, integrated collaboration, and strategic thinking, along with completing a research project one month prior to attending the final course.

The research project provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their critical thinking abilities. Students apply the key learning concepts from the Advanced Academy curriculum relative to their own strengths and weaknesses, their organizations, and their own performance environments.

The Advanced Academy program series consists of four resident courses, each five days in duration and completed during the current federal fiscal year. Attendance at each course is required and must be attended in sequential order. The courses are not offered individually and participants are selected by an annual selection board in June with the first of four classes starting during the first quarter.

For more information on how to be considered for the National Emergency Management Advanced Academy, visit https://training.fema.gov/empp/applytoadvancedacademy.aspx or email fema-empp-advanced-academy@fema.dhs.gov.

WINTER FIRE SAFETY

Winter increases the potential for fires in our homes. This checklist can increase your awareness of how fires occur and help you take simple precautions to prevent most fires and fire-related injuries.

WOOD STOVES AND FIREPLACES
- Is your woodstove installed properly and in good condition?
- Do you have 36" clearance from combustible surfaces and items and have proper floor support and protection?
- Is your chimney inspected and cleaned annually?
- Do you have a glass or metal screen covering the fireplace opening?

SAFETY TIPS
- Do not use flammable liquids to start or accelerate fire.
- Burn your stove hot twice daily to reduce creosote buildup in the chimney.
- NEVER burn charcoal in your stove or fireplace and limit the use of paper to build a fire.
- NEVER close your damper with hot ashes in the fireplace and be sure the fire is out before going to sleep.

KEROSENE HEATER
- Do you always use K1 kerosene and burn according to manufacturers directions?
- Is the heater in a well-ventilated room?
- Are all combustible materials at least 36" away from the heater?
- Is the heater placed where it will not be knocked over or block an escape route?
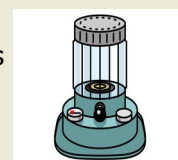
SAFETY TIPS
- Use only approved heaters with an emergency shut off if tipped over.
- NEVER fill a heater while hot and NEVER inside your home.
- Keep fuel stored in approved metal cans outside the home.

COOKING EQUIPMENT
- Do you keep potholders and other combustible materials away from your cooking range?
- Do you enforce a "kid-free zone" of 3' around your range?
- Do you leave cooking unattended?
- Do you cook in clothing with long, loose sleeves?

SAFETY TIPS
- Don't reach over working ranges to get items stored above.

SMOKING MATERIALS
- Do you keep matches and lighters out of children's reach?
- Do you ensure cigarette butts are out before emptying ashtrays?
- Do you check furniture where smokers have sat for unintentionally dropped smoking materials?

SAFETY TIPS
- Use large, deep ashtrays set on sturdy surfaces.

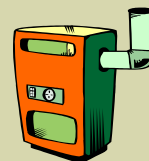## WINTER FIRE SAFETY *(continued from previous page)*

FURNACE HEATING
- Are all controls and emergency shutoffs in proper working condition?
- Has the furnace been inspected/serviced by a professional?
- Are flue pipes well supported, free of holes, rust, and cracks?

SAFETY TIPS
- Make sure furnaces and chimneys are in good repair.
- Keep trash and other combustibles.

ESCAPE PLANNING
- Make an escape plan that shows two ways out of every room and have everyone practice the plan before an emergency occurs.
- Practice escaping from a fire by crawling low to the floor to the nearest exit free of smoke and flames.
- Have everyone agree on a meeting place outside. In an emergency, GET OUT FIRST and then call for help.
- NEVER RE-ENTER A BURNING BUILDING.

OTHER WINTER FIRE SAFETY TIPS
- If there is a fire hydrant near your home you can assist the fire department by keeping the hydrant clear of snow and ice so in the event it is needed, it can be located.
- Be sure every level of your home has a working smoke alarm, and be sure to check and clean it every month.
- Never use a range or oven as a supplementary heating device. This is a safety hazard and can produce potentially deadly fumes.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors should be installed in every home to warn of deadly build-ups.
- NEVER try to thaw frozen water pipes with a blowtorch or other open flame. The pipe could conduct the heat and ignite a fire inside a wall. Use hot water or an Underwriters Laboratory (UL) labeled device such as a hair dryer for thawing.
- And finally...know how to contact the fire department for any emergency.

FOR ADDITIONAL FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Kraig Herman, Public Education Specialist
Office of the State Fire Commissioner
1310 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110
Phone: 800-670-3473 or (717) 651-2209
E-mail: krherman@pa.gov
Visit us at: www.osfc.pa.gov

PROCLAMATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY TO COMBAT HEROIN AND OPIOID CRISIS

On January 10, 2018, Governor Tom Wolf signed a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency declaring heroin and opioid addiction to be a statewide emergency. The proclamation created an Opioid Unified Coordination Group (UCG) that will comprise of the senior leadership of the following agencies, and be tasked with guiding the implementation of 13 specific initiatives related to combating the heroin and opioid crisis:

- The Department of Health (DOH)
- The Department of Human Services (DHS)
- The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP)
- The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)
- The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)
- The Pennsylvania State Police (PSP)

The above listed agencies will provide personnel, as required, to staff a Public Health Emergency Command Center located at PEMA headquarters in Harrisburg, PA. The Command Center will be structured in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) guidelines, and will be led by an Incident Commander appointed by the DOH. It will operate on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the primary goal of implementing and tracking the 13 initiatives listed in the disaster proclamation.

1. Establish and staff a Public Health Emergency Command Center
2. Establish a Naloxone leave behind program for Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
3. Allow pharmacists to partner with other organizations to increase access to Naloxone
4. Expand access to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) to other Commonwealth entities for clinical decision-making purposes
5. Reschedule fentanyl derivatives to align with Federal Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) schedule
6. Add overdoses and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) as reportable conditions in Title 28, Chapter 27
7. Waive face-to-face physician requirement for Narcotic Treatment Program (NTP) admissions
8. Authorize the emergency purchase under the procurement code for a long-term hotline contract with current vendor
9. Allow expansion of medication units for satellite Narcotic Treatment Programs (NTP)
10. Waive annual licensing requirements for high performing drug and alcohol treatment facilities
11. Streamline a pilot program using an advanced body scanner at Wernersville that is used to scan re-entrants returning to the treatment facility
12. Waive fees for birth certificates for individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)
13. Waive separate licensing requirements for hospitals to expand access to drug and alcohol treatment

PROCLAMATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY TO COMBAT HEROIN AND OPIOID CRISIS *(continued from previous page)*

To highlight just one of the initiatives above, in October of 2017, PCCD, in collaboration with DDAP and DOH, announced the availability of up to $5 million in state fiscal year 2017-2018 funds to support a Naloxone program for First Responders. This provided up to 63,336 kits available to First Responders, with each kit containing two intranasal doses of the life-saving medication. The funding for Naloxone through that program will also be used to provide Naloxone to EMS agencies should they choose to implement the leave behind program which is now allowed as part of the disaster proclamation, but was not previously permitted. This will allow EMS agencies to provide family members, friends or other responsible individuals immediate access to the life-saving medication without having to obtain it from a pharmacy or other source, for situations when individuals suffering from an opioid or heroin overdose are revived by EMS and refuse transport to a hospital. It's also important to note that EMS providers are not required to participate in the leave behind program.

The Naloxone is provided to First Responders through a series of Centralized Coordinating Entities (CCE) throughout the state.   In order to ensure maximum distribution and availability of this life-saving medication, the term "First Responder" as it applies to this program has been expanded to include:

1. Emergency Medical Services (EMS), to include Advanced Life Support (ALS), Basic Life Support (BLS), Quick Response Services (QRS) and Emergency Medical Technicians
2. Law Enforcement, to include Municipal Police, Sheriff's Offices, Campus Police, Campus Security, School Resource Officers, and Park Rangers
3. Fire Fighters, to include both volunteer and career fire fighters
4. Adult Probation and Parole Officers
5. Juvenile Probation Officers
6. County Correctional Facilities
7. Constables
8. Afterschool Program Personnel
9. Public Transit Drivers
10. Domestic Violence Shelter Personnel
11. Homeless Shelter Personnel
12. Public Defenders Offices
13. Library Personnel
14. Drug Treatment Providers
15. Any other community group legally organized and trained to respond to overdose

For more information on the program, or if your agency is interested in participating in the Naloxone for First Responders program, please visit the PCCD website at the following link to find the CCE in your area and additional information about the program.

http://www.pccd.pa.gov/criminaljustice/advisory_boards/Pages/Naloxone-for-First-Responders.aspx

TITLE 35 UPDATE NEWS

PEMA has worked for several years with stakeholder groups and the General Assembly to update Title 35. Over the past three years we have engaged county coordinators, task force leaders, and the emergency management community on ways to improve the Commonwealth's Emergency Management Code. The comments provided have been incorporated into the bill PEMA worked with the Chairman Vulakovich to have introduced.

On January 17th, Senator Vulakovich introduced SB 1019, which has been referred to the Senate Veteran's Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee. The bill can be viewed at the following link: http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billInfo/billInfo.cfm?sYear=2017&sInd=0&body=S&type=B&bn=1019

The Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee hosted to hearings on SB 1019: • Monday, January 22nd: PEMA Director Richard D. Flinn, Jr. discussed proposed changes to Title 35 • Monday, January 29[tt]: Testimony from stakeholders representing first responders, county, and municipal governments.	Stakeholders Included: PA Office of Homeland Security, Marcus Brown, Director; Keystone Emergency Management Association, Todd Lake, President; PA Fire and Emergency Services Institute, Don Konkle. Executive Director; County Commissioners Association, Doug Hill, Executive Director; PA State Association of Boroughs, Ed Troxell, Director of Government Affairs; PA State Association of Township Supervisors, Elam Herr, Assistant Executive Director; Healthcare Distribution Alliance, Bryan Lowe. Director, State Government Affairs

Some significant revisions proposed in the bill include:

• The creation of a Commonwealth Disaster Emergency Fund to provide assistance to municipalities during non-federally declared disasters.
• Giving control back to county and local governments to appoint and remove Emergency Management Coordinators (EMCs). EMCs will no longer need PEMA or Gubernatorial approval. PEMA will certify that EMCs have met basic and advance certifications.
• Provides options for how Regional Task Forces can organize themselves in order to receive grant funding.
• Moves Act 227 of 2002, the Counter Terrorism Planning, Preparedness & Response Act, from a standalone act to formal acknowledgement within Title 35.
• Extends Commonwealth protections and Workers' Compensation provisions to members of specialized teams when deployed by the Governor.

PEMA sincerely appreciates the comments and assistance everyone has provided. We know that there are a few changes that may be made throughout the legislative process, however we believe many of the changes have been received in a positive manner.

PREDICTING ICE JAMS
By Sarah Jamison, Service Hydrologist, National Weather Service Cleveland

Ice jams, though common in the northern United States, are not as frequent an occurrence in Pennsylvania. During a typical Pennsylvania winter, river ice will develop, breakup, melt, and reform several times before spring, and in most instances, produce minor or no flooding. During severe winters, ice jams can produce major flooding and damages directly attributable to the ice.

Open Water Flooding vs. Ice Jam Flooding

Are ice jams predictable? In many respects no. River floods are often simulated fairly accurately using hydrologic models which can provide communities days of advance notice of an impending flood. By contrast, the National Weather Service (NWS) struggles to model ice jams which can lead to unexpected river rises catching communities by surprise. What the NWS can identify are the meteorological conditions that favor river ice growth and breakups. The NWS will then alert local, county, and state officials to the heightened risk of ice jams. It is through communication with the "boots on the ground" that the NWS is kept aware of the ice thickness, conditions, location, and subsequent flooding impacts. *(continued on next page)*

PREDICTING ICE JAMS *(continued from previous page)*

The NWS relies on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) river gage observations to identify ice jams and/or backwater flooding if no other reports from the field are made available. Unfortunately in ice jam events, river gage readings can become unreliable causing the USGS and NWS Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service (AHPS) websites to appear unrepresentative of the impacts on the ground for the following reasons:

1. The river gages could be providing false readings due to damage from the ice or impacts on the equipment from a hard freeze.
2. NWS flood categories may not apply. NWS forecasts represent a reach of a river designated around a single river gauge points. The ice jam can disrupt the relationship between the stage and typical impacts.
3. The gage may not identify the ice jam located in a different part of a river.
4. The river stage and flow/discharge relationship can be invalid.
5. River forecasts can't properly account for the backwater flows and unpredictable river rises and falls.

These along with other mitigating factors cause river forecasts to become challenging during ice jam events. In some instances the NWS will cease river flow and stage forecasts when it is determined that neither can be predicted accurately. The NWS will instead issue flood or flash flood warnings based almost exclusively on reports from the field with added details on expected river response over the next day or two.

Photo by Vinnie Langdon III

© MSteiner / Twitter

Ice jams prove a unique challenge for forecasters and local responders. It is up to the NWS to alert communities when there is a heightened risk for ice jams, and for the local officials to share information back to the NWS. This flow of information is most critical in situations where forecast guidance is limited yet the threat to life and property is elevated. If you haven't already done so, I encourage readers to reach out to their local NWS to open those doors of communication that could prove vital in future ice jam situations.

PENNSLVANIA STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM

Emergency responders are trained to prepare for any and all human emergencies. But, what do you do when an incident includes an angry cow, a tractor trailer full of pigs, a confused dog, or a litter of kittens?

You contact dispatch and ask for the Pennsylvania State Animal Response Team (PASART).

Historically, animals are especially vulnerable when a disaster strikes because they must rely on humans for help. Over the past 15 years there have been both natural and man-made disasters which have pointed out the need for improvements in the preparedness efforts that focus on animals. Many of the animals that were negatively impacted by these events could have been spared injury and death had there been a coordinated response plan in their locale. From these events, the PASART concept was born.

PASART was founded to provide highly trained and insured volunteers to assist in caring for animals in emergencies. PASART has county level response teams (CARTs) covering nearly the entire Commonwealth which are available to respond to emergency response and law enforcement needs exclusively through 9-1-1 or other official request for assistance.

PASART volunteers can assist in removing pets from homes, setting up temporary animal shelters, provide on-site support for vehicle accidents, and assist with dogs running at large. PASART volunteers are equipped with crates, trailers, pet food, blankets, and leashes.

In early December in Luzerne County, their CART members were dispatched to a fire in a high rise apartment building which had 10 stories and 150 apartments. After the scene was secured, CART volunteers went door to door rescuing animals who had been caught in the building. Simultaneously, an animal shelter was set up to care for pets of the displaced residents. The shelter remained open for three days until all the pets had new lodging.

PASART is a resource that hopes to make your life easier. Their mission is to preserve the lives of animals, while you focus on the lives of humans. PASART has seen first hand what the comfort of an animal can mean in a stressful situation and are here to help.

UPCOMING TRAINING

Course	Date	Location	Last Day to Register
Central Area In Service Training (IST)	7-Feb-18	Holiday Inn	7-Feb-18
G400 Advanced Incident Command and General Staff - Complex Incidents (ICS400)	8-Feb-18	Mansfield University	
G402 Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives and Senior Officials (Safe Schools)	8-Feb-18	Allegheny Intermediate Unit	1-Feb-18
PEMA Headquarters Orientation for Emergency Management Coordinators	9-Feb-18	PEMA Headquarters Rm 127 (Elmerton Ave)	8-Feb-18
G191 ICS/EOC Interface Workshop (G-191)	10-Feb-18	Montgomery County EOC	2-Feb-18
G393 Hazard Mitigation for Emergency Managers	20-Feb-18	Indiana County EMA	16-Feb-18
Initial Damage Assessment and Reporting	21-Feb-18	Crawford County Department of Public Safety	19-Feb-18
Initial Damage Assessment and Reporting	21-Feb-18	Crawford County Department of Public Safety	19-Feb-18
PEMA Central Area Orientation for Emergency Management Coordinators	27-Feb-18	PEMA Central Area Office	
NWS SKYWARN Spotter - Basic	1-Mar-18	Allegheny County Fire Academy	27-Feb-18
MGT341: Disaster Preparedness for Hospitals and Healthcare Organizations Within the Community Infrastructure (MGT-341)	5-Mar-18	Chester County Public Safety Training Campus	2-Mar-18
PER335 Critical Decision Making for Complex Coordinated Attacks	6-Mar-18	Montgomery County EOC	26-Feb-18
G317 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)	12-Mar-18	Dauphin County Technical School	28-Mar-18
G271 Hazardous Weather and Flooding Preparedness	13-Mar-18	W.M. Tokishi Training Center	14-Mar-18
Agency Representative (AREP) Training for the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center (CRCC)	13-Mar-18	PEMA Headquarters CRCC	13-Mar-18
Allegheny County Municipal EMC Quarterly Training	13-Mar-18	Allegheny County Emergency Services	
Allegheny County Municipal EMC Quarterly Training	13-Mar-18	Allegheny County Emergency Services	13-Mar-18
Agency Representative (AREP) Training for the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center (CRCC)	15-Mar-18	PEMA Headquarters CRCC	
G271 Hazardous Weather and Flooding Preparedness	20-Mar-18	Bucks County Emergency Management Agency	18-Mar-18
G318 Hazard Mitigation Planning (G-318)	20-Mar-18	PA State Fire Academy	13-Mar-18
AWR232 Mass Fatalities Planning and Response for Rural Communities AWR-232	27-Mar-18	Pampered Palate Catering & Conference Center (Crawford County)	27-Mar-18
G402 Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives and Senior Officials (ICS-402)	27-Mar-18	Town of McCandless Municipal Building	
G402 Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives and Senior Officials (ICS-402)	28-Mar-18	Northampton County EOC	

All PEMA courses are on Train PA. and you must register for courses through Train PA.

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For help, please contact TRAINPAsupport@pa.gov

Need Ideas For Getting The Word Out?

Each month, the PEMA External Affairs Office distributes numerous preparedness resources designed to help make communicating to your communities about preparedness easy. We encourage everyone to share this valuable information with their partner agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, family and friends.

These tools are emailed each month and are also available on at www.ready.pa.gov.

ReadyPA Monthly - Community preparedness information designed for citizens. Forward to libraries, schools, local municipalities, etc.
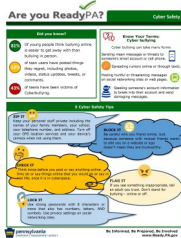
Fact Sheets - One-page preparedness information that can be easily printed and displayed for quick reference.

Talking Points and Social Media Toolkit - Graphics, tweet suggestions, and talking points for you to use on social media, websites, and when speaking to groups.

The ReadyPA webpage has a new logo, web address, and new features. The new address is www.Ready.PA.gov. ReadyPA now includes the "Know Your Community" page. This page emphasizes information such as contact information for the county emergency management agency, a listing of the top three hazards for each county, whether the county has a CERT program, and when the most recent tornado occurred. Please check out the new ReadyPA and let us know what you think by emailing: empemaextaffairs@pa.gov

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