

# EMergent News

Engaging You, Engaging the Community

July - August 2019



## FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT, IT'S NOT EMA MISSION CREEP

By Tom Hughes, State Hazard Mitigation Officer and  
Acting NFIP Program Manager  
PEMA Bureau of Recovery and Mitigation

Here is why. On October 1, 2018, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) assumed operational activities for our sister agency, PA Department of Community and Economic Development. As such, PEMA will be conducting or coordinating the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) required Community Assistance Visits (CAVs), Community Assistance Contacts (CACs), General Technical Assistance (Workshops/Mapping Updates/Floodplain Ordinances) and Floodplain Management training for municipal and state partners. Floodplain management is required under 44 Code of Federal Regulation 60.3 and PA Act 167. Storm water Management falls under PA Act 166 of 1978. Many federal grants and disaster support funding streams require that

a community be in good standing with National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Ok, so there is a requirement but so what, why is Emergency Management involved; what's in it for us?

Disaster Recovery efforts for a community in good standing and for their residents who have NFIP policies starts the second that a resident or business makes a call to their agent to access repair and content replacement funds through the program; without any disaster declaration (provided it involves flooding of two homes/two acres) by the municipality, county, state or FEMA. *(continued on next page)*



Cocalico Street, Ephrata, PA, 09/12/18 - © The Ephrata Review



PEMA Headquarters, Harrisburg, PA

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## FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

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NFIP Floodplain Management ordinances take in account for freeboard; for the PA State Model Ordinance, when adopted by a community that is 1.5 feet or higher, above the Base Flood Elevation (formally that line that was the FEMA identified 100-year floodplain) which reduces impact to the new constructed structures in the floodplain. The ordinance also requires structures in the

“Educate folks in the importance of flood insurance”

Special Flood Hazard Area or SFHA to get a permit! Code Enforcement can inspect the work to ensure it complies with the latest enforceable building code, thus helping your community to become more resilient. It has a substantial damage inspection requirement for each and every flood event for floodplain managers to ensure that buildings are inspected after each and every flood event, and if a substantial improvement designation is deemed by the municipality, the home will probably have to be elevated (treated as new construction) 1.5 feet or higher based on the ordinance. Accessory buildings and propane tanks and other type items in the floodplain are also required to be permitted, elevated or anchored in the floodplain; thus cutting down the debris management and bridge/culvert blockages that caused flooding in unexpected areas and reduces adverse impact to others properties in and out of the floodplain.

### **For more information, contact :**

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Your floodplain manager can be your friend too, that can reduce the complexities of disaster response but they need your help. Things you can do is conduct a drive-by of the floodplain in your jurisdiction; the more eyes we have watching these flood prone areas will reduce the chance of new unpermitted development in our neighborhoods and business areas. Educate folks in the importance of flood insurance; FEMA’s latest moonshot per their five-year strategy, is to double the number of Insurance policies in the country.

Lastly, ensure the FEMA Post-Event Flood Checklist is sent to the right people in our flood communities. We all get busy in our day-to-day activities and a friendly reminder from our EMA community can assist in accomplishing the required FEMA activities, so when the State and FEMA come to town for a CAV or CAC, they can very easily see that flood preparedness and recovery activities have been met due to the community’s flood resilient mind set. Being and supporting a “floodie” is not EMA mission creep but a partnership that can make communities more resilient in your coverage area.

As Ben Franklin said, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” (He was a floodie and didn’t know it!)

For further information on  
Pennsylvania Floodplain  
Management and Flood  
Insurance, go to:

[www.pema.pa.gov/  
PAFloodplains](http://www.pema.pa.gov/PAFloodplains)

## NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFIP) 51TH ANNIVERSARY

Congress created the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) on August 1, 1968, to provide federally backed flood insurance in communities that voluntarily adopt and enforce floodplain management ordinances which meet the minimum NFIP requirements.

In the last 51 years of the NFIP, the program has supported 2.3 million policyholders impacted by flood damage paying more than \$64 billion in flood claims losses. Insured survivors recover faster and more fully after a flood than uninsured survivors. The NFIP provides the primary source of flood insurance in the United States for homeowners, renters, and businesses.

Today, the NFIP manages flood risk for more than 22,000 participating communities by providing insurance and protecting the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains through land use and development requirements. The program supports more than 5 million flood insurance policies, insuring more than \$1.2 trillion in assets.

The NFIP thanks the state, local, tribal, and territorial governments as well as insurance and floodplain management partners and many others for their partnership and assistance in servicing the nation. Through the decades, the NFIP has met its humanitarian mission to save life and property through these partnerships and will continue to manage, inform, and insure flood risk.

For more information, visit the following websites:

[www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program)

[www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).



## MITIGATION MINUTE

FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) turned 51 years old this month and has seen its fair share of growth and noteworthy achievements to become what it is today. In this episode of the FEMA Podcast, they discuss the program with Carl Cook and Chuck Steele, both founding employees and program leaders of the NFIP. In this interview they discuss what it was like in the early days of the program and how they worked to grow the program and involve communities.

This is an interview by Ryan Ike, FEMA Region 10 External Affairs Branch Chief, with Carl Cook and Chuck Steele, both founding employees and program leaders with the National Flood Insurance Program. In this interview they discuss what it was like in the early days of the program and how they worked to grow the program and get communities involved.

- Location: Bothell, WA

To listen to this podcast, click the following link:

<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/audio/168615>

The FEMA Podcast is available on [Apple iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#) to stream or download. Approximately 20 to 30 minutes in length, the podcast will be updated with a new episode every two weeks. Also included in the weekly podcast is a link to the transcript. Listeners will have the ability to subscribe to new episodes, which will then automatically update on a listener's device.

FEMA encourages emergency management professionals and the general public to listen in and follow the on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram where you can join the conversation every time a new episode is posted. To submit ideas for a FEMA podcast topic, send us an email at [FEMA-podcast@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-podcast@fema.dhs.gov).

## EXCESSIVE RAINFALL OUTLOOKS FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE'S WEATHER PREDICTION CENTER

By Alex Lamers ([alex.lamers@noaa.gov](mailto:alex.lamers@noaa.gov)) and Greg Carbin ([gregory.carbin@noaa.gov](mailto:gregory.carbin@noaa.gov)), NWS Weather Prediction Center

Flooding is one of the biggest weather-related threats to life and property in the United States, and Pennsylvania has a long history of significant floods. The deadliest flood in U.S. history occurred in Johnstown, Pennsylvania in 1889 from a dam failure as the result of heavy rainfall. Since 2000, Pennsylvania had 44 flood-related fatalities and over \$1.5 billion in flood damage according to National Weather Service statistics. The majority of those deaths were due to flash flooding. Rapid onset flooding coincident with, or in the hours immediately following heavy rainfall. Therefore, monitoring the potential for heavy rain and flash flooding is of critical importance for decision makers and those charged with the protection of life and property.



PA 973 bridge washed out near Loyalsockville, PA, September 2011.

The Weather Prediction Center (WPC), in College Park, Maryland, has a nearly 60-year legacy of producing national rainfall forecasts. Of course, the amount of rain that falls only has so much meaning. Context is important: how quickly the rain falls, how saturated the soil conditions are prior to the rain, and the land characteristics where the rain is falling. WPC produces an outlook or forecast, specifically taking these variables into account — the Excessive Rainfall Outlook (ERO). The ERO provides a probabilistic risk assessment of where flash flooding may occur on any

given day across the contiguous United States. The flash flood risk probabilities are mapped to categories that escalate from Marginal to Slight, Moderate and High. The ERO risk probabilities and corresponding categories apply to areas about the size of a medium-sized city (within 25 miles of any point). One way to think about the risk of flash flooding at this spatial scale is to roughly equate the probability or category description to the chance of a flash flood occurring in either your county or a medium-sized city.

Risk categories and corresponding probabilities increase as the chance of flash flooding becomes more widespread, and significant flash flooding is more likely. WPC has developed a chart (included below) outlining generalized expectations with the ERO risk categories.

High Risks are relatively rare and are a strong indicator of a potentially deadly and damaging flood day. High Risks are issued on about four percent of days over the past decade, but tend to be associated with considerable impacts. For example, nearly half of all flood-related fatalities, and nearly 90 percent of flood-related damages in the contiguous United States, have occurred on a High Risk day. One noteworthy High Risk case in Pennsylvania was in September 2011, when devastating flooding occurred with the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee.

Despite the magnitude of impacts on High Risk days, it is important not to ignore other risk categories on the ERO. Although the chances of flash flooding occurring are lower, there is still a threat, and significant flash floods can and do occur even at these lower forecast probabilities/categories. *(continued on page 10)*

## NATIONAL NIGHT OUT 2019



Tuesday, August 6, 2019, is National Night Out (NNO). NNO is an annual community-building campaign that provides an opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances. Many emergency services participate in NNO, as well.

In 2018, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency made available NNO Prep Packs. The packs include printed preparedness materials for kids and families and made available to county and local emergency management agencies, police departments, communities, etc. to use during their NNO events. In 2018, almost 50,000 preparedness materials were shared across the state. For 2019, we have more than doubled that number.

Thanks to all who took advantage of this initiative. Please take time to visit a NNO event near you and support your local police.



Swatara Township, Dauphin County. © Rutherford Fire Company



© Caln Township (Chester County) Police Department/Facebook



Dauphin County Sheriff's Department Deputy Josh Long hands Karter Rudy a coloring book during National Night Out in Middletown, Dauphin County. © Middletown Press and Journal



Manheim Township, Lancaster County. © LancasterOnline



## PEMA GRANTS UPDATE

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Bureau of Grants Management, is providing this timeline as a reminder for when performance reports are due for the below listed grants

Grant	Performance Report Due Dates
Hazardous Materials Response Fund (HMRF)	Due no later than 30 days after the end of the performance period
Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)	1st Quarter (October 1 to December 31) - January 15
	2nd Quarter (January 1 to March 31) - April 15
	3rd Quarter (April 1 to June 30) - July 15
	4th Quarter (July 1 to September 30) - October 15
Radiation Emergency Response Grant (RERF)	Due No later than 30 days after the end of the performance period

**NOTE: PEMA is currently waiting for the Federal awards for HSGP, EMPG, and HMEP.**

### Important things to remember

Due dates for applications cannot be extended.

All grant applications must be submitted using the Electronic Single Application (ESA)

Designated signatories must have a User ID and Password

There currently are no open application in the ESA

Questions regarding grants, contact:  
[ra-dgmhmgrants@pa.gov](mailto:ra-dgmhmgrants@pa.gov)

ESA login:  
<https://www.esa.dced.state.pa.us>

### Guidance

For further guidance and instructions for each grant, please visit:

<https://www.pema.pa.gov/about/Pages/Grants.aspx>

### Reminders

Deadline and due dates may vary from year to year; please refer to PEMA guidance for each individual grant.

EMPG reimbursement requests due quarterly on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month after the quarter ends.

## FEMA UPDATE



### FEMA Podcast



The FEMA Podcast is an audio program series available to anyone interested in learning more about the Agency, hearing about innovation in the field of emergency management, and listening to stories about communities and individuals recovering after disasters.

#### **Episode 36: Resiliency: A Conversation with Dr. Dan Kaniewski**

On this episode, Acting Deputy Administrator Dan Kaniewski discusses FEMA's new strategic and structural focus on resiliency and how it makes America safer, stronger, and better prepared for future disasters.

#### **Episode 41: National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster**

Listen in on this discussion with the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) President Greg Forrester and FEMA's Voluntary Agency Coordination Branch Chief Liz Gibson on how the NVOAD fosters a more effective delivery of services to communities affected by disaster and their coordination with FEMA to help people before, during and after disasters.

To View the FEMA Podcast, go to <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/multimedia/collections/620>

#### UPCOMING WEBINARS

Security & Sustainability Forum,  
Climate Action Planning,  
August 7, 2019, 1:15PM—2:45PM

American Planning Association,  
Planning for Drought and Cascading Hazards,  
August 15, 2019, 2:00PM—3:15PM

#### UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Floodplain Management Association Annual Conference:

Knowledge is Power: Keeping the Lights on  
Floodplains, Resilience Planning and  
Risk Reduction.  
September 3-6, San Diego, CA

Association of State Dam Safety Officials,  
Dam Safety 2019,  
September 8-12, 2019, Orlando, FL

#### PODCASTS

American Planning Association  
Resilience Roundtable Podcasts

#### NATURAL HAZARDS CENTER WEBINAR SERIES ON MITIGATION

The Natural Hazards Center, in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, will soon launch a new webinar series, **Making Mitigation Work**. These free one-hour webinars will feature innovative speakers and highlight recent progress in mitigation policy, practice, and research.

**Tuesday, August 13, 2019 | 1:00-2:00PM**  
An In-Depth Look at the National Mitigation Investment Strategy: Aligning Mitigation Investment for the Whole Community

**Tuesday, September 10, 2019 | 1:00-2:00PM**  
Ethical and Efficient Infrastructure Resilience: The Battle for Better Building Codes

**Tuesday, October 8, 2019 | 1:00-2:00PM**  
Moving Mitigation Forward: The Past, Present, and Future of Hazard Mitigation Assistance

**Tuesday, November 12, 2019 | 1:00-2:00PM**  
Disaster Spending and Mitigation: A State-by-State Story

## 2019 Lehigh Valley Shelter Simulation

By Tanya Hook, Community Outreach Coordinator  
Lehigh County Office of Emergency Management

Lehigh County Emergency Management recently collaborated with our local partners to sponsor the 2019 Lehigh Valley Shelter Simulation. Participating partners included: the Allentown Health Bureau, Allentown Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps, Allentown EMA, American Red Cross, Church of the Brethren: Children's Disaster Services, Lehigh County EMA, Lehigh County CERT, Lehigh Valley CART, Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living, Northampton County EMA, PA EMS Council and the Salvation Army. This event focused on the operation and functions of an emergency shelter, registration, dormitory, feeding and medical operations. It focused on the community members with functional and access needs, and community members who come with service animals and pets. The Shelter Simulation was designed as a mock shelter to provide a "hands-on" opportunity for volunteers to practice and draw upon their training to find solutions for dealing with commonly confronted shelter situations. There were 149 volunteers and staff members from local agencies/organizations that participated in the three-day Shelter Simulation.



## PENNSYLVANIA DISASTER IN HISTORY

### Austin Dam Flood Disaster

In the early 1900s, the town of Austin, Pennsylvania, revolved around the lumber industry. Situated in a valley surrounded by hills covered with pine, hemlock, and cherry, Austin was a natural location for lumber companies. In the late 1800s, as the old-growth timber was exhausted, the pulp and paper industry replaced the sawmills. Several paper mills existed in the area, but none was as important as the Bayless Pulp and Paper Company. Constructed in 1900, it was both the largest plant and the biggest employer in the borough of Austin. The town's population swelled as lumbermen, mill workers and their families moved to the community for work.

Like all paper mills, the Bayless mill needed a continual supply of water to operate. After facing several water shortages, the company decided to construct a large concrete dam on Freeman Run in 1909. Although designed by a professional engineer, the company made cost-cutting modifications to the dam that contributed to a minor structural failure in January 1910. Repairs were made, but the events of the following year proved that the dam remained unsound.



Building Damage © Bain News—Library of Congress

September 1911, was a rainy month in Austin. The Bayless Company, seeing an opportunity to increase its water reserves, allowed the rains to fill the dam to its maximum capacity. On September 30, 1911, the Bayless Pulp and Paper Company Dam gave way under the pressure. Coursing down Freeman Run, the water picked up debris and stacks of pulp wood, estimated to be as much as 700,000 cords from the Bayless lumber yard. These logs became deadly weapons as the water hit the town of Austin. After the waters raged through Austin, they hit the nearby town of Costello. Seventy-eight people are known to have died.



Damage to the Austin Dam © Potter County Historical Society

The dam disaster also took a tremendous toll on the survivors. Although Bayless rebuilt the paper mill, the town never managed to recapture the vibrancy or prosperity that existed before the flood. Between 1910 and 1920, the town lost half of its population. As support for Austin's residents poured in from across the state, people began to question who was to blame for the disaster. Many felt that the Bayless Company had been negligent, both in its construction of the dam and its failure to adequately repair the structural damage in 1910. After several lawsuits, the Bayless Company paid \$600,000 in damages and fees to the victim's families.

The Austin flood disaster had lasting statewide effects. Only the infamous Johnstown Flood of 1889 caused a greater loss of life in a dam failure. In its aftermath, many survivors and officials raised Pennsylvania's lack of regulations for the design, construction and inspection of dams as a contributing factor. This pressure resulted in the Pennsylvania Water Supply Commission, the state agency responsible for dams, to press for comprehensive regulation of dams. In 1913, the state legislature passed a law granting the commission the power to regulate and inspect dams and hold hearings on their construction, and the power to enforce their duties with fines or imprisonment.

© [ExplorePAhistory.com](http://ExplorePAhistory.com)

## National Preparedness Month

### 30 Days/30 Ways Program

The ReadyPA Team is again launching the **30 Days/30 Ways Program** for Preparedness Month 2019. Sign up, and each week in September, ReadyPA will send out an email that includes easy tips and tools - one for each day of the week - that can help citizens be better prepared.

Sign up now 4

**30**  
Days  
**30**  
Ways

- Be Informed
- Be Prepared
- Be Involved

[www.Ready.PA.gov](http://www.Ready.PA.gov)

#### Here's how to participate:

1. Sign up any time in September at: <https://signup.e2ma.net/signup/1899672/1902357/>
2. Participants will receive an email with tips and tools each week. At the end of the month, participants will receive a very short survey to help us learn the tips that were most helpful for them.
3. When they submit their survey, they will receive a customized ReadyPA Team 30 Days/30 Ways printable certificate.
4. They will also be entered into our random drawing for a wind up radio/flashlight/ phone charge

For further information on the 30 Days/30 Ways Program, go to: <https://www.ready.pa.gov/BeInvolved/Pages/30-Days-30-Ways.aspx>.

Thank you for being part of the **ReadyPA Team's 30 Days/30 Ways Program.**

## Excessive Rainfall Outlooks *(Continued from Page 4)*

Similar to Storm Prediction Center Thunderstorm Outlooks, the ERO is issued for the current day (Day 1), and two additional days into the future (Days 2 and 3). This provides users with several days of advance notice and allows public safety officials a risk assessment and planning tool. As a part of the National Weather Service (NWS), the Weather Prediction Center works in sync with local NWS offices across the nation. If you regularly receive information or briefings from a local NWS office, you may see the WPC ERO maps and discussions in those briefing.

The WPC ERO should be considered the "Outlook" component of the NWS's Outlook, Watch and Warning (Ready, Set, Go!) paradigm. The ERO is a good place to start when assessing the flash flood risk in your community over the next few days.

### Understanding WPC Excessive Rainfall Risk Categories

No Area/Label	MARGINAL (MRGL)	SLIGHT (SLGT)	MODERATE (MDT)	HIGH (HIGH)
Flash floods are generally not expected.	<b>Isolated flash floods possible</b>	<b>Scattered flash floods possible</b>	<b>Numerous flash floods likely</b>	<b>Widespread flash floods expected</b>
<a href="http://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov">@NWSWPC</a>	Localized and primarily affecting places that can experience rapid runoff with heavy rainfall.	Mainly localized. Most vulnerable are urban areas, roads, small streams and washes. Isolated significant flash floods possible.	Numerous flash flooding events with significant events possible. Many streams may flood, potentially affecting larger rivers.	Severe, widespread flash flooding. Areas that don't normally experience flash flooding, could. Lives and property in greater danger.
Flash flooding near me? Flash Flooding NO Flash Flooding				

## UPCOMING TRAINING

Course Title	Start Date	Session Location	Registration Deadline
PA-PEMA: G364 Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools	8/5/2019 8:30	Allegheny Intermediate Unit	7/29/2019
PA-PEMA: G428 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Train-the-Trainer	8/9/2019 18:00	Butler County EOC/911 Classroom	8/9/2019
PA-PEMA: L970 NIMS ICS All-Hazards Supply Unit Leader (SUPL)	8/12/2019 8:00	Building 14-134 Fort Indiantown Gap	8/7/2019
PA-PEMA: G393 Mitigation for Emergency Managers	8/13/2019 8:00	Montgomery County Fire Academy	
PA-PEMA: L146 Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program	8/20/2019 8:00	PEMA Headquarters Rm 112 (Elmerton Ave)	8/16/2019
PA-PEMA: G289 Public Information Officer Awareness Training	8/22/2019 8:30	Delaware County 911 Center	
PA-PEMA: L948 Situational Awareness and Common Operating Picture (SA/COP)	8/26/2019 8:30	PEMA Headquarters Rm 112 (Elmerton Ave)	
PA-PEMA: P010 Area Office Orientation for Emergency Management Coordinators	8/28/2019 10:00	PEMA Western Area Office	8/28/2019
PA-PEMA: P003 PEMA Headquarters Orientation for County Emergency Management Coordinators	8/30/2019 9:00	PEMA Headquarters - Rm 358 (Elmerton Ave)	8/23/2019
PA-PEMA: AWR147 Rail Car Incident Response	9/7/2019 8:00	Rillton Volunteer Fire Department	8/24/2019
PA-PEMA: Allegheny County Municipal EMC Quarterly Training	9/10/2019 10:00	Allegheny County Emergency Services	9/10/2019
PA-PEMA: P236 CEM Planner Train the Trainer	9/11/2019 8:00	Allegheny Intermediate 3	9/10/2019
PA-PEMA: G191 ICS/EOC Interface Workshop	9/12/2019 8:30	PEMA Headquarters Rm 112 (Elmerton Ave)	9/12/2019
PA-PEMA: G557 Rapid Needs Assessment	9/14/2019 8:00	Northampton County EOC	9/13/2019
PA-PEMA: G235 Emergency Planning	9/17/2019 8:30	PEMA Headquarters Rm 112 (Elmerton Ave)	
PA-PEMA: AWR331 Winter Weather Hazards: Science and Preparedness	9/19/2019 8:00	Northampton County EOC	9/17/2019
PA-PEMA: G320 Fundamentals Course for Radiological Response	9/20/2019 8:00	Chester County Government Services Center	9/19/2019

To register, visit Train PA: <https://pa.train.org>





## 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](http://www.ready.pa.gov).



**ReadyPA Monthly** - Community preparedness information designed for citizens. Forward to libraries, schools, local municipalities, etc.



**Fact Sheets** - One-page preparedness material about a specific hazard. Please make this easily printed information available to your community members, elected officials, civic organizations, and anyone who could benefit from this valuable information.



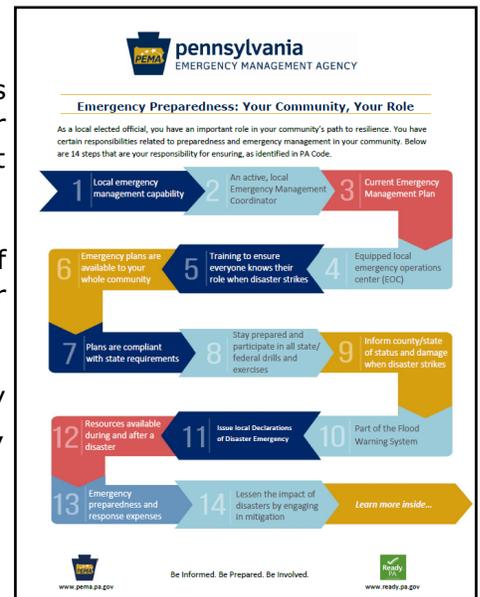
**Talking Points and Social Media Toolkit** - Graphics, tweet suggestions, and talking points for you to use on social media, websites, and when speaking to groups.

## FEATURED EMERGENCY MANAGER TOOL

**Elected Officials Fact Sheet.** This one page fact sheet provides elected officials a flowchart with an easy to follow guide to their responsibilities and duties as it pertains to emergency management in their community.

Other available fact sheets for elected officials are "The Phases of Emergency Management" and "Federal Disaster Assistance for Elected Officials."

An electronic copy of these fact sheets are available to any county or municipal emergency management agency. To request a copy, email us at [ReadyPA@pa.gov](mailto:ReadyPA@pa.gov).



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