



MEMA REPORTS

MEMA REPORTS is a monthly newsletter produced by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to help keep the Public Safety Community of Massachusetts better informed about the day's Emergency Management issues. MEMA REPORTS also appears on the MEMA website: www.mass.gov/mema.

March 11, 2013

Volume 12, Issue 3

MEMA RESPONDS TO THE BLIZZARD OF 2013

In response to the predicted blizzard, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) at MEMA HQ in Framingham and MEMA's three Regional EOCs in Tewksbury, Bridgewater and Agawam stood up at Level II Activation (Full) at noon on Friday, February 8th. This was the culmination of many days of planning and conference calls with the National Weather Service (NWS), the other New England States, State agencies and local officials. The timing of the Activation coincided with Governor Deval Patrick's declaration of a State of Emergency (SoE) for the Commonwealth. Over 30 public, private

and volunteer agencies and organizations were present in the SEOC to staff the various Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) including: MEMA, Executive Office of Public Safety & Security (EOPSS), FEMA, MA Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT), MA State Police (MSP), MA National Guard (MANG), MA Dept. of Public Health (MDPH), MA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation (DCR), Dept. of Fire Services (DFS), Department of Public Utilities (DPU), National Grid, Nstar, Unitil, Western Mass Electric, Verizon, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Coastal Zone Management (CZM), MA Water Resources Authority (MWRA), Department of Public Safety (DPS), MA Environmental Police, Operational Services



MEMA Director Kurt Schwartz and Governor Deval Patrick address the Media in Scituate. Photo: Scituate Mariner

Division (OSD), Dept. of Agricultural Resources (DAR), MA Task Force 1/Urban Search & Rescue, MASS211, NorthEast Disaster Recovery Information X-Change (NEDRIX), Walmart, American Red Cross (ARC), MA Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MAVOAD), and Salvation Army.

At 4:00 P.M. on February 8th, Governor Patrick initiated a driving ban across the Commonwealth (first since the Blizzard of 1978). The ban was in place for 24 hours for most of the Commonwealth. Due to the conditions, all public transportation also came to a halt as the MBTA, Regional Transit Authorities, Logan and regional airports, Amtrak, and the Steamship Authority suspended service. Over 400,000 utility customers, principally in Southeastern MA, including the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station in Plymouth lost power during the storm. The loss of off-site power at Pilgrim resulted in an immediate shutdown and the declaration of an 'Unusual Event' (No danger to the public). As the event unfolded, hundreds of requests from communities were handled by the State and Regional

Deval L. Patrick, Governor
Timothy P. Murray, Lieutenant Governor

Andrea J. Cabral, Secretary of Public Safety & Security
Kurt N. Schwartz, MEMA Director

EOCs. The requests sought evacuation support, debris clearance, chainsaw crews, transport of medical supplies, commodities and citizens to shelters, generators, cots, heaters, front loaders, snow plows, backhoes, bottled water, propane, oxygen, wellness checks, etc. Through a request made by MEMA through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), the state of Vermont provided 15 much-needed large front-end loaders and personnel. Coastal communities from the New Hampshire border to Cape Cod conducted localized evacuations in their most flood-prone neighborhoods. Dozens of warming centers, regional and local shelters were opened serving over 1,600 citizens and their pets. The MA National Guard provided lodging for hundreds of utility workers at the MA Military Reservation in Bourne. As the storm waned, the Civil Air Patrol provided aerial photography of the coastal damage. The MANG provided aerial reconnaissance for Senior Commonwealth Officials. Rapid Assessment Teams were dispatched to coastal areas to get initial on-the-ground 'windshield assessments' of damages. During the storm, MASS211 received over 4,400 telephone calls from citizens with inquiries concerning shelter locations to power restoration.

The SEOC had a strong 24/7 Media presence of the major television affiliates, radio stations and print outlets. Literally hundreds of interviews were conducted via telephone with national, international and local Media. MEMA maintained a strong Social Media presence throughout the Blizzard. MEMA sent out over 200 Tweets dealing with topics such as safety tips, the driving ban and power outages. There were over 100 posts on the MEMA Facebook page. The MEMA Webpage posted storm tips in six languages and provided a Gas Station Locator to help provide fuel availability information for the citizens of Southeastern MA. Through Ping4alerts!, three key messages were also sent out. The public responded to the Social Media efforts, as MEMA saw a 16% growth in Twitter followers to 16,500, a 27% growth in Facebook fans to 12,000 and the MEMA webpage experienced 33,000 views per day, when it normally sees fewer than 1,000 hits on an average day. Clear Channel provided access to seven electronic billboards to provide warnings and safety tips before, during and after the storm. The SEOC stood down to Level IV (Monitoring) at 6:00 P.M. on February 12th, as MEMA initiated the Clean-up and Recovery process.

OUTREACH FOR BLIZZARD DAMAGE

Following submission of Initial Disaster Assessments (IDAs) from local Emergency Management Directors throughout the state, MEMA has developed a clearer vision of the amount and types of specific impacts and costs of the Blizzard of 2013. Beginning the week of March 11th, MEMA, in conjunction with FEMA and various state agencies, will send Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) Teams into the field to insure that various state and county thresholds are reached. Reaching these specific thresholds will allow MEMA to go forward with the potential of a Federal Disaster Declaration. How the process works, as MEMA proceeds, is available at www.mass.gov/mema under "Winter Storm Disaster Assistance Process".

SEOC ACTIVATED FOR MARCH 7-8 STORM

Following a number of days of NWS conference calls and outreach to local officials, the State Emergency Operations (SEOC) was activated at Level II (Full) at 4:00 A.M. on Thursday March 7 in preparation for the approaching winter storm. More details concerning the Response and Recovery efforts taken for this statewide Snowstorm and the impactful Coastal Flooding will be detailed in next month's *MEMA REPORTS*.

HURRICANE SANDY AID PROGRAM PROGRESSES

The Public Assistance (PA) program for communities impacted by Hurricane Sandy has been made available to Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Nantucket, Plymouth and Suffolk Counties. FEMA has held a number of 'kick-off' meetings with the impacted communities to develop 'project worksheets' to move the process forward. Under this PA Program, affected local governments, state agencies and various eligible private non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for federal funds to be reimbursed for 75% of the approved cost of protective measures, storm-related overtime costs for first responders,

clearing debris from public roads and public property, and repairing, replacing, restoring or reconstructing damaged public facilities and infrastructure.

MEMA ASSISTS IN HULL

MEMA staff, led by Region II personnel, was on-scene at the Hull Water Treatment Plant flooding event from the wee hours of February 28th through March 3rd. MEMA's Mobile Emergency Operations Center (MEOC) and accompanying tent were utilized as Command Support and work space throughout the event. MEMA's tent was also utilized for a Rehab (warming) and Feeding Center for the workers. Multiple state agencies assisted Hull officials in dealing with the 32 feet of water in the plant, making it inoperable. In addition to the MEOC and onsite personnel, MEMA provided resource support; MassDOT: high capacity pumps; MWRA: technical support; DFS: their Incident Support Unit (ISU); MSP: escorts for heavy equipment into the area and DEP: environmental issues.

TIER II MANAGER

MEMA, in coordination with the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), has recently purchased the on-line 'Tier II Manager'. MEMA anticipates utilizing this new, web-based hazardous chemical reporting system in 2014. MEMA is currently developing its outreach and implementation strategy regarding use of this system and more information will be made available soon. To learn more about the Tier II Manager visit the IDSi International website at: http://www.idsiinternational.com/TIER_II_MANAGER.html.

MEMA PASSES EMAC BATON TO IOWA

As part of MA's transition from the past year's lead Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) state, the MEMA Training & Exercise and Operations Units supported the EMAC transition exercise in the role of Simulation Cell (SimCell). During the exercise the trainers taught how the National Coordinating State (NCS) leads the Operations Function within the EMAC system during activations as well as the numerous responsibilities that are part of that role. There was also a 'Lessons Learned' briefing from the outgoing NCS Leader, Allen Phillips, MEMA Ops Manager. The EMAC National Coordinating State Transition Exercise was invaluable in providing the state of Iowa EMA Operations Staff with the insight on the types of issues they may encounter as NCS over the upcoming year. They are now better prepared and look forward to facilitating resource support to EMAC member states during catastrophic disaster events. The transition will take place in March. Phillips will serve a year as 'Past Chair', as MA will step in and cover the NCS role if/when Iowa has their own disasters. More on EMAC: <http://www.emacweb.org/>.

NUCLEAR SAFETY NEWS

The Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station federally graded exercise will be conducted on March 21st. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Framingham, MEMA Region II EOC in Bridgewater, the five local EOCs located within the Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ): Carver, Duxbury, Kingston, Marshfield and Plymouth, the three Reception Center communities' EOCs: Braintree, Bridgewater and Taunton, the Joint Information Center (JIC) in Plymouth, and the Emergency Operations Facility (EOF) in Plymouth will all be participating. The various entities will include MEMA, FEMA, MA Department of Public Health (MDPH), MA Department of Transportation (MassDOT), MA Department of Mental Health (MDMH), MA State Police (MSP), MA Army National Guard (MANG), US Coast Guard (USCG), local governmental, public safety and public health officials, as well as the utility.

The Commonwealth's involvement in the Vermont Yankee Combined Functional Exercise on February 13th was extremely limited due to the ongoing involvement by state and local entities dealing with the aftermath of the February 8th Blizzard. On May 8th, MA will take part in the final Combined Functional Exercise, concluding the cycle with the Federally Graded VY Exercise on June 5th.

FUKISHIMA CANCER STUDY RELEASED

After two years of study, the World Health Organizations (WHO) has released its study of the cancer impacts of the Fukushima Nuclear Accident which occurred following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in March of 2011. Attached is the WHO link with details of the study: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2013/fukushima_report_20130228/en/index.html#.

MEMA STAFF UPDATE

Carrie Clifton recently joined the MEMA staff as the Headquarters Front Desk Administrative Assistant. Nathan Dentzau and John Pozark have also been recently added as MEMA Dispatchers in the Communications Unit. On March 1st, Paul Fox, a student at the Mass Maritime Academy, completed his internship in the MEMA Operations Department. Paul was able to work in the SEOC and gain valuable experience. In addition, he worked on MEMA's Commodity Plan. MEMA Ops will have an additional intern for 16 weeks starting in April.

RMS MOBILE VERSION AVAILABLE

The Resource Management System (RMS) mobile version is fully operational and ready for use on mobile devices. The mobile website provides a streamlined version of RMS, for use in the field, to search for and request resources. The RMS, which was developed with financial support from the state's Homeland Security Councils and the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security (EOPSS), is a secure web-based system that may be used by all cities and towns, state agencies and other emergency management partners including public works, public health and emergency medical services, to facilitate mutual aid across the Commonwealth. MEMA urges all cities and towns, agencies and organizations to take full advantage of RMS by using it as an internal inventory management system and to facilitate emergency and non-emergency mutual aid support. The address for the mobile version is <<https://memarm.chs.state.ma.us/Mobile/Login.aspx>>. Please contact your respective MEMA Regional Office to request additional assistance, if needed.

TRAINING UPDATE

Year-to-date, an additional 277 individuals attended 21` different classes receiving training through MEMA in the following subject areas: *ICS-100 ICS-300, ICS-400, Resource Management System (RMS) Basic, RMS System Administration, and Hazardous Materials Awareness*. For additional information regarding MEMA Training and future classes, go to www.mass.gov/mema.

AL ROKER, READY.GOV PROMOTE PREPAREDNESS

TV Weatherman Al Roker has teamed up with FEMA's Ready Program to promote Preparedness in a Public Service Announcement: <http://allday.today.com/news/2013/02/12/16928248-al-roker-reveals-3-steps-to-weathering-a-disaster>.

DHS HIGHLIGHTS EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN CYBERSECURITY

On February 13th the President signed an [Executive Order \(EO\) on Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity](#) and a [Presidential Policy Directive \(PPD\) on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience](#). These actions will strengthen the security and resilience of critical infrastructure against evolving threats through an updated and overarching national framework that acknowledges the increased role of Cybersecurity in securing physical assets. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) actively collaborates with public and private sector partners every day to help prevent and respond to attempted disruptions to the Nation's critical cyber and communications networks. For additional information, go to <http://www.dhs.gov/news/2013/02/13/dhs-highlights-efforts-strengthen-cybersecurity-nations-critical-infrastructure>.

HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM

MEMA and the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) continue to make available post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding resulting from the Presidential disaster declaration for the 'October 2011 Severe Snow' event. This HMGP funding is available to all communities in the Commonwealth that meet the sub-applicant and project eligibility requirements. The federally-funded HMPG provides significant opportunities to reduce, minimize or eliminate potential damages to public, tribal, and private non-profit infrastructure from natural hazard events. Funding for hazard mitigation plans and projects can reduce overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing the reliance on taxpayer-funded federal disaster assistance for disaster recovery. Funding reimbursement is typically 75% federal share, 25% non-federal match of eligible project costs. 'In-kind' services are allowable as part of the non-federal match. To be eligible for FEMA HMGP hazard mitigation project grants, applicants must have a locally-adopted and FEMA-approved Local Natural Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan at the time of official FEMA grant award. Formal grant briefings and technical assistance opportunities are available prior to application deadline. The State-established deadline for complete, full HMGP grant applications is: Friday March 15, 2013 by 3:00 p.m. The 'Disaster Recovery & Mitigation' section of the MEMA website at www.mass.gov/mema can provide additional hazard mitigation grant funding availability information.

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

MEMA continues to encourage all communities and governmental entities to take advantage of the opportunity to opt into the Statewide Public Safety Mutual Aid Agreement and the Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement program. To date, 234 entities are on board with the Statewide Public Safety Mutual Aid Agreement and 162 have signed onto the Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement. See the list at www.mass.gov/mema. Local officials with any questions regarding the Agreement should contact their MEMA Regional Office or Allen Phillips, MEMA Operations Manager at (508) 820-1426 or allen.phillips@state.ma.us.

DOWNLOAD PING4ALERTS! APP

An excess of 60,000 citizens have downloaded the FREE mobile app, *ping4alerts!*. This state-of-the-art tool significantly enhances MEMA's ability to communicate with the public during emergencies. In a matter of minutes, MEMA has the ability to highlight an area on a map and then push text messages, text files, image files and audio messages to Smartphones that have the app and are located within that area. National Weather Service severe weather alerts are also pushed to phones with the app in affected areas. The app is now available for iPhone and Android Smartphones. MEMA continues to encourage all Smartphone users to visit the following website: www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp for additional information and to download this mobile app. This is a resource that MEMA will be sharing broadly with other state agencies, as well as local public safety, public health and emergency management officials in order to ensure that the public receives warnings about imminent or occurring emergencies and information that will help them take appropriate steps to mitigate their risk.

NEDRIX WINTER CONFERENCE

On March 27, the NorthEast Disaster Recovery Information X-Change (NEDRIX) will be hosting their annual Winter Conference at Liberty Mutual, 20 Riverside Road, Weston, MA. The focus of the conference will be to explore how to take an active role in cultivating success in future Emergency Response and Crisis Management, particularly in relation to Cyber Prevention and Response, Workplace Violence, and Hurricane Sandy Lessons Learned. The conference objectives are: Educate attendees by providing interesting and useful educational content; Give attendees the opportunity to network with industry professionals with related interests; and Inspire attendees to take what they have learned, and actively pursue opportunities and leadership roles geared towards the creation of

resilient organizations and communities. For additional details on location, directions, and registration, visit <http://nedrix.com/upcoming.php>.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADDRESSES

MEMA has streamlined its Social Media addresses: Twitter is www.twitter.com/MassEMA; Facebook is www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA; and YouTube is www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA. And do not forget to download the *ping4alerts!* app.

FOLLOW MEMA UPDATES ON FACEBOOK (www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA) & TWITTER, (www.twitter.com/MassEMA), AS WELL AS ON THE MEMA WEBSITE at www.mass.gov/mema.

