



# 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](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

---

January 5, 2015

Volume 13 Issue 12

## **WINTER HEATING SAFETY**

The recent extremely cold temperatures have demonstrated the potential dangers associated with utilizing 'alternative' methods to heat your home, particularly if you lose your primary heating source due to a power outage or to lack of fuel. Home fires occur more in winter than in any other season. Many of these home fires are caused by the improper use of space heaters, as well as fireplaces and wood stoves. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) advises the following heating and carbon monoxide tips to help stay safe this winter season:

### **Portable Heaters**

- Only use portable heaters from a recognized testing laboratory.
- Make sure the heater has an automatic shut-off so if it tips over, it shuts off.
- Keep anything that can burn such as bedding, clothing and curtains at least three feet away from the heater.
- Plug portable heaters directly into outlets. Never plug a portable heater into an extension cord or power strip.
- Turn heaters off when going to bed or leaving the room.

### **Fireplaces**

- Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace to prevent embers or sparks jumping out.
- Do not burn paper in the fireplace.
- Put the fire out before going to sleep or leaving the home.
- Put ashes in a metal container with a lid, outside, at least three feet from the home.

### **Wood Stoves**

- Have the chimney inspected and cleaned each year by a professional.
- Make sure the wood stove is three feet away from anything that can burn.
- Do not burn paper in the wood stove.
- Put the fire out before going to sleep or leaving the home.

### **Carbon Monoxide**

- When using heaters that require fuel, install a carbon monoxide detector.

## **IMPORTANTANT EMERGENCY INFORMATION DISTRIBUTED TO EPZ COMMUNITIES**

### **2015 Emergency Public Information Calendars**

Emergency public information calendars have been mailed to the residents of the 18 MA communities located within the Emergency Planning Zones (EPZs) for the three nuclear power stations. The 2015 calendar is an important part of emergency planning, containing information that will better prepare individuals and families to respond to an emergency associated with a nuclear power plant or any other emergency within the community, including hurricanes, flooding, chemical spills or large fires. The Commonwealth's EPZ communities are: **Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station** – Duxbury, Kingston, Plymouth and portions of Carver and Marshfield; **Seabrook Nuclear Power Station** – Amesbury,

---

Charles D. Baker, Governor  
Karyn E. Polito, Lt. Governor

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

Merrimac, Newbury, Newburyport, Salisbury and West Newbury; **Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station** – Bernardston, Leyden, and portions of Colrain, Gill, Greenfield, Northfield and Warwick. Those who do not receive their calendars are encouraged to contact their local Emergency Management Director, a MEMA Regional office in Bridgewater, Tewksbury, or Agawam, or the Nuclear Preparedness Department at MEMA HQ in Framingham. Electronic and audio versions of the calendar are available on the MEMA website at [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

### **MEMA Makes Information for Visually Impaired Available**

MEMA has again updated and distributed Compact Discs (CDs) containing important emergency information for visually impaired MA residents living within 10 miles of a nuclear power plant. The CDs contain important information in the event of an emergency at Pilgrim, Seabrook or Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Stations. Copies of the CDs can be borrowed from libraries and local Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) in each of the Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) towns, MEMA HQ in Framingham, MEMA Regional Offices in Tewksbury, Bridgewater and Agawam, and the Talking Information Center (TIC) in Marshfield. The Talking Information Center has been an important partner in producing and distributing this vital information. The information is similar to that contained in the Emergency Public Information Calendars distributed annually to residents and businesses within the three nuclear stations' EPZ communities. More is available at [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

### **MEMA STAFF HONORED WITH MASSPORT LOGAN STARS AWARD**

MEMA Communications & Interoperability Manager Steve Staffier and MEMA Training & Exercise Coordinator Jim McLoughlin were recently recognized by the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) for their continued support and assistance with both Communications/Interoperability and NIMS/ICS training, exercises and workshops at Logan Airport. Massport Fire Chief Donahue nominated the pair to be recognized for the auspicious *Logan Stars Award*. He explicitly highlighted their work on the 2014 *Operation Ready Exercise*. The award honors non-Massport employees working at or doing business with Boston Logan International Airport whose actions epitomize the highest level of customer service. The honor was created by Massport's Aviation Department in 2008 to give Logan's nearly 11,000 employees the opportunity to recognize their peers for superior individual achievement.

### **GOVERNOR RECEIVES WINTER STORM COORDINATION AND RESPONSE BRIEFING**

On December 15, then Governor-elect Baker and members of his staff received a 90-minute briefing on Winter Storm Coordination and Response in the Commonwealth held at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Framingham. MEMA Director Kurt Schwartz led the discussion which covered topics that included monitoring forecasts & assessing potential impacts; coordination with public utilities; information sharing/situational awareness; pre-storm conference calls; monitoring school closings; state office closings; coordination with federal agencies, City of Boston and local communities; public messaging; pre-deployment of assets; decisions on state emergency declarations, and storm operations at the SEOC. Leaders of various key state agencies also made presentations regarding their specific roles during storm operations. They included MA Department of Transportation (MassDOT), MBTA; Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR); Department of Public Utilities; MA State Police, Department of Education, and the Human Resources Division (HRD).

### **TRAINING UPDATE**

During the past month, 149 individuals attended 7 different classes, receiving training through MEMA in the following subject areas: *ICS-300*, *ICS-400*, *Basic Public Information Officer* and *EOC Management & Operations*. For the year 2014, 2,466 students have attended MEMA sponsored classes. For additional MEMA Training opportunities, go to [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

## **MEMA STAFF UPDATES**

Congratulations to Jaci Hamel, who has been promoted to the new position of Operations Unit Supervisor. In addition, Lauren Sardella has joined MEMA's Communication Unit as a Dispatcher.

## **FIELD DEPLOYMENTS**

During the month of December, MEMA utilized Mobile Emergency Operations Center 2 and personnel to support multiple events across the Commonwealth:

- MEOC 2 supported the holiday tree lighting and parade in Taunton with a unified command platform and communications.
- MEOC 2 supported the First Night fireworks and events in downtown Northampton with a unified command platform and communications.

## **TIER II MANAGER SYSTEM**

MEMA and the Massachusetts SERC strongly encourage use of the on-line Tier II Manager System for Tier II Reporting Year 2014. MEMA has posted two documents on its website ([Tier II Manager Registration](#) and [Tier II Reporting Year 2014](#)) which provide additional information: <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/emergency-info/haz-mat/serc/>.

## **NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER ISSUES STORM SURGE WATCH & WARNING GRAPHIC**

Beginning with the 2015 Hurricane Season, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will offer an experimental storm surge watch/warning graphic to highlight those areas along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts of the U.S. that have a significant risk of life-threatening inundation by storm surge from a tropical cyclone. The new graphic is designed to introduce the concept of a watch or warning specific to the storm surge hazard, which is often the greatest threat to life and property from a tropical cyclone. In addition, while most coastal residents can remain in their homes and be safe from a tropical cyclone's winds, evacuations are generally needed to keep people safe from a storm surge. Having separate warnings for these two hazards should provide emergency managers, the media, and the general public better guidance on hazards they face when tropical cyclones threaten. For more, go to [http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/news/20141211\\_pa\\_surgeWarningGraphic.pdf](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/news/20141211_pa_surgeWarningGraphic.pdf).

## **DHS CYBER STUDENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

The Department of Homeland Security has announced the launch of the 2015 Secretary's Honors Program Cyber Student Volunteer Initiative for current two- and four-year college students. Beginning in the spring of 2015, more than 75 selected students will complete volunteer assignments supporting the DHS cyber mission at department field offices in over 50 locations across the country. Through this initiative, student volunteers currently pursuing an undergraduate degree related to cybersecurity will gain invaluable hands-on experience and exposure to the cybersecurity work performed across DHS. In addition to supporting activities such as cyber threat analysis, digital forensics, network diagnostics and incident response, selected students will participate in mentoring and professional development events with DHS managers and senior leaders. For more information about the Cyber Student Volunteer Initiative, including the selection and application process, visit <http://www.dhs.gov/secretarys-honors-program>.

## **DISASTER.DATA.GOV HAS BEEN LAUNCHED**

[Disasters.data.gov](http://Disasters.data.gov) is a public resource to foster collaboration and the continual improvement of disaster-related open data, free tools, and new ways to empower survivors, first responders, and all levels of government with critical information and resources. The [White House Innovation for Disaster Response and Recovery Initiative](#) was launched by the Administration in response to Hurricane Sandy. Over the last two years the initiative has hosted workshops that have resulted in major commitments from the public and private sector at this year's [Demo Day](#), the first [hardware](#)

[hackathon for disaster preparedness held in support of the Initiative](#), and numerous workshops, and we are thrilled to share [disasters.data.gov](https://disasters.data.gov) as the Initiative's first major online presence.

- [“Types of Disasters” Landing Pages](#): Categorizes open data sets, apps, and tools to make relevant resources easier to find.
- [Apps & Tools](#): The portal includes apps and tools that can be deployed at minimal cost by first responders, emergency managers, volunteer organizations, survivors, and other stakeholders.
- [Call to Action: Data Stewards](#): Datasets relevant to disaster preparedness (including prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery) have traditionally been closed by default to the public. To help empower the community with information that can improve community resilience, the Administration is working with stakeholders to open a series of disaster-related datasets from all levels of government and the private sector. Learn more [here](#) and email [disastertech@ostp.gov](mailto:disastertech@ostp.gov) if you are interested in participating.
- [Innovator Challenge](#): The first in a series of Innovator Challenges that highlight pressing needs from the disaster preparedness community is being unveiled. The inaugural challenge focuses on a need identified from firsthand experience of local emergency managers, responders, survivors, and Federal departments and agencies, asking innovators: “How might we leverage real-time sensors, open data, social media, and other tools to help reduce the number of fatalities from flooding?”
- [Join the “Innovation for Disasters” Movement](#): Whether you visit the site as a tech entrepreneur, developer, hardware tinkerer, journalist, researcher, government official, first responder, survivor, or potential volunteer, there are numerous ways to join the Innovation for Disasters movement and get involved.

### **MEMA’S MISSION STATEMENT**

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA is committed to an all hazards approach to emergency management. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, and with the private sector - - individuals, families, non-profits, and businesses - - MEMA ensures the Commonwealth’s ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, coordinating response operations, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover.

### **FOLLOW MEMA AND GET IMPORTANT EMERGENCY INFORMATION:**

**TWITTER** - ([www.twitter.com/MassEMA](https://www.twitter.com/MassEMA)), **FACEBOOK** - ([www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA](https://www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA)), **YouTube** - ([www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA](https://www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA)), the **MEMA WEBSITE** - [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema), **READY MASSACHUSETTS** - [www.mass.gov/mema/ready](http://www.mass.gov/mema/ready). And do not forget to download **Massachusetts Alerts** app – ([www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp](http://www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp)).

