



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.

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WINTER PREPAREDNESS

Last winter was a sound reminder of the importance of preparing for extreme weather conditions. A winter storm in New England can range from moderate snowfall over a few hours to a Nor'easter, bringing blizzard conditions with blinding wind-driven snow that lasts several days. People can become stranded in their automobiles or trapped at home, without utilities or other services. The aftermath of a winter storm can have an impact on a community or the entire region for days, weeks or even months. Storm effects, in New England, can include large snow accumulation, extremely



cold temperatures, heavy, wet snow or icing on trees and downed power lines, roof collapses, coastal flooding and beach erosion. Winter storms can also be deceptive killers because most deaths are indirectly related to the actual storm. The major causes of storm-related deaths include automobile or

other transportation accidents, exhaustion and heart attacks caused by overexertion, expiring from freezing temperatures and asphyxiation from improper heating sources. Additionally, house fires occur more frequently in the winter which can be partially attributed to the lack of instituting proper safety precautions when using alternate heating sources, like unattended fires and space heaters. As with most potential disasters: preparedness, monitoring the media for information and utilizing common sense is key to minimizing the danger to you and your family. Tips on how to best protect yourself, family, pets and property this winter season can be found on the MEMA website at <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/ready-massachusetts/winter-storms.html>.

QUIET HURRICANE SEASON CONCLUDES

The predicted below-average 2015 Atlantic Hurricane Season ended quietly on December 1. During this season we saw 11 named storms, 4 hurricanes – 2 of which were major (Category 3+). The average is 12 named, 4 hurricanes with 3 major. Several factors likely contributed to the seasons quiet. Perhaps the primary reason tropical cyclone activity was limited was the strong presence of El Nino. El Nino's are caused by warmer than normal water in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, which suppresses storm activity in the Atlantic due to increases in vertical wind shear (the change in wind direction with height in the atmosphere). No major hurricanes made U.S. landfall in 2015. The last major hurricane to make U.S. landfall was Wilma (2005), which means that the U.S.

has gone 10 years without landfall by a major hurricane. Since 1878, the U.S. has never had a 10-year period without a major hurricane landfall. Hurricane Sandy was a reminder that lower category hurricanes and tropical storms can still have significant impacts on communities. For more information about how to prepare for next year's hurricane season, go to: INSERT LINK For more information about the 2015 Atlantic Hurricane Season, go to <https://source.colostate.edu/below-average-2015-atlantic-hurricane-season-correctly-predicted-by-csu-forecasters/>.

FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD

The Disaster Assistance and Snow Assistance process for local communities, state agencies and eligible private-non-profits for the January 26-28 Blizzard continues to advance. As of the end of November, 1,293 projected Project Worksheets (PWs) were being processed from 650 eligible applicants. The total project costs reflected in these PWs may reach close to \$160 million. To date, FEMA has obligated nearly \$24M in federal assistance to local communities, state agencies and private non-profits. FEMA and MEMA project that 90% of the federal disaster assistance will be obligated by the end of March, 2016. Details regarding the Disaster Declaration and reimbursement process for communities, state agencies and eligible private non-profits are available at www.mass.gov/mema.

TRAINING UPDATE

During the month of November, MEMA's Training and Exercise Unit hosted 765 students in 8 different classes: ICS-100/NIMS-700, ICS-300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents, ICS-400, HURRIPLAN Resilient Building Design for Coastal Communities, Benefit Cost Analysis: Overview, and the 2015 Leadership During a Crisis Conference. So far this year, 2,367 individuals have received training through MEMA programs. For additional information about MEMA Training opportunities go to: www.mass.gov/mema.

SEABROOK NUCLEAR EXERCISE

On November 18, MEMA staff participated in an exercise of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station Emergency Plan. MEMA and New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, along with the MA Department of Public Health, MA Department of Transportation, MA State Police, MA National Guard, Mass 2-1-1, American Red Cross, FEMA and Seabrook Station, successfully conducted the practice exercise. Local officials from Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) communities (Amesbury, Salisbury, Newbury, Newburyport and West Newbury) again showed strong participation. This exercise is one of a number of 'practice' exercises that will take place in advance of Seabrook's federally graded exercise scheduled for early 2016.

FIELD DEPLOYMENT HIGHLIGHTS

During the month of November, MEMA utilized its two Mobile Emergency Operations Centers (MEOCs), Mobile Communications Support Trailer (MCST), Mobile Field Tent (MFT), caches of radios and personnel to support multiple events across the Commonwealth:

November 1: MEMA supported the South Shore Half Marathon in Norwell. The MEOC was utilized as the Unified Command Center (UCC) for local agencies including fire, police, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management, race officials and other law enforcement staff. MEMA also provided the MFT to function as a medical tent near the finish line. Communications support was provided to enhance interoperability between all disciplines operating at the race.

November 15: MEMA provided 25 cache radios to the Lee Police Department to support event coordination and communication capabilities across law enforcement for their 5k Sweater Run. This race is held to benefit the Special Olympics.

November 29: MEMA supported MA Department of Conservation & Recreation's (DCR) controlled deer hunt at Blue Hills. The MEOC was utilized by the UCC, including several state agencies and partners managing the hunt. Over 100 trails and several miles of roadway were monitored by the UCC.

HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM

November 23, 2015 marked the state's deadline for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) 4214 applications from cities, towns and state agencies. MEMA received 39 sub-applications requesting a total of \$34.9M (\$22M federal share) for this post-disaster funding. Projects under consideration range from generators, multi-hazard mitigation planning, localized and non-localized flood risk reduction, infrastructure retrofits, and structural elevations. Based on FEMA's 6-month HMGP estimated ceiling for HMGP 4214, the state is expecting to have nearly \$18.4M (federal share) available to make sub-awards. Over the next few months, the Interagency Review Panel will review these applications for completeness, feasibility, cost-effectiveness, etc. and then formally review and rank them. The committee will make recommendations to the MEMA Director and the DCR Commissioner and the final list of recommended applications will be sent to FEMA for their review and approval.

TIER II REPORTING MEMA has, per Governor's Executive Memorandum, been designated as the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) in MA. For the 2015 Tier II Reporting Year, the MA SERC will require filers to submit reports via the Tier II Manager System. At this time, MEMA is requesting that filers register to use the Tier II Manager System. This change would only affect how Massachusetts Tier II filers submit reports to the Massachusetts SERC; this does not and will not change any Massachusetts EPC and/or Fire Department Tier II reporting requirements. For additional information, please review MEMA's Tier II Reporting: Reporting Year 2015 memo which is on MEMA's website at <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/emergency-info/haz-mat/serc/>.

NEDRIX – ACP PROGRAM MEETING

The Northeast Disaster Recovery Information X-Change (NEDRIX) will host the next Association of Contingency Planners (ACP) meeting on Wednesday, December 9 at 3:45-6:00 p.m. at Liberty Mutual, 175 Berkeley Street, Boston Conference Center South, Rooms 21 and 22. The presentation is entitled, 'Business Continuity in times of Civil Unrest', by Steven Crimando, Principal at Behavioral Science Applications. Steve is a subject matter expert and trainer specialized in human factors/behavioral sciences in homeland and corporate security, violence prevention and intervention, emergency and disaster management. This 75-minute presentation will help leaders and decision-makers form accurate behavioral assumptions for managing the impact of collective actions directed at their communities and organizations. RSVPs are necessary to ensure adequate accommodations. Register here at michael.spano@us.pwc.com. Additional details are available on the ACP website: <http://www.acp-international.com/v2-about/about-membership>.

ISO-NE EXPECTS ADEQUATE POWER CAPACITY

On November 9, ISO-NE (Independent System Operator of New England) held their annual Pre-Winter Conference Call Briefing for utilities, State Emergency Management Agencies, Governors' Offices, Public Utility Commissions & Energy Offices and Power Reliability Councils. It was reported that there will be adequate power capacity for the region this winter, barring unprecedented extreme weather or unanticipated major impacts on fuel supplies. Because of continued concerns over natural gas pipeline constraints, ISO New England will administer another Winter Reliability Program that will help protect overall power system reliability. ISO-New England is the independent, not-for-profit company authorized by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to perform **three critical, complex, interconnected roles** for the region by ensuring the constant availability of competitively-priced wholesale electricity, through Grid Operation, Market Administration and Power System Planning. See the full ISO-NE's Winter Outlook press release at http://www.iso-ne.com/static-assets/documents/2015/12/20151201_winter_outlook_release_final.pdf.

AMERICA'S PREPARATHON ACTIVITIES

FEMA Region 1 is interested in identifying one or two communities in MA who are interested in participating in the America's PrepareAthon program by developing a preparedness activity for one of

the following six natural disasters: winter storm, flood, tornado, wildfire, hurricane, and earthquake. If interested, FEMA Region I can support your preparedness efforts for your weather related activities. For additional information, visit the website: [America's PrepareAthon! website](#) and contact Sara Varela, Regional Preparedness Liaison at (703) 713-8819; Sara.varela@icfi.com.

FEMA'S IPAWS CONDUCTS FIRST SUCCESSFUL BILINGUAL TEST ALERT

On November 17 at 4:20 p.m. EST, FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), in voluntary coordination with state broadcaster associations, emergency management agencies, and state emergency communications committee chairs from AZ, MN, NV, NM, UT, and WI, issued the first bilingual alert message via the Emergency Alert System (EAS) from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) conference exhibit hall. A full message text and true voice spoken word audio messages were sent, received, and broadcast by participating broadcast stations in both English and Spanish, demonstrating the capacity to convey multilingual public alerts and warnings to the diverse communities served. FEMA Deputy Administrator Joseph Nimmich and John Russell, president of IAEM-USA, activated the IPAWS Supported State/Regional Tests (ISSRT). A minute after initiating the test, more than 1,400 EAS devices in the six-state area retrieved the message. Information included the expanded alert text, plus audio in both languages. Some stations automatically aired the Spanish version, followed by the English version, while others stations coupled with specific software, enabled specific language selections for each individual program stream. Looking to 2016, FEMA plans to continue regional National Periodic Tests (NPT) throughout the first half of the year. New Federal Communications Commission rules regarding EAS participant action upon receipt of an NPT message will go into effect July 30, 2016. For more information about IPAWS, visit www.fema.gov/ipaws.

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), FACEBOOK - (www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA), YouTube - (www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA), the MEMA WEBSITE - www.mass.gov/mema, READY MASSACHUSETTS - www.mass.gov/mema/ready. And do not forget to download Massachusetts Alerts app - (www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp).

