



# Jefferson County Homeland Security & Emergency Management

<http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/homeland-security-and-emergency-management>

**December 2019**

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Stephen S. Allen, Director  
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## Jingle All The Way



officially starts on Saturday, December 21st.

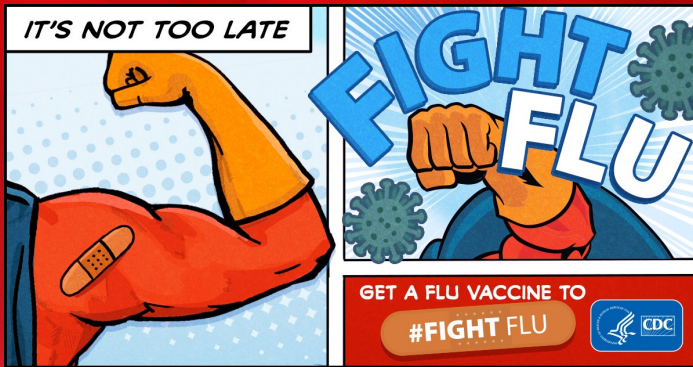
Many families have traveled to have their fill of turkey and are quickly planning for more holiday festivities. Stockings are being hung by the chimney with care, halls are being decked, and the sound of holiday classics are filling the air.

Did you know, the commonly heard "Jingle Bells" tune has some controversy surrounding its creation? The exact location of where the song was first written is debated. A plaque commemorating the song's origin can be seen in Medford Massachusetts. Here, individuals believe that James Pierpont wrote the song in 1850 while sitting in a tavern. However, people in Savannah Georgia contest this, insisting that the song was written in their town in 1857. They believe that Pierpont wrote the anthem and led the first sing along at a local church where his brother was pastor.

"Jingle Bells" wasn't even the song's original name. Instead, Pierpont released the song under the title "One Horse Open Sleigh". The name was later changed in 1859. Regardless of the location it was written or the original name, this holiday classic has become the most commonly sung song around the holiday season. This holiday classic was even the first song to be broadcast from space just nine days before Christmas in 1965. Two astronauts aboard Gemini 6 used a harmonica and bells to broadcast the classic tune.

In this edition of the Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management's (JCHSEM) newsletter, we will be discussing National Influenza Vaccination Week, Winter Safety, and Resolve to be Ready. We will also be sharing tips to help keep you and your family safe this holiday season.

# National Influenza Vaccination Week



National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) takes place December 1-7, 2019. NIVW was established by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in 2005. This week aims to highlight the importance of flu vaccination during the holiday and winter season.

For the many people who have suffered from the flu, the flu isn't just a bad cold. The flu can cause serious health complications such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, and even death. With family gathering for the holidays, flu activity increases. The CDC recommends that everyone over the age of 6 months gets a flu shot.

There are many benefits to receiving a flu shot this season, including:

- The flu vaccination can keep you from getting sick from the flu. From 2016-2017 the influenza vaccination prevented an estimated 5.3 million influenza illnesses.
- The flu vaccination can reduce the risk of flu-associated hospitalization. In 2016-2017 an estimated 85,000 flu-related hospitalizations were prevented.
- The flu vaccine can help protect both a pregnant woman and her baby. The mother passes the antibodies to the baby, boosting his/her resistance to the flu even after birth.
- Getting vaccinated for the flu can also help reduce the severity of flu symptoms if you do get sick. In 2018 vaccinated hospital patients were 59 percent less likely to be admitted to the ICU with flu symptoms.

Flu vaccines are updated each year to help better protect from the particular strains of the virus that are expected to circulate the United States. There are several options for the flu vaccine available this season. Standard flu shots are given by needle and are recommended for individuals 18-65 years old. High dose flu shots are given to those 65 and older who are at a higher risk of the flu. For those allergic to eggs, which are used in the production of the vaccine, there is a special shot. There is also a live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) that is given as a nasal spray.



Although the CDC recommends to vaccinate against the flu by the end of October, it's not too late to get your flu shot. Receiving the flu vaccine not only protects you, but others around you, including those who are more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies, young children, older people, and people with certain chronic health conditions. The flu is unpredictable, the best way to protect yourself is to get your flu shot today!



# Holiday Safety



The holiday season has officially started! Throughout the next month families and friends will continue to gather for holiday festivities. During this time, it is important to ensure you and your family are safe. From kitchen mishaps to lighting catastrophes, the possibility of an emergency increases during the holiday season.

For many people, decorating is one of the best ways to get in the holiday spirit. In fact, many of you may already have had the decorations up since the beginning of November! When decorating, it is important to keep these safety tips from the National Safety Council in mind:

- Only use indoor lights indoors, and outdoor lights outdoors.
- Replace lights that have broken sockets, frayed wires, or loose connections.
- Be sure to follow all directions on packaging of your lights and never plug more than the allotted amount into a socket.
- When using a ladder be sure to choose the right one. Practice ladder safety and prevent falls by wearing slip resistant shoes, having someone supporting the bottom of the ladder, and securely fastening straight and extension ladders to a proper upper support.
- Keep potentially poisonous plants such as mistletoe and holly berries out of the reach of children.
- If using an artificial tree be sure to check that it is fire resistant.
- If using a live tree, make sure to water it everyday to prevent it from drying out. Be sure to place your tree at least 3 feet away from any heat source.
- Be sure to turn off all lights and other decorations before you go to bed or leave the house.

From ham and turkey to cookies and pies, food is a major part of many families' celebration. It is important to keep your holidays happy by handling food safely. Food poisoning is no way to celebrate! Be sure to wash your hands frequently when handling food and always keep raw meat away from produce. Ensure your food is cooked properly by using a meat thermometer and store all leftovers promptly to prevent them from spoiling. Visit [foodsafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov) for more information on food safety.





When choosing gifts for the little ones this season, be sure they don't have the potential to cause injury. Toys should always be age appropriate. It is recommended that toys for children under 3 have no small parts that could pose a choking hazard. For children under 10, avoid toys that have to be plugged into an electrical outlet. When giving scooter, bicycles, or other riding toys, be sure the child also has the appropriate safety gear such as a helmet. Gifts and toys should bring joy this holiday season not injury.

Travel is a major part of the holiday season, is your car ready? Be sure to get your car serviced before any long distance travel. Oil changes and tire rotations are an important part of a maintenance cycle to help keep your car running smoothly. Consider installing winter tires on your vehicle to increase traction during winter weather. Another way to help prepare you for holiday travel is to create an emergency supply kit for your car. Be sure to include jumper cables, ice scraper, cell phone charger, a blanket, and a map. In addition, always make sure your gas tank is full.

Flickering lights, falling snow, and festive celebrations are all hallmarks of the holiday season. However, some are also hallmarks for home fires. Fifty-seven percent of home decoration fires were started by candles. Lighting and electrical equipment were responsible for 44% of Christmas tree fires. Cooking equipment was involved in 19% of home fires. During the holiday season it is important to follow these safety tips provided by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to help you put a freeze on winter fires:

- Consider using flameless candles for your holiday celebrations.
- If you do use real candles, use sturdy candle holders and keep them at least 12 inches away from anything that could burn.
- Make sure your Christmas tree is at least 3 feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces, radiators, and heat vents.
- Stay in the kitchen while frying, grilling, or boiling food and keep anything that can catch fire such as oven mitts and kitchen towels away from the stovetop.
- Dispose of your Christmas tree promptly after the holiday. A dry Christmas tree poses a serious fire hazard.

The holidays should be filled with joy, hope, and fun! Ensure your family is safe this holiday season. From everyone at JCHSEM, we wish you the merriest of holidays and the happiest of new years!





# Winter Safety



The winter season officially starts on Saturday December 21st. JCHSEM joins the National Weather Service (NWS) in recognizing the importance of winter weather safety. Many parts of West Virginia have already seen snow and winter weather conditions. The winter season can bring rain, ice, sleet, and snow. These storms can be unpredictable and wreak havoc on communities, causing power outages, deteriorating road conditions, and car accidents.

During this time, it is essential to know the terms used to describe changing weather conditions as they impact what actions you must take to stay safe. Tune into local media weather forecasts and heed any watches or warning issued by the NWS.

- Winter Storm Advisory: Winter weather is expected, exercise caution! Light amounts of wintery precipitation or patchy blowing snow will cause slick conditions and could affect travel if precautions are not taken.
- Winter Storm Watch: Snow, sleet or ice is possible, be prepared! Confidence is medium that a winter storm could produce heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain and cause significant impacts.
- Winter Storm Warning: Snow, sleet, or ice is expected, take action! Confidence is high that a winter storm will produce heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain and cause significant impacts.

One of the best ways to prepare yourself is to create a basic emergency supply kit. This kit should have at least a three-day supply of food, water, medication, and any other essential supplies your family may need in the event of any hazard, power outage, or storm when travel is not possible. During the winter months it is important to winterize this kit by adding blankets, coats, and scarfs to help everyone stay warm.

Many people use a fireplace or wood burning stove to help heat their home. A dirty chimney can cause a chimney fire that can damage structures, destroy homes, and cause serious injury. Fireplaces and wood stoves are designed to contain a wood fire. It also helps contain wood burning by-products such as unburned wood particles, gases, and hydrocarbons. The resulting residue from this is called creosote which can build up and cause a chimney fire. The National Chimney Safety Institute encourages individuals to have their chimney cleaned and inspected by a certified chimney sweep. Visit the Chimney Safety Institute of America's Website at <https://web.csia.org/search> to search for a certified chimney sweep near you.





## Holiday and Winter Pet Safety



From gifts of new chew toys to play towers, pets are a part of many families' holiday celebrations. Our pets are generally inquisitive and love being part of the action. But do you know how to keep your pet safe this holiday season? Many common items we associate with the holidays can be very unsafe for your animals. Be sure they stay safe this holiday season by understanding what items to keep away from your pets.

Your Christmas tree may look like a giant play ground to your pet. From sniffing to batting at ornaments pets may think the tree was put there just for them. But the tree could also cause harm to your pet. Stagnant tree water, especially water with fertilizer, can cause your pet to get sick. In addition, glass ornaments that break can injure paws.

Many of the plants we bring into the house during the holiday season can be toxic to your animals. Lilies, often present in bouquets, are one of the most toxic plants for cats. Just one or two bites of this plant can cause severe kidney failure and death. Holly is also a toxic plant to both dogs and cats. The spiny leaves and toxic substances present in the plant can cause gastrointestinal upset. Kissing under the mistletoe is seen in all the Christsmas movies, but letting your pet eat it could cause severe gastrointestinal irritation resulting in ataxia, seizures, and even death. Poinsettias are also mildly toxic to your pets. The milky white sap contains chemicals that, if ingested in large quantities, can cause skin and stomach irritation. If you have any of these plants in your house, be sure they are out of reach of your pets. If you believe your pet has ingested any of these plants and you see symptoms such as vomiting, shaking, or excessive drool, call and get your pet to the vet immediately.

There are several holiday foods we enjoy that could be harmful to your pets. Chocolate, alcohol, and bones should all be kept away from your furry friend. Xylitol, a sugar-free sweetener found in candies, sauces, and chewing gum, can cause liver failure. Some of your favorite decorations pose a threat to your pets. String, ribbon, and tinsel may be great for decorating, but if ingested can wrap around your pet's digestive track, causing serious issues.

The temperatures are dropping and the snow word has already been mentioned. We all know the dangers of hot weather for our furry friends. But what about cold weather?



The truth is, if it's too cold for you outside, it's probably too cold for your pet too! So keep your animals inside. If left outdoors, pets can freeze, become disoriented, stolen, or injured. In addition, be sure to wipe your dog's paws when they come inside. Many of the ice-melting products used contain chemicals that can be toxic to your dog.

Many families will be welcoming new pets into their home this holiday season. If you or your family are getting or receiving a pet this holiday season please remember that this animal is now a part of your family. The furry friend you receive now relies on you. Allow the time it takes for your new friend to adjust to your home. Also, please remember that this new companion is a forever friend, not just a Christmas present. We all love our pets! So be sure to keep them safe during all the holiday festivities this year.

## **Resolve to Be Ready**



The new year is nearly upon us. Another year has come and gone and many people will begin making their resolutions for the year 2020. This year, make a resolution to be prepared! Create an emergency supply kit for you and your family, make a family communication plan, and practice your plans. Each of these steps will help prepare you and your family for any hazard or disaster that may occur.

An emergency supply kit is a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Try to assemble your kit well in advance of an emergency. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take only essentials with you during an emergency. You may not have time to search or shop for the supplies you need.

You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantities. You should have a kit for every member of your family, including your pets. These kits should have enough supplies to last for at least 72 hours. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster but they cannot reach everyone immediately. Basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewer, and communications may be cut off for days or even weeks. Your supply kit should contain items to help you manage during these outages.

Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes, so it is important to have a plan in place that is communicated to each member of your family. The first step in creating a plan is to discuss the following five questions with your household: (1) How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings? (2) What is my shelter plan? (3) What is my evacuation plan? (4) What is my family communication plan? (5) What is my family reunification plan? Discussing these questions will help you begin to plan for disasters and emergencies.

Be sure to plan for the specific needs of your family. Do you have children, elderly, or pets? Each of these individuals will require different items in the event of a disaster. Resolve to be Ready this year!



# Disaster Exercise Series 2019

The West Virginia Region 3 Functional Exercise will be held on Tuesday, December 10 at Hardy County OEM/911. This exercise, entitled “Smoking Mountains”, aims to validate plans and test operational capabilities. The scenario of this exercise involves a terrorist organization that has orchestrated simultaneous arsons of forested areas in Western Maryland and the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Due to drought conditions in the area, these fires have spread and pose serious threats. In addition, there are several related and unrelated hazardous materials incidents that have occurred, exhausting available resources in the area.



The core capabilities of this exercise include: environmental response/health and safety, scene security, protection and law enforcement, operational coordination, and public information and warning. The objectives of the exercise are as follows:

- Activate the Incident Command System (ICS) and define the incident response structure; use the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) established procedures to guide initial actions; establish incident end goals; define operational periods and operational period objectives; disseminate information to achieve coordination through the ICS; and revise objectives, strategies, and tactics as dictated by incident circumstances.
- Assess the ability to ensure health and safety of the public, workers, emergency responders, and the environment from all hazards in support of responder operations to effected communities.
- Ensure the capacity for timely communication in support of security, situational awareness, and operations by any and all means available, among and between affected communities in the impact area.
- Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities.
- Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat of hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance available, as appropriate.

An effective exercise program is an essential component of our preparedness. Exercise program management involves a collaborative approach that integrates resources, organizations, and individuals in order to identify and achieve program priorities. If you or your organization is interested in participating in the 2019 exercise series visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/epadhsem-2019-smoking-mountains-functional-exercise-tickets-70331907890> to sign up, or contact us at [jehsem@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:jehsem@jeffersoncountywv.org).



# Need Training?

Emergency management is a constantly-changing field. Whether it is keeping up with the latest technology, to working with stakeholders to develop plans, conducting successful floodplain management, performing damage assessments, managing debris after a disaster, helping our communities to recover, or just learning the fundamentals, there are plenty of options available to you. Here are some great opportunities for training that you may or may not know about:

**West Virginia Military Affairs and Public Safety's Training Center, CourseMill.** If you are involved in emergency management in West Virginia, you can set up your free account at <http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov/dmapscm6/home.html>.

Here is a listing of upcoming state sponsored training opportunities. These courses are free to attend, however, registration is required.

## **Basics of Floodplain Management– A356**

**Date:** December 4, 2019

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Location:** 1340 Smith Street, Charleston, WV

**Course Description:** The Basics of Floodplain Management is a free State sponsored comprehensive one day, hands on, participatory training course on program aspects of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) presented five times annually (in various WV locations) for Floodplain Administrators and Local officials of our Counties and Communities. Class size is limited to thirty-first come- first served. Class content is geared toward newly appointed Floodplain Administrators; however, ALL are welcome. The focus is to update NFIP Program Elements for permitting and enforcement of FEMA minimum development standards and regulations for established flood zone areas. This one-day course is taught by WV NFIP staff utilizing PowerPoint modules to cover topics including floodplain mapping, flood insurance, legal issues, permitting, and other aspects of the NFIP program. As well, daylong attendance at this course will serve to satisfy the six-hour annual training in floodplain management requirement as stipulated by WV State Code § 15-5-20 A.

## **SIRN Armada Programming Course**

**Date:** December 11, 2019

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. - TBD

**Location:** Tygrat Valley Regional Jail

**Course Description:** Course instructor is Dave Saffel. Course is not limited.

Prerequisites: Students must already be a certified programmer on another programming platform currently used by SIRN subscriber units OR file a NEW Programmer Application (available at [www.sirn.wv.gov](http://www.sirn.wv.gov) under TRAINING) and receive a background check prior to being enrolled in the course.

Students must bring their own laptop. Students must already have Armada software installed and operational. SIRN will NOT be providing copies of software. Student is responsible for any cabling and necessary equipment to participate in the class. There is NO COST to attend the course. Any travel costs incurred by attendees are the responsibility of the attendee or sponsoring agency. (TRAVEL/FOOD/LODGING IS NOT INCLUDED)

To Register for these FREE Classes, go to: <http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov/dmapscm6>. Once you set up your account, you can log on and look at the list of available courses taught in West Virginia.

For questions about the course or registration, contact [Shawn.D.Dunbrack@WV.gov](mailto:Shawn.D.Dunbrack@WV.gov) or call 304-558-5380.

# Online FEMA Training

FEMA also offers a number of online courses at <https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx>. From this training portal, anyone can take their online independent study courses for free. There are over 100 courses to choose from. You can also browse the schedules and information about their on-campus resident courses for those who are involved in emergency management at the federal, state, local or tribal governments.

Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management recommends the following FEMA Independent Study Courses. These courses are free and available online. After the course is completed an online test can be taken. Once the test is passed you will receive a completion certificate.

## IS 111 - Livestock in Disasters

**Course Description:** This course combines the knowledge of livestock producers and emergency managers to present a unified approach to mitigate the impact of disasters on animal agriculture. The objectives of this course are to learn understand issues that arise when disasters affect livestock, determine a farm's susceptibility to hazards, and identify actions to reduce economic losses and human and animal suffering in disasters.

**Primary Audience:** Emergency management officials and livestock owners.

**Course Length:** Approximately 4 hours

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-111.a>

## IS 394 - Protecting Your Home or Small Business From Disaster

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to provide a foundation of knowledge that will enable participants to: Describe different types of natural disasters, Describe hazards that pose a risk to their home or small business, Explain how protective measures can reduce or eliminate long-term risks to their home and personal property from hazards and their effects, Explain how protective measures for small businesses secure people, business property, and building structures and prevent business loss from a natural disaster.

**Primary Audience:** The primary audience for this course is small business owners, homeowners, and individual citizens. It is presented in a non-technical format and includes protective measures that can reduce the negative consequences of disasters on homes or small businesses.

**Course Length:** Approximately 10 hours

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-394.a>

## IS 909 - Community Preparedness: Implementing Simple Activities for Everyone

**Course Description:** Community members are the key to our Nation's preparedness and resilience. The purpose of this course is to present a model program for community preparedness. In addition, resources materials are available to help organizations conduct simple preparedness activities for everyone. By the end of this course, participants will be able to identify the definition of preparedness, describe the role of individual and household preparedness, and describe the purpose of community based preparedness activities.

**Primary Audience:** The primary audience for this course is the whole community including emergency management personnel and representatives of faith-based and nonprofit organizations.

**Course Length:** Approximately 1 hour

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-909>



# **Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management-Committees**

## **Steering Committee, John Sherwood, Chair**

The Steering Committee works with the JCHSEM Director to guide the activities of JCHSEM. A fourteen-member Steering Committee is made up of public and private representation. JCHSEM is a Department within the Jefferson County Commission, who has overall responsibility for the department and its employees. The Jefferson County Commission appoints all members to the steering committee. This committee meets following the Local Emergency Planning Committee Meetings held on the third Wednesday of February, April, June, August, October, and December. Please call the office for exact dates, locations, and times.

## **Public Awareness, Education and Training Committee, Paula Marrone-Reese, Chair**

Any interested person can serve on this committee. The Public Awareness, Education and Training Committee is responsible to communicate the organization's activities to the public and to build support for JCHSEM's programs. They work with the Director and other staff to keep the entire community focused on the objectives of JCHSEM, the opportunities for additional involvement and support by updating citizens and businesses about what the partners are doing and how the community will and is benefiting from these efforts. Additionally, they are responsible to assist the program manager in setting up speaking engagements and public awareness events. This committee meets monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 0830 in the EOC at 28 Industrial Blvd., Kearneysville, unless otherwise announced.

## **All Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee, Mason Carter, Chair**

Any interested person may serve on this committee. The All Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee examines the community's risks and vulnerability to all hazards and assess the community's vulnerability to those risks. An All Hazards Mitigation Plan was completed and adopted by the Jefferson County Commission, all Jefferson County municipalities, WVHSEM, and Federal Emergency Management Agency in July, 2003. The plan was updated in 2008 and 2013. The 2013 Plan was approved by WVDHSEM and FEMA in June 2013 and the 2018 plan was approved in November 2018.

## **Counter Terrorism Committee, Stephen Allen, Director, Chair**

Membership to this sub-committee of the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Planning Committee is limited to members of law enforcement, emergency management, homeland security, emergency communications, Red Cross, schools, health care, fire companies, ambulance authority/EMS, and government, due to sensitive homeland security issues. The committee works on issues of planning and training for counter terrorism or human-caused disasters. Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at the EOC at 28 Industrial Blvd., Kearneysville, unless otherwise announced.

If you are interested in joining any of our committees, contact Stephen Allen at [sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org)

Times, dates, places may need to be changed due to inclement weather, scheduling conflicts, or EOC activation. If you have questions, call the JCHSEM office at (304) 728-3290.

**Jefferson County  
Homeland Security and  
Emergency Management**

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**PUBLIC SAFETY;  
PUBLIC TRUST**



The Jefferson County Commission's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (JCHSEM) is responsible for the coordination of preparedness, planning, response, recovery and mitigation of

disasters and large emergencies in Jefferson County, West Virginia. Volunteer and community participation is encouraged and welcome. We currently have committees on All Hazards Mitigation Planning; Public Awareness, Education and Training; Counter Terrorism; and a Steering Committee that acts as an advisory group.

We are responsible for the Citizen Corps/CERT, StormReady, Community Rating System, Resilient Neighbor Network and Project Impact programs. JCHSEM is also responsible for the Jefferson County R.A.C.E.S. group.

## **December Meetings & Events**

- Sterling National Weather Service calls every Monday at 9 a.m.
- Weather calls every Monday and Friday at 10 a.m. with State EOC and National Weather Service
- December 4 - Department Head Meeting
- December 10 - Region III Functional Exercise, Moorefield WV
- December 11 -Public Awareness Committee Meeting
- December 18 - Local Emergency Planning Committee Meeting
- December 24 & 25 - Christmas Holiday, County Offices Closed
- December 30 & January 1 - New Years Holiday, County Offices Closed