



# Jefferson County Homeland Security & Emergency Management

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

**March 2020**

## St. Patrick

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Many American's know St. Patrick's day as a celebration filled with four leaf clovers, Irish themed foods, and the color green. But do you know the history of this Irish holiday?

St. Patrick's Day falls on

March 17th each year. The patron Saint celebrated on this day wasn't born in Ireland, he was born during the 5th Century in Britain. When he was 16, he was captured by Irish raiders and spent 6 years as a slave in Ireland.

Patrick later escaped captivity but returned to Ireland years later after converting to Christianity. He spent his remaining years working as a missionary, bringing Christianity to the people of Ireland. St. Patrick passed away on March 17th, 461. He was later honored as the patron St. of Ireland for his work explaining Christianity.

The legend of the Shamrock came from St. Patrick's explanation of the Holy Trinity. He used the three leaves to explain each part of the trinity. As a result, people in the 18th Century began to wear Shamrocks to show their Irish Christian pride. This later developed into the tradition of wearing green clothing on St. Patrick's Day.

Celebrating St. Patrick's Day with parades actually started in America in the mid 1740's but really took hold after thousands of Irish men and women migrated to America after the great potato famine in Ireland in 1840. The New York parade is one of the largest and longest St. Patrick's Day parades. Nearly 200,000 people participate in the parade and over 3 million spectators come to enjoy the festivities.

In this edition of the Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management's (JCHSEM) newsletter, we will be discussing the "It's Not Luck" Campaign, Severe Weather Awareness, Tsunami Awareness Week, and Flood Safety. You will also find information on upcoming local, online, and state sponsored trainings.

# It's Not Luck Campaign



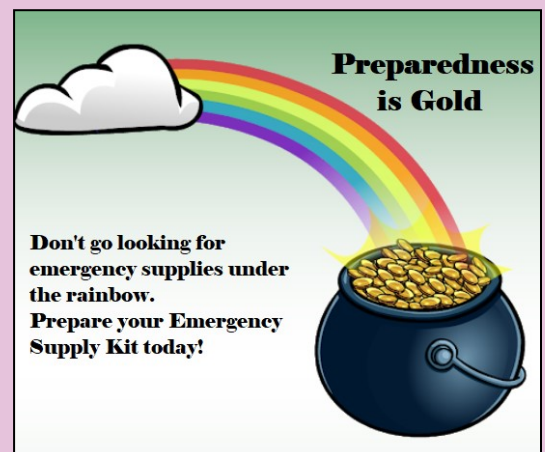
Have you ever heard the phrase “luck has nothing to do with it?” Well, that couldn’t be more true when it comes to preparedness. Ensuring you and your family are ready no matter what may happen, can help protect you when a disaster strikes. Preparing takes action, not luck. Be prepared today by heeding the tips found below.

Have an emergency supply kit on hand. A supply kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Creating an emergency supply kit is an important step in preparing yourself for an emergency. Many people already have items that make up an emergency supply kit in their home. Everyone’s supply kit will look different depending on the specific needs of your family. These are some of the items commonly found in an emergency supply kit:

- Food and water. Have one gallon of water per person per day. Don’t forget to include water for your pets.
- Battery or hand-powered radio and a NOAA Weather radio.
- First aid kit with gloves, bandages, gauze, antibiotic ointment, tweezers, scissors, and over the counter medications such as ibuprofen.
- Flashlight.
- Toiletries such as shampoo, conditioner, soap, and other hygiene items.
- Sleeping bag and blankets.
- Cash.
- Important documents.
- Supplies for children such as coloring books, games, books, etc.
- Pet supplies such as food, water, toy, bowls, etc.

It is also important to stay informed. When a disaster strikes it is important to keep up to date on accurate information. Jefferson County’s Community Alert System, Nixle, is a great way to stay informed. You can sign up by texting your Jefferson County Zip code to 888777 or by visiting <https://local.nixle.com/register/>. You can also download the FEMA app to receive real time alerts from the National Weather Service. This app also contains emergency safety tips, shelter information, and other online disaster assistance information.

Remember to be prepared for power outages. Power outages can be caused by a variety of issues including heavy wet snow or high winds. Prepare yourself by including flashlights and extra batteries in your supply kit. Include a kit in your vehicle to be prepared when your are on the road. And finally, be a good neighbor. Share your preparedness plans with your neighbors so they can get involved too and remember to check on older adults and young children who are especially vulnerable during emergencies and extreme weather. For more information on how to



prepare you and your family for a disaster visit <https://www.ready.gov/>.

## Severe Weather



Severe weather effects the entire nation and can strike at any time. Thunderstorms, tornadoes, hail, flooding, and winter storms can produce hazardous conditions that can impact travel, communications, and power systems. During the month of March, we encourage residents to prepare for the possibility of severe weather. Severe Weather Awareness Week in West Virginia takes place March 16 - 20. Below, you will find tips and tricks that will help keep you and your family safe, no matter what the weather may bring.

The first step in any preparedness plan is to know your risks. The possibility for specific weather events varies depending on your place of residence. For example, the risk of a hurricane is larger in North Carolina than it is Kentucky. This however, does not mean the risk is zero. For more information on specific hazards and risks for Jefferson County you can refer to our Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The purpose of this mitigation plan is to identify risks and vulnerabilities from hazards that affect Jefferson County. This helps to prevent or reduce the loss of life and injury and to limit future damage costs by developing methods to mitigate or eliminate damage from various hazards. This plan is a great resource to help you address the specific risks and hazards for our county. A full copy of this plan can be found at <http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/home/showdocument?id=16326>.

The next step of preparedness is to make an emergency plan. Be sure to have an evacuation plan, a shelter plan and a family communication plan. It is important to include every member of your family in the creation of this plan. After you have discussed your emergency plan with your family, and considered the specific needs of your household, you should fill out a family emergency communication plan. A downloadable plan can be found at: [https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1530826217620-10775bfcb5d7600be8e6b88308b24d8c/P1094\\_CreateYourFamilyEmergencyCommunicationPlan\\_070318.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1530826217620-10775bfcb5d7600be8e6b88308b24d8c/P1094_CreateYourFamilyEmergencyCommunicationPlan_070318.pdf). You can fill this form out or use it as a template to create your own.

Finally, make an emergency supply kit. This should include all the items you may need to sustain you and your family for 72 hours. Do you require items for children or the elderly? Do you need to include medication in your kit? Do you have pets? Make sure to consider the specific needs for each member of your



household. For more information on severe weather preparedness visit <https://www.ready.gov/severe-weather>.

# Flood Safety



Flooding can happen anywhere, anytime. In Jefferson County, we have multiple water sources that increase our risk of flooding including the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. As seen in the past, these rivers can rise quickly, causing flooding to roads, homes, and businesses. It is important to know what to do before, during, and after a flood to keep you and your family safe.

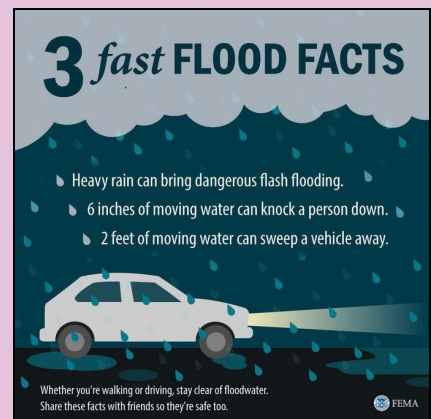
Floods can happen gradually or can occur within minutes. It is important to prepare before a flood event, it can save a life and give you piece of mind. Here are some tips to help you prepare:

- Know the risk of flooding to your home, business, or workplace.
- Create a communication plan for you and your family.
- Assemble an emergency supply kit.
- Sign up for notifications to ensure you are informed in the event of an emergency.
- Prepare your home, family, and pets for the potential of flooding and the possibility of an evacuation.
- For more information on preparing before a flood visit <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-before>.

During a flood, water levels and the rate the water is flowing can change quickly. Be vigilant in monitoring the conditions around you. Listen to local television, news, and radio to stay up to date on flood information. Evacuate immediately when water starts to rise. Don't wait until it's too late! Avoid flood waters at all costs. Don't walk through flood waters. It only takes 6 inches of moving water to knock you off your feet. If you are trapped by moving water, move to the highest point and call 911 if possible. Do NOT drive into flooded roadways or around a barricade as the water may be deeper than it appears and can hide hazards such as sharp objects, washed out road surfaces, electrical wires and chemicals. A vehicle caught in swiftly moving water can be swept away in seconds. It only takes 12 inches of water to float a car or small SUV. Just 18 inches of water can carry away large vehicles.

After a flood be sure to listen to local officials for information on when it is safe to return to your home. Also, be sure to avoid flood waters and disaster areas and always heed road closure and other cautionary signs. For more information visit <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-after>.

Always heed any watches, warnings, or advisories issued by the National Weather Service. Residents of Jefferson County are encouraged to sign up for Nixle. This service provides accurate and timely information on any severe weather hazards. To sign up for the opt-in service go to <https://local.nixle.com/register/> or, on your phone, text your Jefferson County zip code to 888777.





For any severe weather event it is essential to know the terms used to describe changing weather conditions, as they can impact what actions you must take to stay safe.

- ◇ **Flood Advisory: *Be Aware.*** A Flood Advisory is issued when a specific weather event that is forecasted to occur may become a nuisance. A Flood Advisory is issued when flooding is not expected to be bad enough to issue a warning. However, it may cause significant inconvenience, and if caution is not exercised, it could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property.
- ◇ **Flood Watch: *Be Prepared.*** A Flood Watch is issued when conditions are favorable for a specific hazardous weather event to occur. A Flood Watch is issued when conditions are favorable for flooding. It does not mean flooding will occur, but it is possible.
- ◇ **Flash Flood Warning: *Take Action!*** A Flash Flood Warning is issued when a flash flood is imminent or occurring. If you are in a flood prone area move immediately to high ground. A flash flood is a sudden violent flood that can take from minutes to hours to develop. It is even possible to experience a flash flood in areas not immediately receiving rain.
- ◇ **Flood Warning: *Take Action!*** A Flood Warning is issued when the hazardous weather event is imminent or already happening. A Flood Warning is issued when flooding is imminent or occurring.

## National Tsunami Awareness Week

A Tsunami is defined as a long high sea wave caused by an earthquake, submarine landslide, or other disturbance. Tsunami Awareness Week takes place during different times around the Nation. Although the risk of a tsunami for Jefferson County is extremely low, it is important to know and understand how to prepare for a tsunami in the event you are vacationing and a tsunami becomes a threat.

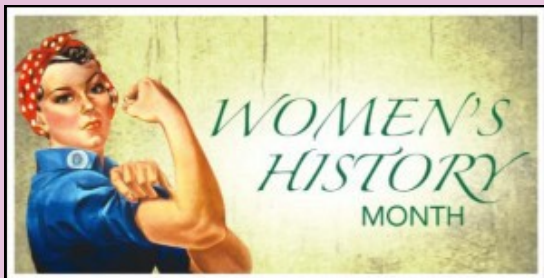
If you are in an area that is at high risk for a tsunami:

- Drop, cover and hold on to protect yourself during an earthquake
- When the shaking stops, gather the members of your household and review your evacuation plan. A tsunami may be coming within minutes.
- If you hear an official tsunami warning or detect signs of a tsunami, evacuate at once. A tsunami warning is issued when authorities are certain that a tsunami threat exists. Take your animals with you.
- Get to higher ground as far inland as possible. Watching a tsunami from the beach or cliffs could put you in grave danger. If you can see the wave, you are too close to escape it.
- Stay away until local officials tell you it is safe.



For more information on Tsunami preparedness visit <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/tsunami.html>.

## Women's History Month



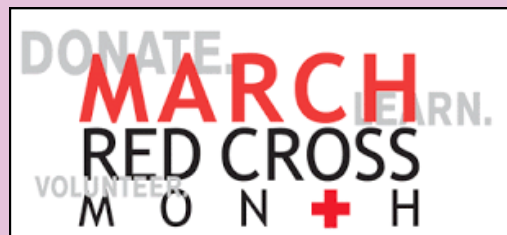
Women's history month began as a celebration in 1978 in Sonoma County California. In 1981 Congress passed a bill to recognize the week of March 7th 1982 as Women's History Week. Then, in 1987 Congress passed a bill to declare the entire Month of March as Women's History Month. Finally, in 1995, President Bill Clinton issued a proclamation declaring March officially as Women's History Month.

This year's theme for the month is "Valiant Women of the Vote" and honors the people who fought to win suffrage rights for women.

The goal of Women's History Month is to "amplify women's voices to honor the past, inform the present and inspire the future." During this time many communities will host celebrations to honor women. In addition, the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress host exhibits dedicated to the documentation of women's history. The National Women's History Museum in Alexandria Virginia will host several events to educate, inspire, and empower both the women of history and the future.

## Red Cross Month

March is recognized as Red Cross Month. The American Red Cross was founded on May 21, 1881 and has become a well known organization around the world. The American Red Cross is a critical community partner in Jefferson County. The agency helps residents during many types of disasters including sheltering and feeding citizens.



The Red Cross serves in five critical areas nationally: people affected by disaster in Americas, support for members of the military and their family, blood collection and distribution, health and safety education, and international relief and development. However, they can not continue to do what they do without the support of people like you. If you would like to volunteer with the American Red Cross visit <https://www.redcross.org/> to find out all the ways your support can make a difference, or call your local Red Cross Chapter to speak to someone about volunteer opportunities in your community today!

## Disaster Exercise Series 2020



West Virginia Region 3 will begin an exercise series in the coming months. Over the course of the year a Table top, Functional, and Full Scale exercise will be held. An effective exercise program is an essential component of our preparedness as it validates plans, tests operational capabilities, maintains leadership effectiveness, and examines ways to utilize the whole community. 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 2020 exercise series, please contact Stephen Allen at: [sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org).

# Emergency Operations Center Training

Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management held their annual Emergency Operations Center Training on Thursday, February 27th, 2020. Individuals from various community departments and organizations attended. Continued training such as the EOC training prepares us for any disaster that may happen within our county. We thank all of the volunteers who attended the training for their continued support and dedication to Jefferson County's preparedness efforts.



## Media Day

Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management hosted Media Day on Friday, February 28th, 2020. Media Day involved local representatives from the media as well as public information officers, or those serving in a public information role, to come together for a meet and greet. This event provided an opportunity for these individuals to get to know each other better, share contact information, and discuss the importance of emergency public information. This event also provided an opportunity to discuss the roles and procedures of public information during a critical incident while also working towards the common goal of keeping the general public safe and informed during an emergency event. Continued networking and training between public information officers and media representatives creates continuity and communication during a disaster or other event. We thank everyone who attended and their continued dedication to emergency preparedness and public information.



# 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.

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

## **Incident Tactical Dispatcher Training**

**Date:** March 17–20, 2020 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Charleston Metro 911 Center

**Course Description:** An Incident Tactical Dispatcher is a specially trained individual qualified to operate away from the dispatch center in a command post, base camp or at the incident scene. Incident Tactical Dispatchers leverage the multi-tasking, communication, accountability and documentation skills of successful Tele communicators to provide public safety communications expertise and support at planned events and extended incidents such as hostage situations, multi-alarm fires, search and rescue operations, bombings, and active shooter incidents. Incident Tactical Dispatchers may support the Communications Unit as a single resource or as part of an incident tactical dispatch team. This course provides a basic understanding for the roles and responsibilities of an incident tactical dispatcher working in a tactical environment.

## **Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device Detection PER-312**

**Date:** March 25, 2020, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Monongalia County Health Department, Morgantown, WV

**Course Description:** The Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) Detection course provides participants with the knowledge and skills to successfully and safely inspect for identify and/or respond to vehicle-borne explosive threats. This is a one day, in-person instructor-led training covering the following topics:

- Vehicle-Borne explosive threat
- Identifying Vehicle-Borne explosives
- Assessment of vehicles and occupant behavior
- Vehicle inspection activity

## **Incident Command System Summary for Executives and Senior Officials - G402**

**Date:** March 27, 2020 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** South Branch Inn, 4 Heritage Circle, Romney WV 26757

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to provide an orientation to executive and senior officials (including elected officials, city/county managers, agency administrators, etc.) to the Incident Command System (ICS). It covers what ICS is, organization and features, discuss the unified command and area commands, coordination and incident management assessment and ICS preparedness.

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.

# Upcoming Local Training

Jefferson County and the surrounding areas are hosting numerous community training within the coming months. These trainings can help increase your knowledge of emergencies and preparedness.

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

## SKYWARN Flooding Course

**Date:** March 25, 2020

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**Location:** Berkeley County Sheriffs Office, 510 South Raleigh St. Martinsburg, WV 25401

**Course Description:** By attending this course, you will be trained by NWS personnel to recognize different types of flooding, learn how it is forecast and what causes it to occur, and get an in-depth look into the science of hydrology. At the end of the course, you will be assigned a SKYWARN® spotter number which will be maintained in the official database at the NWS in Sterling. You will also be directed on how to report this vital weather information.

**Registration:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/skywarn-flooding-berkeley-county-wv-tickets-91232967261>

## SKYWARN Basics Course

**Date:** April 8, 2020

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Location:** Independent Fire Company, 200 W 2nd Ave, Ranson, WV 25438

**Course Description:** Do you have an interest in weather? Would you like to be able to help your local National Weather Service office by providing the ground truth on the atmosphere that we observe from radar, satellites and various reporting stations? Then consider attending the SKYWARN® program Basic course. By attending this course, you will be trained by NWS personal to recognize features associated with developing, mature, and dissipating thunderstorms which cause hazardous weather such as lightning, flooding, hail, tornadoes and downbursts. The attendee will also learn basics about winter weather and tropical hazards. At the end of the course, you will be assigned a SKYWARN® spotter number which will be maintained in the official database at the NWS in Sterling. You will also be directed how to report this vital weather information.

**Registration:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/skywarn-basics-jefferson-county-wv-tickets-94859931609>

## Community CPR

**Date:** May 2, 2020

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

**Location:** Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency, 419 Sixteenth Avenue Ranson, WV, 25438

**Registration:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-cpr-course-tickets-88040344039> (If registration is full or closed please contact JCESA at (304) 728-3287 to see if there is a spot available)

## Community First Aid

**Date:** May 2, 2020

**Time:** 1:00 p.m.

**Location:** Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency, 419 Sixteenth Avenue Ranson, WV, 25438

**Registration:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-first-aid-tickets-88042590759> (If registration is full or closed please contact JCESA at (304) 728-3287 to see if there is a spot available)

# 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 907 - Active Shooter: What You Can Do

**Course Description:** All employees can help prevent and prepare for potential active shooter situations. This course provides guidance to individuals, including managers and employees, so that they can prepare to respond to an active shooter situation.

**Primary Audience:** All individuals, including managers and employees.

**Course Length:** Approximately 1 hour

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-907>

## IS 914 - Surveillance Awareness: What You Can Do

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to make critical infrastructure employees and service providers aware of actions they can take to detect and report suspicious activities associated with adversarial surveillance.

**Primary Audience:** The course is designed for critical infrastructure owners and operators, employees, and service providers as well as those with critical infrastructure protection duties and responsibilities at the State, local, tribal, and territorial levels.

**Course Length:** Approximately 1 hour

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-914>

## 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, 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  
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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.

## March 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
- March 10 - Counter Terrorism Committee Meeting
- March 11 - Public Awareness Committee Meeting
- March 25 - SKYWARN Flooding Course, Berkeley County
- March 31 - IT Meeting