



February 2022

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From the Director's Chair

Hello and welcome to the February 2022 edition of the Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's (JCOHSEM) newsletter. We are providing the full newsletter since we are at the beginning of a new month.

The newsletter includes information from Ready.gov about Winter Safety, Earthquake Awareness and Flooding. Details about COVID-19 are not included in this edition but will be published Thursday, February 3. As a result, the information will be based on a seven day accumulation of data.

So, this edition is full of details about three topics which we hope you find informative.

We also wish you a Happy Presidents' Day and Happy Valentine's Day!

Winter Weather

Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion. Winter storms including blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice and high winds.

A winter storm can:

- Last a few hours or several days.
Cut off heat, power and communication services.
Put older adults, children, sick individuals and pets at greater risk.

How to Protect Yourself from Winter Weather

IF YOU ARE UNDER A WINTER STORM WARNING, FIND SHELTER RIGHT AWAY

Winter Storm Warning

Issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 12 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin.

Winter Storm Watch

Alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm.

## Winter Weather Advisory

Issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet which will cause significant inconveniences and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to life-threatening situations.

## Know Your Risk for Winter Storms

Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms. Listen for emergency information and alerts. Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Weather Radio](#) also provide emergency alerts.

## Preparing for Winter Weather

Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups. Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Remember the needs of your pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights. If you are unable to afford your heating costs, weatherization or energy-related home repairs, contact the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#) for help.

## In Case of Emergency

Be prepared for winter weather at home, at work and in your car. Create an emergency supply kit for your car. Include jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water and non-perishable snacks. Keep a full tank of gas.

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Sign up for [email updates](#) about coronavirus from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Learn the [symptoms of COVID-19](#) and follow [CDC guidance](#). If you are able to, set aside items like soap, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfecting wipes, and general household [cleaning supplies that you can use to disinfect surfaces you touch regularly](#).

## Stay Safe During Winter Weather

**Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows. Never heat your home with a gas stovetop or oven.**

- Stay off roads if at all possible. If trapped in your car, then stay inside.
- Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, then wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack by avoiding overexertion when shoveling snow and walking in the snow.

## Learn the sign of, and basic treatments for, frostbite and hypothermia.

**Frostbite** causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers and toes.



- **Signs:** Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin.
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad.

**Hypothermia** is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency.

- **Signs:** Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech or drowsiness.
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.



## **Earthquake Awareness Month**

An earthquake is a sudden, rapid shaking of the ground caused by the shifting of rocks deep underneath the earth's surface. Earthquakes can cause fires, tsunamis, landslides or avalanches. While they can happen anywhere without warning, areas at higher risk for earthquakes include Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Washington and the entire Mississippi River Valley.

### Prepare Before an Earthquake

**The best time to prepare for any disaster is before it happens.**

- Practice **Drop, Cover, and Hold On** with family and coworkers.
- **Make an Emergency Plan:** Create a family emergency communications plan that has an out-of-state contact. Plan where to meet if you get separated. Make a supply kit that includes enough food and water for several days, a flashlight, a fire extinguisher and a whistle.
  - Being prepared allows you to avoid unnecessary excursions and to address minor medical issues at home, alleviating the burden on urgent care centers and hospitals.
  - Remember that not everyone can afford to respond by stocking up on necessities. For those who can afford it, make essential purchases and slowly build up supplies.
- **Protect Your Home:** Secure heavy items in your home like bookcases, refrigerators, water heaters, televisions and objects that hang on walls. Store heavy and breakable objects on low shelves.
  - Consider making improvements to your building to fix structural issues that could cause your building to collapse during an earthquake.
  - Consider obtaining an earthquake insurance policy. A standard homeowner's insurance policy does not cover earthquake damage.

## Stay Safe During

- If you are in a car, pull over and stop. Set your parking brake.
- If you are in bed, turn face down and cover your head and neck with a pillow.
- If you are outdoors, stay outdoors away from buildings.
- If you are inside, stay and do not run outside and avoid doorways.

## Protect Yourself During Earthquakes

### 1. Drop (or Lock)

Wherever you are, drop down to your hands and knees and hold onto something sturdy. If you're using a wheelchair or walker with a seat, make sure your wheels are locked and remain seated until the shaking stops.

### 2. Cover

Cover your head and neck with your arms. If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl underneath it for shelter. If no shelter is nearby, crawl next to an interior wall (away from windows). Crawl only if you can reach better cover without going through an area with more debris. Stay on your knees or bent over to protect vital organs.

### 3. Hold On

If you are under a table or desk, hold on with one hand and be ready to move with it if it moves. If seated and unable to drop to the floor, bend forward, cover your head with your arms and hold on to your neck with both hands.

## Stay Safe After

**There can be serious hazards after an earthquake, such as damage to the building, leaking gas and water lines, or downed power lines.**

- Wash your hands with soap and water after holding on to commonly touched surfaces or objects. If you are unable to wash your hands, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Expect aftershocks to follow the main shock of an earthquake. Be ready to Drop, Cover, and Hold On if you feel an aftershock.
- If you are in a damaged building, go outside and quickly move away from the building. Do not enter damaged buildings.
- **If you are trapped, send a text or bang on a pipe or wall.** Cover your mouth with your shirt for protection and instead of shouting, use a whistle.
- If you are in an area that may experience tsunamis, go inland or to higher ground immediately after the shaking stops. Avoid contact with floodwaters as they can contain chemicals, sewage, and debris.
- Check yourself to see if you are hurt and help others if you have training. Learn how to be the help until help arrives.
  - If you are sick or injured and need medical attention, contact your healthcare provider for instructions. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.

**Once you are safe, pay attention to local news reports for emergency information and instructions via battery-operated radio, TV, social media or from cell phone text alerts.**

- Register on the American Red Cross “[Safe and Well](#)” website so people will know you are okay.
- Use text messages to communicate, which may be more reliable than phone calls.
- Be careful when cleaning up. Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, work gloves and sturdy thick-soled shoes. Do not try to remove heavy debris by yourself. Wear a mask and maintain a physical distance of at least six feet while working with someone else. Use an appropriate mask if cleaning [mold or other debris](#). People with [asthma and other lung conditions and/or immune suppression](#) should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.

**BE PREPARED FOR AN EARTHQUAKE**

Earthquakes can collapse buildings and cause heavy items to fall, resulting in injuries and property damage.

**FEMA**  
FDHA V-1003/May 2018

Earthquakes are the sudden, rapid shaking of the earth, caused by the breaking and shifting of underground rock.

Can happen anywhere. Higher risk areas are California, Alaska, and the Mississippi Valley

Give no warning

Cause fires and damage roads

Cause tsunamis, landslides, and avalanches

**IF AN EARTHQUAKE HAPPENS, PROTECT YOURSELF RIGHT AWAY**

**DROP**

**COVER**

**HOLD ON**

If in a vehicle, pull over and stop.

If in bed, stay there.

If outdoors, stay outdoors.

Do not get in a doorway.

Do not run outside.

# Flooding

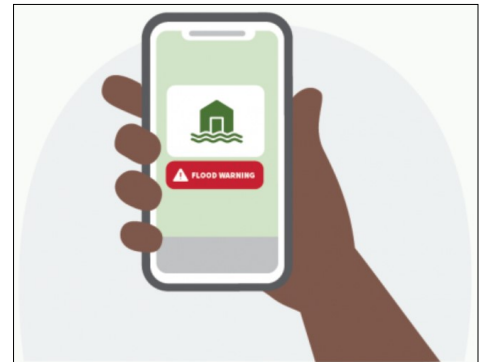
Flooding is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States. Failing to evacuate flooded areas or entering flood waters can lead to injury or death.

Floods may:

- Result from rain, snow, coastal storms, storm surges and overflows of dams and other water systems.
- Develop slowly or quickly. Flash floods can come with no warning.
- Cause outages, disrupt transportation, damage buildings and create landslides.

## If you are under a flood warning:

- Find safe shelter right away.
- Do not walk, swim or drive through flood waters. **Turn Around, Don't Drown!**
- Remember, just six inches of moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.
- Stay off bridges over fast-moving water.
- Depending on the type of flooding:
  - Evacuate if told to do so.
  - Move to higher ground or a higher floor.
  - Stay where you are.



## Preparing for a Flood

### Know Your Risk for Floods

[Visit FEMA's Flood Map Service Center](#) to know types of flood risk in your area. Sign up for your community's warning system. The [Emergency Alert System \(EAS\)](#) and [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.

### Purchase Flood Insurance

Purchase or renew a flood insurance policy. Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover flooding. It typically takes up to 30 days for a policy to go into effect so the time to buy is well before a disaster. [Get flood coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program \(NFIP\)](#).

### Preparing for a Flood

[Make a plan](#) for your household, including [your pets](#), so that you and your family know what to do, where to go, and what you will need to protect yourselves from flooding. Learn and practice evacuation routes, shelter plans, and flash flood response. Gather supplies, including non-perishable foods, cleaning supplies, and water for several days, in case you must leave immediately or if services are cut off in your area.

## In Case of Emergency

Keep important documents in a waterproof container. Create password-protected digital copies. Protect your property. Move valuables to higher levels. Declutter drains and gutters. Install check valves. Consider a sump pump with a battery.

## Staying Safe During a Flood

- Evacuate immediately, if told to evacuate. Never drive around barricades. Local responders use them to safely direct traffic out of flooded areas.
- Contact your healthcare provider if you are sick and need medical attention. Wait for further care instructions and shelter in place, if possible. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.
- Listen to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio or local alerting systems for current emergency information and instructions regarding flooding.
- Do not walk, swim or drive through flood waters. **Turn Around. Don't Drown!**
- Stay off bridges over fast-moving water. Fast-moving water can wash bridges away without warning.
- Stay inside your car if it is trapped in rapidly moving water. Get on the roof if water is rising inside the car.
- Get to the highest level if trapped in a building. Only get on the roof if necessary and once there signal for help. Do not climb into a closed attic to avoid getting trapped by rising floodwater.



## Staying Safe After a Flood

- Pay attention to authorities for information and instructions. Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Avoid driving except in emergencies.
- Wear heavy work gloves, protective clothing and boots during clean up and use appropriate face coverings or masks if cleaning mold or other debris.
- People with asthma and other lung conditions and/or immune suppression should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.
- Be aware that snakes and other animals may be in your house.
- Be aware of the risk of electrocution. Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. Turn off the electricity to prevent electric shock if it is safe to do so.
- Avoid wading in floodwater, which can be contaminated and contain dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.
- Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machinery **ONLY** outdoors and away from windows.

## 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.

**\*\*Due to the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, many of the previously scheduled courses have been cancelled. Please check <http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov/dmapscm6> or contact Chuck Bennett at [Charles.W.Bennett@wv.gov](mailto:Charles.W.Bennett@wv.gov) with any questions in regards to cancelled or rescheduled courses.\*\***

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### Upcoming Local Training Bovine Emergency Response Program

Training for First Responders  
Sunday March 27, 2022 –Class time 8:30 am to 5:00 pm  
R\*S\*D Horse Auctions 1241 Wiltshire Rd. Kearneysville, WV 25430  
More information will be coming regarding this training!

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### Disaster Exercise Series 2021/2022



Typically, 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. The COVID-19 virus has presented problems over the past two years in our communities fulfilling these needs and participating in the exercises.

At the December 15, 2021 meeting of the Jefferson County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), a discussion occurred centered around the ability of the community to gain a full- scale exercise accreditation by using an actual incident (our Jefferson/Berkeley County Regional Mass Vaccination Clinic at the Charles Town Races). An After-Action Report and Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) was generated in the last couple of months and will be submitted to the State to meet the requirement of participating in a full-scale or functional exercise in 2021.

A follow-up discussion took place where U.S. EPA Federal On-Scene Coordinator, Don McLaughlin, indicated that a “virtual” tabletop/ discussion-based exercise may be able to occur. This would take the place of a tabletop exercise which is normally attended “in-person”. In order to ensure the safety of the attendees, having it presented “virtually” will serve the need for having a discussion-based exercise and at the same time allow the attendees to take part from the safety of their own offices or meeting rooms.

Mr. McLaughlin and Mr. Sandy Green (WV EMD Region 3 Liaison) met in January to firm up the tabletop exercise plan and are expected to present it at the February 16, 2022 LEPC meeting for review by the attendees.

If you or your organization is interested in participating in the 2021/22 tabletop exercise when it is scheduled, please contact Stephen Allen at: [sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org).



# Online FEMA Training

FEMA 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 in the federal, state, local or tribal governments.

JCOHSEM 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-230.E: Fundamentals of Emergency Management

**Course Description:** The goal of this course is to provide all FEMA employees with basic information to prepare them for incident management and support activities. Additionally, this course will provide an overview of FEMA; introduce basic emergency management concepts; and provide a high-level look at how FEMA meets its mission.

**Primary Audience:** This entry-level course is designed for individuals new to the field of emergency management or persons with a desire to understand the fundamentals of emergency management.

**Course Length:** Approximately 6 hours

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-230.e>

## IS 522 - Exercising Continuity Plans for Pandemics

**Course Description:** This course is based on the pandemic continuity tabletop exercise Determined Accord. The course covers fundamental continuity principles and processes but is focused on the special continuity requirements for pandemics. Strategies such as telework and other social distancing strategies are described, as well, as special protection strategies for first responders, healthcare personnel, and others who have daily contact with the public.

**Primary Audience:** At the conclusion of this course, the students should be able to: relate the anticipated conditions and effects of a pandemic influenza to responders and communities, describe best practices for planning for and responding to a pandemic influenza, apply knowledge of the anticipated conditions and suggested practices to an activity, and develop next steps for pandemic planning within their agencies or communities.

**Course Length:** Approximately 8 hours

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-522>

## 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, resource 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 Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management-Committees**

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

The Steering Committee works with the JCOHSEM director to guide the activities of JCOHSEM. A fourteen-member Steering Committee is made up of public and private representation. JCOHSEM 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 (LEPC) 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 JCOHSEM's programs. They work with the director and other staff to keep the entire community focused on the objectives of JCOHSEM, 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. This committee is responsible in assisting the director in setting up speaking engagements and public awareness events. This committee meets monthly on the second 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, West Virginia Emergency Management Division of the West Virginia Department of Homeland Security (WVEMD) and FEMA in July 2003. The plan was updated in 2008 and 2013. The 2013 plan was approved by WVEMD 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 counterterrorism or human-caused disasters. Meetings are held on the second 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, and places may need to be changed due to inclement weather, scheduling conflicts, or Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation.

If you have questions, call the JCOHSEM office at (304) 728-3290.



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**PUBLIC SAFETY;  
PUBLIC TRUST**



The Jefferson County Commission's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (JCOHSEM) is responsible for the coordination of preparedness, , 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. JCOHSEM is also responsible for the Jefferson County R.A.C.E.S. group.

## February Meetings & Events

- Virtual/In-Person Regional Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Workshop, Friday, February 11, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.
- Virtual Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Meeting, Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at 8:15 a.m.
- Sterling National Weather Service calls every Monday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m.
- WV State weather calls on Mondays and Fridays at 10 a.m.
- WV Emergency Management Council calls each Tuesday at 9 a.m.
- All other committee meetings including the Public Awareness and Counter Terrorism meetings have been cancelled for the month of February.