



March 1, 2022

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From the Director's Chair

Hello and welcome to the March 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.

This newsletter includes information from Ready.gov titled "It's Not Luck" Campaign, Spring and Flood Safety and National Tsunami Awareness Week. Details about COVID-19 are not included in this edition but will be published Thursday, March 3. Therefore, the information will be based on a seven day accumulation of data.

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

We also wish you a Happy St. Patrick's Day!

It's Not Luck!

The "It's Not Luck" campaign offers safety and preparedness tips you can use to prepare for disasters. The focus of the campaign is that no one should rely on luck when it comes to being prepared for disasters and emergencies. Don't leave disaster prep to chance.

The first steps to being prepared:

- Know your risk for the area where you live and work.
- Make a plan to lessen the impact of those risks.
- Build a kit to be ready for disasters and emergencies.
- As we get closer to St. Patrick's Day, here's a reminder that #ItsNotLuck that prepares you for emergencies.
- Preparedness tip o' the mornin' for #StPatricksDay: Know your risk for the area where you live & work. Make a plan to lessen the impact of those risks. Build a kit to be ready for disasters & emergencies.
- Let your kit be your lucky charm! Make a go bag today. #ItsNotLuck #BeReady.
- Don't count on being lucky during severe weather, be prepared. Do you have insurance (renters or homeowners)? If you don't, consider making the call today! #ItsNotLuck.
- An insurance policy really can be your lucky charm. Get financially prepared! Learn more at: #PlanAhead #ItsNotLuck #PrepareNow

Spring Flood and Safety

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 911.
- 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.

National Tsunami Week: March 23-29, 2022



A tsunami can kill or injure people and damage or destroy buildings and infrastructure as waves come in and go out. A tsunami is a series of enormous ocean waves caused by earthquakes, underwater landslides, volcanic eruptions, or asteroids. Tsunamis can:

- Travel 20-30 miles per hour with waves 10-100 feet high.
- Cause flooding and disrupt transportation, power, communications, and the water supply.
- Happen anywhere along U.S. coasts. Coasts that border the Pacific Ocean or Caribbean have the greatest risk.

IF YOU ARE UNDER A TSUNAMI WARNING:

- First, protect yourself from an Earthquake. **Drop, Cover, then Hold On.**
- Get to high ground as far inland as possible. You can protect yourself from a tsunami while also protecting yourself and your family from COVID-19. Protect yourself from the effects of a tsunami by moving from the shore to safe, high grounds outside tsunami hazard areas.
- Be alert to signs of a tsunami, such as a sudden rise or draining of ocean waters.
- Listen to emergency information and alerts.
- Evacuate: DO NOT wait! Leave as soon as you see any natural signs of a tsunami or receive an official tsunami warning.
 - Understand that your regular public shelter may not be open this year as shelter locations may have changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. CDC, FEMA, and the American Red Cross are advising shelter operators on safety procedures to make sure that shelters can protect people from natural disasters while taking COVID-19 precautions. Check with local authorities for the latest information about public shelters or download the free [Red Cross Emergency app](#) for a list of [open Red Cross shelters](#) in your area. In addition:
 - Always follow the instructions from local emergency managers. They provide the latest recommendations based on the threat in your community.

- Make plans to shelter with friends and family, if possible.
- If you must evacuate to a public shelter, try to bring items that can help protect yourself and your family from COVID-19, such as [hand sanitizer](#) that contains at least 60 percent alcohol, cleaning materials, and two [masks](#) per person. Children under 2 years old, people who have trouble breathing, and people who cannot remove masks on their own should not wear them. Review the CDC’s guidelines for “Going to a Public Disaster Shelter During the COVID-19 Pandemic.”
- Maintain a distance of at least six feet between yourself and those who are not part of your household.
- If you are in a boat, go out to sea.

HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A TSUNAMI THREATENS

- If you live near, or regularly visit a coastal area, learn about the risk of tsunami in the area. Some at-risk communities have maps with evacuation zones and routes. If you are a visitor, ask about community plans.
- Learn the signs of a potential tsunami, such as an earthquake, a loud roar from the ocean, or unusual ocean behavior, such as a sudden rise or wall of water or sudden draining of water showing the ocean floor.
- Know and practice community evacuation plans and map out your routes from home, work, and play. Pick shelters 100 feet or more above sea level, or at least one mile inland.
- Create a family emergency communication plan that has an out-of-state contact. Plan where to meet if you get separated.
- 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. Sign up for [email updates](#) about COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Consider earthquake insurance and a flood insurance policy through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Standard homeowner’s insurance does not cover flood or earthquake damage.

Survive DURING

If you are in a tsunami area and there is an earthquake, then first protect yourself from the earthquake. Drop, Cover, and Hold On. Drop to your hands and knees. Cover your head and neck with your arms. Hold on to any sturdy furniture until the shaking stops. Crawl only if you can reach better cover, but do not go through an area with more debris. If possible, avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose, especially after touching high-touch surfaces, to slow the spread of COVID-19.

- When the shaking stops, if there are natural signs or official warnings of a tsunami, then move immediately to a safe place as high and as far inland as possible. Listen to the authorities, but do not wait for tsunami warnings and evacuation orders.
- If you are outside of the tsunami hazard zone and receive a warning, then stay where you are unless officials tell you otherwise.
- Leave immediately if you are told to do so. Evacuation routes are often marked by a wave with an arrow in the direction of higher ground.
- If you are in the water, then grab onto something that floats, such as a raft, tree trunk, or door. There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread through water, however floodwaters may contain debris, chemicals, or waste that are harmful to your health.
- If you are in a boat, then face the direction of the waves and head out to sea. If you are in a harbor, then go inland.

Be Safe AFTER

- Listen to local alerts and authorities for information on areas to avoid and shelter locations.
- Avoid wading in floodwater, which can contain dangerous debris. Water may be deeper than it appears.
- Be aware of the risk of electrocution. Underground or downed power lines can electrically charge water. Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water.
- If you become injured or [sick and need medical attention](#), contact your healthcare provider for further care instructions and shelter in place, if possible. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 and let the operator know if you have, or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a mask before help arrives. If staying at a shelter or public facility, alert shelter staff immediately so they can call a local hospital or clinic.
- Stay away from damaged buildings, roads, and bridges.
- Document property damage with photographs. Conduct an inventory and contact your insurance company for assistance.
- Save phone calls for emergencies. Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster. Use text messages or social media to communicate with family and friends.
- Engage virtually with your community through video and phone calls. Know that it's normal to feel anxious or stressed. Take care of your body and talk to someone if you are feeling upset. Many people may already feel fear and anxiety about the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). The threat of a tsunami can add additional stress. Follow CDC guidance for [managing stress during a traumatic event](#) and [managing stress during COVID-19](#).

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 with any questions in regards to cancelled or rescheduled courses.****

Upcoming Local Training BERP (Bovine Emergency Response Plan) training

Date: March 27, 2022 Location: RSD Horse Auction 1241 Wiltshire Road, Kearneysville, WV 25430
For more information contact Dick Myers at dmyers@jeffersoncountywv.org As Soon As Possible.

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.

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.

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

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.



**Jefferson County Office of
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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.

March Meetings & Events

- West Virginia Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week is scheduled for March 21 –25, 2022. Details will be provided soon. For media information, contact WVEMD Public Information Officer at lo-ra.d.lipscomb@wv.gov.
- 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 March.