

August 2025

Monthly Newsletter



JEFFERSON COUNTY WV
**OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY
& EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Our mission is to reduce the loss of lives and property and protection of the environment from all types of hazards through a comprehensive emergency management program consisting of prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

From the Director's Chair

Hello and welcome to our August 2025 edition of the Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's (JCOHSEM) newsletter.

This newsletter contains information about various topics including this month's Ready.gov topics of Back to School—Children & Youth Preparedness, #SummerReady, International Overdose Awareness Day, and Flood Preparedness Tips. We hope you find the topics in this month's edition informative and helpful.

We want to extend our sincere thanks to Stephen Rivera, our Public Affairs Coordinator, as he prepares to step into a new opportunity. During his time with us, Stephen made significant contributions to our communications and outreach efforts, helping to strengthen community engagement and enhance public awareness. We thank him for his dedication, creativity, and professionalism, and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.



Learn about Preparedness at the Jefferson County Fair!

Join us at the Jefferson County Fair and stop by our booth to talk to our staff and volunteers about preparing yourself, your family, your property, your pets, and your agricultural animals for the next disaster! We have plenty of informational brochures to help you put together your family disaster supply kit, teach you how to put together a family communications plan, and talk about our disaster risks. We look forward to seeing you at the Jefferson County Fair August 17 through 23, 2025!



Thank You to Our Public Affairs Coordinator

Note from Stephen Rivera:

It has been a pleasure serving as the Public Affairs Coordinator for the Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. As I transition into a new opportunity, I am incredibly grateful for the experiences and lessons gained during my time in this role.

I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for the support I've received. During my time here I had the opportunity to work alongside dedicated journalists and media partners who play a vital role in keeping the public prepared and informed for emergency events. Your collaboration has made a difference and I thank you for your continued commitment to public safety.

I am also grateful to the residents, volunteers, and community organizations in Jefferson County. It has been truly rewarding to witness how people consistently step up to help one another when emergencies arise.

I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to the Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Jefferson County Commission, and the many departments and agencies that make up our county government. It has been an honor to work with the many professionals across the county government who are devoted to the safety and well-being of our community.

For future media inquiries contact Steve Allen, Director, by phone (304)728-3290 or email sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org.

Sincerely,

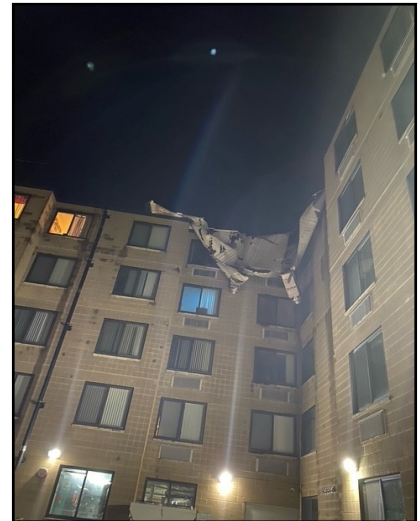
Stephen Rivera

Charles Towers Apartments

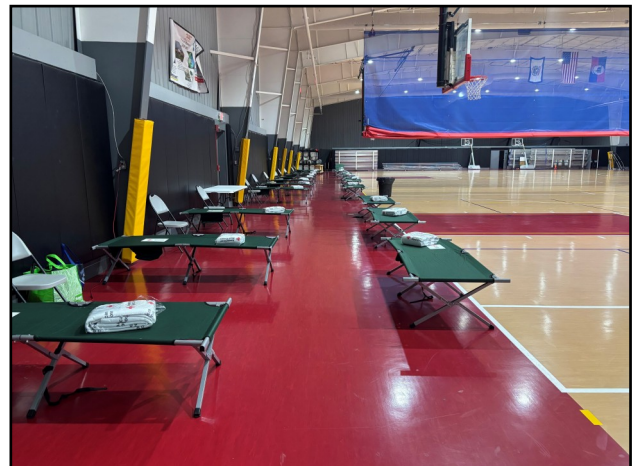
A severe storm on the evening of July 16, 2025 caused damage across Jefferson County, particularly in the Charles Town and Ranson areas. High winds brought down power lines and trees, leaving more than 1,500 residents without electricity at the peak of the storm.

The Charles Towers apartment building sustained roof damage during the storm, prompting the evacuation of all residents. In response, an emergency shelter was opened at the Ranson Civic Center to provide immediate support.

On Thursday, July 17th, 34 residents were transported to a local motel, with the remaining residents provided accommodations the following day. A temporary roof was placed on the building and residents began returning to their apartments.



Thank you to the many community organizations, volunteers, and businesses who helped after the storm. Thank you to The City of Charles Town, The City of Ranson, The American Red Cross, Independent Fire Company, Citizens Fire Company, Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency, WVU Medicine, Jefferson County Community Ministries, Jefferson County Humane Society, Jefferson County Health Department, Jefferson County Emergency Communications Center, Jefferson County Schools, Jefferson Pharmacy, Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority, Charles Town Now, Kiwanis, Kiwanis Kids, Chick-fil-a Ranson, Andy's Pizza/Inferno Brewery, and Fit to Move LLC.



Jefferson County Emergency Alert Sign Up

The Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is encouraging Jefferson County residents to sign up for Everbridge, the county’s local emergency alerting system.

Everbridge provides critical information to residents on a variety of events, including severe weather, fires, floods, and other emergencies, as well as routine updates like road closures and utility maintenance. Alerts are delivered through your preferred contact method—whether by cell phone, text message, home phone, or email.

When registering, users can customize notification preferences to receive only the types of alerts most relevant to them. Signing up for Everbridge is free and easy—register online or through the mobile app.

To register online, [Click Here](#) or follow the instructions below:

- 1) Visit jeffersoncountywv.org
- 2) Click “Emergency Info / Weather & Emergency Alert Sign Up”.
- 3) Select “Visit Everbridge Here”.
- 4) Complete the online registration form.

To register through the mobile app:

- 1) Download the “Everbridge” app from your device's app store.
- 2) Open the app and select “Find an organization or subscription”.
- 3) Type “Jefferson County WV” in the search bar.
- 4) Select “Jefferson County WV HSEM”.
- 5) Complete the online registration form.

For questions about the Everbridge system or assistance with registration, contact the Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management by phone at 304-728-3329 or email at jchsem@jeffersoncountywv.org.



Back to School



Children and Youth Preparedness

As students head back to school, it's a perfect time to make sure the whole family is prepared for emergencies. Disasters can strike anywhere and every family member plays a part in staying safe. Preparedness for the future starts today. Whether you're a student, parent, caregiver, or someone who works with youth, now is the time to take simple steps toward being ready.



Family Emergency Planning



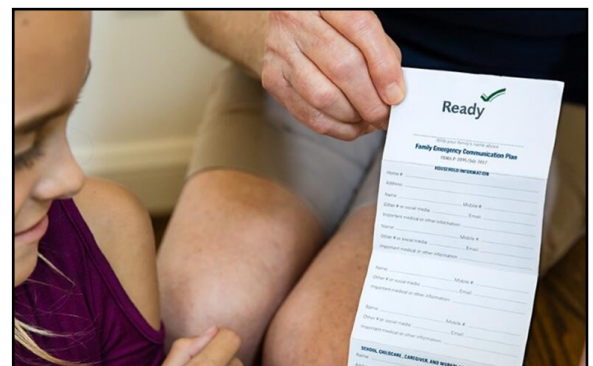
Some disasters strike without any warning, and family members may not all be in the same place. How will you get in touch with each other? Where will you meet? How will you get out of your house in case of a fire? What if your neighborhood is being evacuated? It's important to make a plan, now, so that you will know what to do, how to find each other, and how to communicate in an emergency.

Make a Plan

Your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, so it is important to know which types of disasters could affect your area. Know how you'll contact one another and reconnect if separated. Establish a family meeting place that's familiar and easy to find. And, don't forget to think about specific needs in your family. Your family's needs change over time, so update your plan regularly.

Who Will we Contact?

- Pick the same person for each family member to contact. Pick someone out of town—they may be easier to reach in a disaster.
- Text, don't talk. In an emergency, phone lines may be tied up. It may be easier to text and this leaves phone lines open for emergency workers.



Back to School



Where Will we Meet?

Decide on safe, familiar, accessible places where your family can go for protection or to reunite. If you have pets or service animals, think about animal-friendly locations. Consider places in your house, in your neighborhood, and outside of your city or town so you're prepared for any situation.



Practice, Practice, Practice!

On your own list or using the resources below, write down your contacts and plans. Make sure everyone in the family has copies and keeps them in a safe space, like in a backpack, wallet, or taped in a notebook. Put them in your cell phone if you have one. Hold regular household meetings to review and practice your plan.

Use the resources below to get started:

[Make a Plan Form | Ready.gov](#)

[Family Communications Plan for Kids](#)

[Family Communications Plan for Parents](#)



Build a Kit

Being prepared for an emergency isn't just about staying safe during a storm or a disaster. It's also about how to stay comfortable, clean, fed, and healthy afterwards—when a storm or disaster may have knocked out electricity.

If you lost power, how would you eat? The refrigerator wouldn't keep your food cold. The microwave couldn't warm things up. You might not get clean water out of your faucets. How would you find out if it was safe to play outside? Not from your TV or computer!

Being prepared means having your own food, water, cash, and other supplies to last for at least three days, and possibly longer if you are in a remote or hard-to-reach area.

Back to School



What should go in your kit?

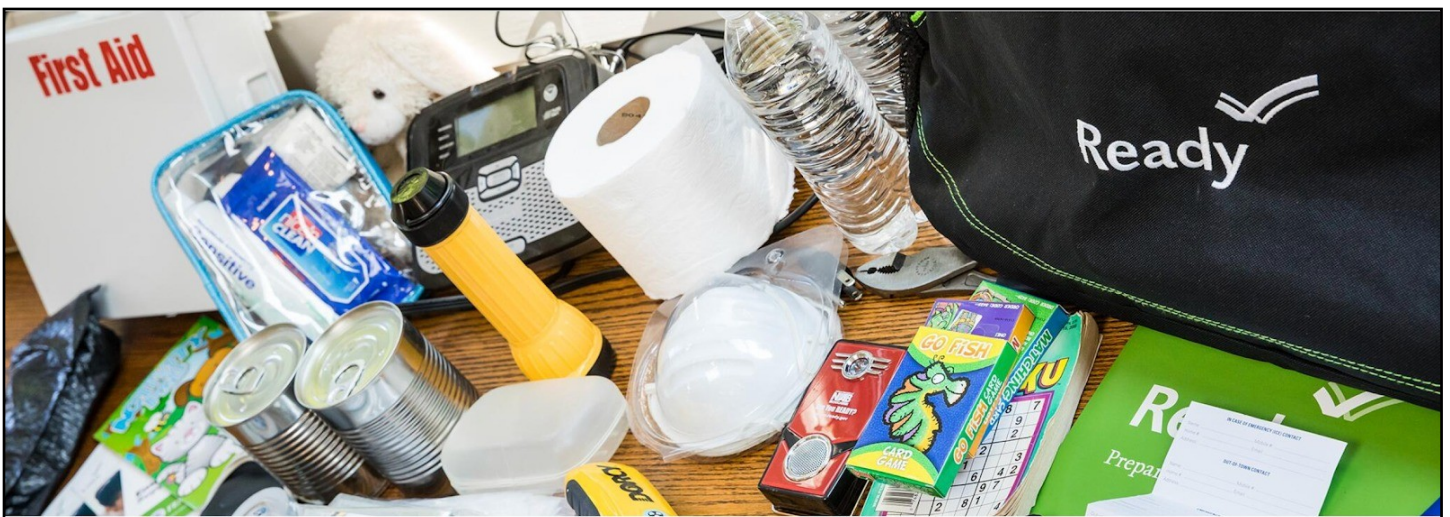
Remember that your kit will depend on your own needs. Once you take a look at the basic items, consider what unique needs your family might have, such as supplies for pets or seniors. Use the list below to get started:

- Water
- Non-Perishable Food
- First Aid Kit
- Cash
- Prescription Medications
- Extra Batteries
- Matches in a Waterproof Container
- Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Soap
- Paper Plates, Plastic Cups and Utensils
- Paper Towels
- Battery Powered or Hand Crank Radio
- Sleeping Bag
- Flashlight
- Whistle
- Can Opener
- Local Maps
- Pet and Service Animal Supplies
- Baby Supplies
- Extra Pair of Eye Glasses

Ready.gov Resources:

[Emergency Kit Checklist for Kids](#)

[Ready Emergency Supply List](#)



#SummerReady

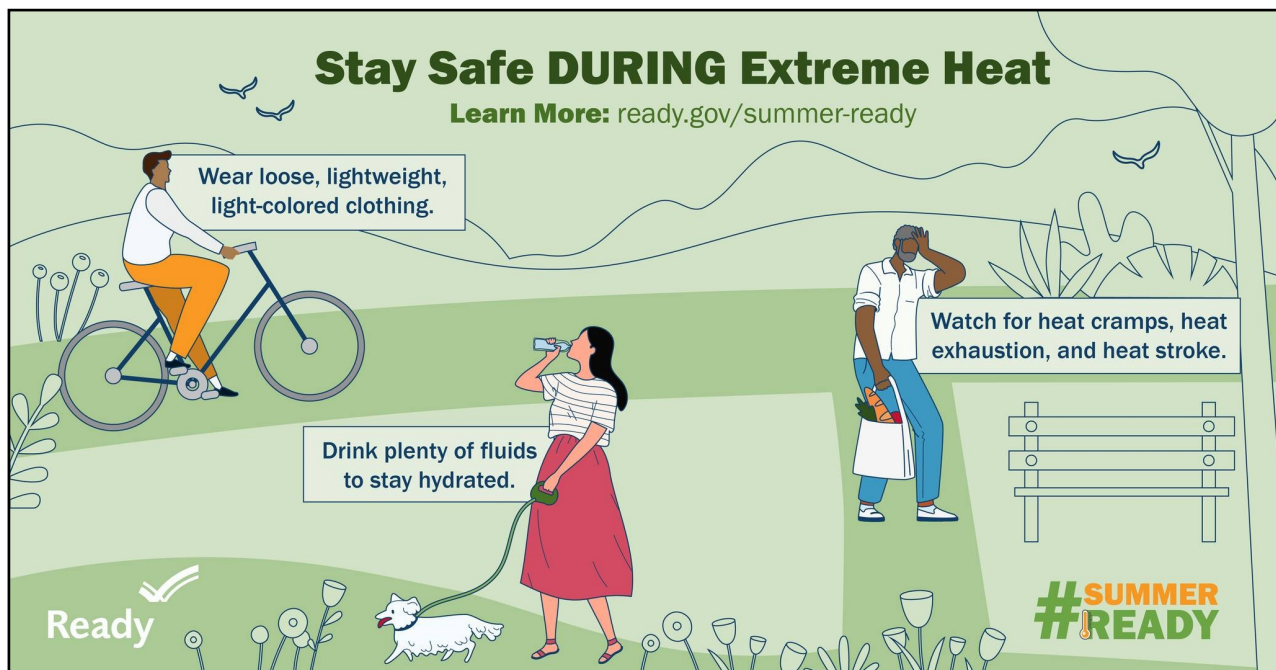


The **#SummerReady** campaign aims to reach vulnerable populations and raise awareness of the impacts of extreme heat and the simple steps to stay prepared. Extreme heat can be especially dangerous to groups of people across communities, including: infants and children, older adults, laborers, individuals with medical conditions, and athletes.

Being **#SummerReady** means understanding your risk of extreme heat and taking steps now to prepare.

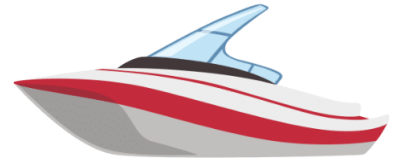
Tips for Everyone

- [Learn the signs of heat-related illnesses and ways to respond](#) from the CDC.
- Fans alone aren't enough in high heat + high humidity. Get inside in air conditioning or go to a public place like the library, museum, or shopping mall to beat the heat.
- NEVER leave children or pets alone in hot vehicles! Heat can rise in a car, up to 20 degrees in just 10 minutes.
- During extreme heat, check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.
- Roughly 40% of unwanted heat buildup in our homes is through windows. Use awnings or curtains to keep the heat out.



Boat Owners and Passenger Safety

- **Wear a life jacket.** The best life jacket is the one you will wear. Visit the [U.S. Coast Guard life jacket web page](#) to learn how to pick the right life jacket.
- **If you are on a boat of any size, make sure you pay attention to marine forecasts.** Before setting out, get the latest marine forecast and warning information from www.weather.gov/marine or a NOAA Weather Radio.
- **Stay safe on the water.** Visit the U.S. Coast Guard [Boating](#)



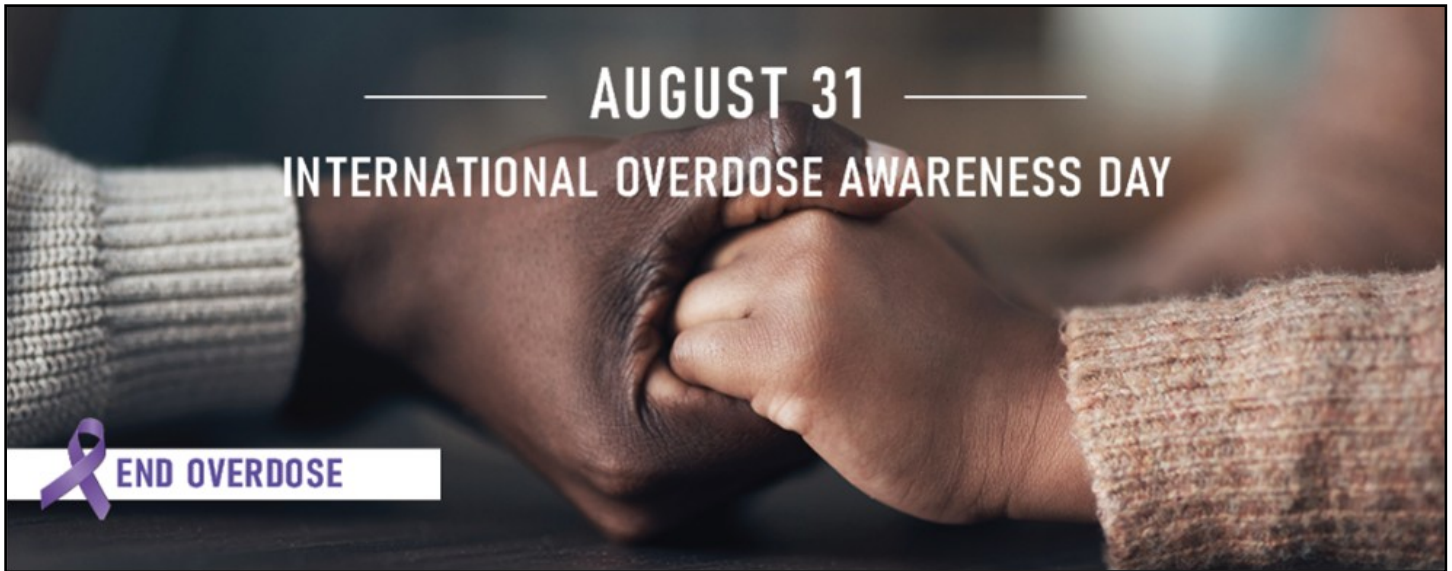
Grilling Safety

- Only use a grill outside and keep a 3-foot safety zone around it, away from siding, deck rains and eaves. Open your gas grill before lighting it.
- Clean your grill after each use.
- If using a charcoal grill, after cooking your food place the coals and ash in a metal can with a lid once they have cooled.



Water Safety for Everyone:

- **Swim with a friend.** Even strong swimmers should make sure they are in the water with someone else who can swim.
- **Know how to perform CPR** on children and adults.
- **At the beach or in a lake, only swim in areas with a lifeguard on duty.** Follow all signs and warnings.
- **Stay alert to rip currents.** Check water conditions before going in by looking at the [local beach forecast](#) before you leave. Visit the National Weather Service [Before You Go in the Water page](#) to learn more about what to do if you are caught in a rip current.
- **Keep an eye on the weather forecast.** If a thunderstorm approaches when you are swimming or near water, get out of the water and seek shelter in a house, large building or car (with the windows closed).
- **Know how deep the water is.** Do not dive into the water if you don't know how deep it is. Diving into shallow water can cause serious injury or death.



International Overdose Awareness Day

On August 31 of each year, International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) is recognized globally as a day to remember and grieve those that we've lost, take action to encourage support and recovery, and help end overdose by spreading awareness about drug overdose prevention. Join us as an IOAD partner by using your voice and platforms to spread messages about ending overdose.

How to recognize an overdose

Recognizing an opioid overdose can be difficult. If you aren't sure, it is best to treat the situation like an overdose—you could save a life. Administer naloxone or another opioid overdose reversal medication (if available) and then call 911. Try to keep the person awake and breathing and lay the person on their side to prevent choking. Do not leave the person alone.

Signs of an overdose may include:

- Unconsciousness or inability to awaken
- Slow or shallow breathing or difficulty breathing such as choking sounds or gurgling/snoring noise from a person who cannot be awakened
- Discolored skin (especially in nails or lips)
- Small, constricted "pinpoint pupils" that don't react to light

For more information visit: [Preventing Opioid Overdose | Overdose Prevention | CDC](#)

Flood Preparedness



Flooding is a temporary overflow of water onto land that is normally dry. Floods are the most common 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. Flash floods can come with no warning. Cause outages, disrupt transportation, damage buildings and create landslides.

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.

Protect your property.

Move valued items to higher levels. Elevate critical utilities. Install a back valve and a battery-operated sump pump. Declutter drains and gutters. Use sandbags to create a flood barrier.

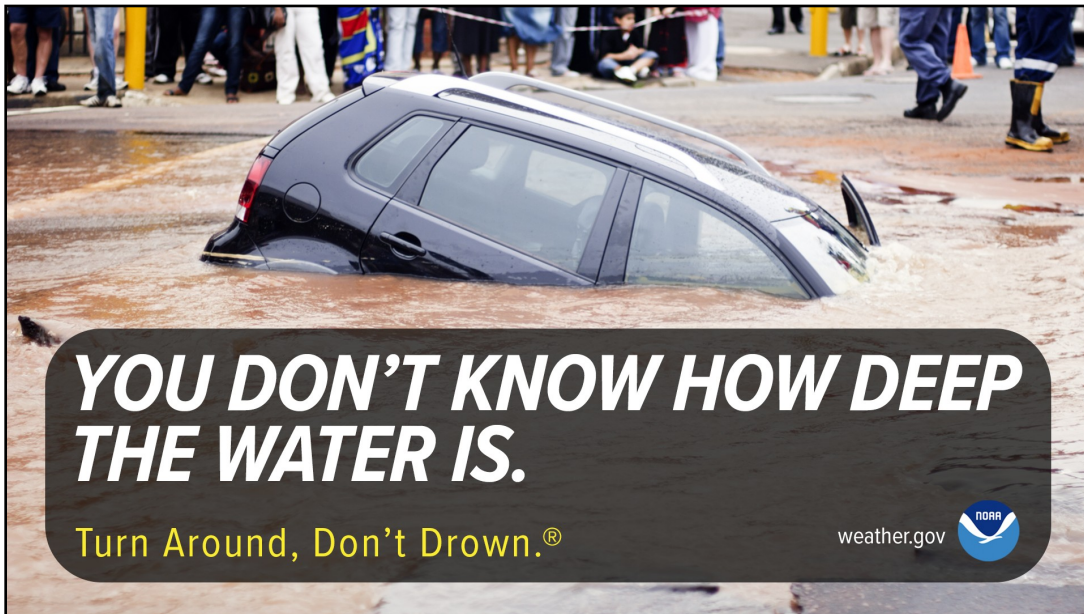


Flood Preparedness



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 \(NFIP\)](#).



If you are under 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.



Online FEMA Training

FEMA offers a number of online courses at <https://training.fema.gov/is/> 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.

FEMA Independent Study Courses:

Course	Date	Location
IS-700.B An Introduction to the National Incident Management System	N/A	Online
IS-800.D National Response Framework, An introduction	N/A	Online
IS-100.C Introduction to the Incident Command System	N/A	Online
IS-200.C Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response	N/A	Online
IS-907 Active Shooter: What Can You Do	N/A	Online
IS-908 Emergency Management for Senior Officials	N/A	Online



FEMA

State and Local 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 flood-plain 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.

State Training



**National Emergency Management Basic Academy (NEMBA)
FEMA Region 3 – Bridgeport, WV**

Program Description: The National Emergency Management Basic Academy is designed for individuals pursuing a career in emergency management and provides a foundational education in emergency management knowledge, skills, and abilities. The goal of the Basic Academy is to support the careers of emergency managers through a training experience combining knowledge of all fundamental systems, concepts, and practices of contemporary emergency management. The Basic Academy provides adult learners, facilitated by skilled faculty members, a solid foundation upon which to build a career in the emergency management profession. For more information, visit our website at: [EMI | EMPP | National Emergency Management Basic Academy \(fema.gov\)](https://training.fema.gov/programs/empp/basic/) (https://training.fema.gov/programs/empp/basic/)

Target Audience: The National Emergency Management Basic Academy is designed for emergency management professionals, including members of state, local, tribal, and territorial homeland security, or emergency services programs; nongovernmental organizations, voluntary agencies, or professional organizations; private sector emergency management offices; college or university emergency management staff; and FEMA, Federal partners, military, and emergency managers at other departments or agencies.



**National Emergency Management Basic Academy (NEMBA)
FEMA Region 3 – Bridgeport, WV**

Course	Date	Deadline
L0116 Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), Public Information Basic	8/18-19/2025	8/1/2025
L0105, Public Information Basics	8/20-22/2025	8/1/2025

Location: Bridgeport Conference Center - 300 Conference Center Way, Bridgeport, WV 26330

- **Cost/Reimbursement Information:** EMI does not provide stipend reimbursement for off-campus course deliveries. There are no fees associated with these courses. Food, lodging, and transportation costs are the responsibility of the participant.
- **How to Register for the Course:** Email Kyle Pajarito at kyle.c.pajarito@wv.gov if interested in attending any or all of these courses and you will be sent the registration code and instructions to register online.
- **EMI Point of Contact:** For additional information, contact the Course Manager, Jeff Januchowski, at (301) 447-1383 or by email at Jeffrey.Januchowski@fema.dhs.gov or Richard Bashioum at (301) 447-1629 or by email at Richard.Bashioum@fema.dhs.gov



**National Emergency Management Basic Academy (NEMBA)
FEMA Region 3 – Bridgeport, WV**

Prerequisites:

Twelve online Independent Study courses are required as prerequisites to the resident or virtual classroom courses. All 12 prerequisite courses must be completed before applying for E/L/K0101:

IS-29: Public Information Officer Awareness

IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS-100

IS-120: An Introduction to Exercises

IS-200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response, ICS-200

IS-230: Fundamentals of Emergency Management

IS-235: Emergency Planning

IS-240: Leadership and Influence

IS-241: Decision Making and Problem Solving

IS-242: Effective Communication

IS-244: Developing and Managing Volunteers

IS-700: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System

IS-800: National Response Framework, An Introduction



National Emergency Management Basic Academy (NEMBA) FEMA Region 3 – Bridgeport, WV

Classroom Requirements:

The Basic Academy consists of the following classroom courses. Attendance at each course is required. It is recommended that the E/L0101, Foundations of Emergency Management, be taken first but it is not required to do so.

- [E/K/L0101](https://training.fema.gov/empp/e101.aspx), Foundations of Emergency Management (https://training.fema.gov/empp/ e101.aspx) (40 hours) 5 days
- [E/K/L0102](https://training.fema.gov/empp/e102.aspx), Science of Disaster (https://training.fema.gov/empp/e102.aspx) (approximately 24 hours) 3 days
- [E/K/L0103](https://training.fema.gov/empp/e103.aspx), Planning: Emergency Operations (https://training.fema.gov/empp/e103.aspx) (16 hours) 2 days
- [E/K/L0146](https://training.fema.gov/empp/e146.aspx), Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) (16 hours) 2 days (https://training.fema.gov/empp/ e146.aspx)
 - (Only an EMI class certificate dated after March 2013 will be accepted for the HSEEP requirement toward graduation)
- [E/K/L0105](https://training.fema.gov/empp/e105.aspx), Public Information Basic (https://training.fema.gov/empp/e105.aspx) (24 hours) 3 days
- Total course hours: 120 hours

Request for Accommodation:

If you require a reasonable accommodation (sign language interpreters, Braille, CART, etc.), please make request NLT 15 days prior to the course offering. When making any requests, please provide details on the accommodation; however, DO NOT include medical or other personal information that is protected under the Privacy Act of 1974 or the Health Information Privacy Protection Act (45 CFR Part 160 Subparts A and E of Part 164). Last-minute requests will be accepted; however, they may not be possible to fulfill. Please send these requests to the course host, WV EMD Training Division, via email at kyle.c.pajarito@wv.gov or call (681) 910-3169, along with a cc: copy to DHS/FEMA/EMI/National/Emergency Management Professional Program/National Emergency Management Basic Academy: FEMA-EMPP-Basic-Academy@fema.dhs.gov.

WV Public Service Training



Course	Date	Location
Water Rescue Series	8/8-10,16-17/25	Bedington VFD
Emergency Services Instructor 1 & 2 (50 hours)	8/1-10/25	Hampshire County, WV
Driver Operator—Aerial	8/2-3,8-9,17/25	Hedgesville, VFD
Firefighter 1	8/5/25	Bedington VFD
Rope Rescue Awareness/Operations	8/22-24/25	Springfield Valley VFD
Rope Rescue Technician	8/30-31/25	Springfield Valley VFD
Rope Rescue Awareness and Operations	9/5-7/25	Blue Ridge Mountain VFC

For more information contact: Jamie Weller at (304) 596-2653 or Steven Harris at (304) 596-2652

Local Training

Course	Date	Location
Community CPR and Stop the Bleed	8/12/25	JCESA
Community CPR and Stop the Bleed	9/09/25	JCESA

All classes are being held at the Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency (JCESA) located at 419 Sixteenth Avenue, Ranson, WV 25438 @ 6:00 pm.

State Training

Course	Date	Location
Aerial Search and Rescue Procedures	8/6-7/25	Martinsburg, WV

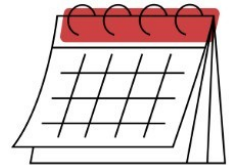
For more information contact: Eva Godbey at (304) 766-0011 ext. 22 or Jeff Cunningham (304) 414-7682



The Jefferson County 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 an Emergency Services Council that acts as an advisory group.

We are responsible for the Citizen Corps/CERT, StormReady, and Community Rating System. JCOHSEM is also responsible for the Jefferson County R.A.C.E.S. group.

AUGUST MEETINGS & EVENTS



- Sterling National Weather Service call every Monday and Friday at 10:30a.m.
- WV State weather calls on Mondays and Fridays at 10a.m.
- The Counter-Terrorism Committee meeting on August 12 at the JCHSEM EOC at 2:00p.m.
- Jefferson County Fair on August 17-23.
- Jefferson County LEPC Meeting on August 27 at the Hospice of the Panhandle at 8:15a.m.

STAFF:

- **Stephen Allen, Director**
 - ⇒ Office: 304-728-3290
 - ⇒ Email: sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org
- **Dick Myers, Deputy Director/ Planner/ Program Manager**
 - ⇒ Office: 304-728-3329
 - ⇒ Email: dmyers@jeffersoncountywv.org



28 Industrial Blvd., Suite 101, Kearneysville, WV 25430