

October 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 October 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 Cybersecurity Awareness Month, Fire Prevention Week, Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drills and Flood Preparedness Tips. We hope you find the topics in this month's edition informative and helpful.

We're excited to welcome Brandon Wonder to the team as our new Public Affairs Coordinator! He brings a wealth of experience in Meteorology, Emergency Management, and Public Health, we're thrilled to have him on board.



Welcome to Our New Public Affairs Coordinator

Note from Brandon Wonder:

I'm excited to introduce myself as the new Public Affairs Coordinator at the Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, having officially started on Tuesday, September 23rd, 2025. I'm excited to be joining the county and have the opportunity to work with all of you.

In this role, I will be working with local stakeholders and community members, managing partnerships, and connecting with the public through social media and outreach events. I'm here to ensure a smooth and efficient collaboration between the Emergency Management office and the local community.

A bit about me: I bring 2 years of experience in Emergency Management and Public Health, most recently working with the Jefferson County Health Department. I'm passionate about working with the community, sharing information at public events, and creating relationships with local businesses and community members.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly at bwonder@jeffersoncountywv.org or on my cell phone at (304) 268-0808 if you have any media inquiries, questions, or need assistance.

Thank you for the warm welcome I've already received—I'm excited for what's ahead!

Sincerely,

Brandon Wonder

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.



Cybersecurity Awareness Month



October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month!

For over 20 years, Cybersecurity Awareness Month has highlighted the importance of taking simple, daily actions to reduce cyber risks. This year's theme – “**Building a Cyber Strong America**” – focuses on the vital role that small and medium business, as well as state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, play in protecting our nation’s critical infrastructure.

Much of this infrastructure is owned or supported by public entities and private companies, including those in the supply chain. Strengthening cybersecurity across these sectors is essential to our national resilience.

Cyber threats don’t take time off – and neither should our defenses. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) urges everyone to **take one action today** to improve cybersecurity in your organization.



Here are some tips to help you make the most of your participation:

- **Recognize the opportunity:** Cybersecurity Awareness Month is your chance to engage your entire organization on the importance of cybersecurity. Whether you’re shaping policy, leading a team or simply practicing more secure habits, your involvement matters.
- **Get your customers and vendors involved:** Share cybersecurity best practices with your customers and vendors and encourage them to commit to stronger cybersecurity. We all need to do our part to keep our communities safe .
- **Plan your participation:** Use the ideas and no-cost tools in this guide to promote Cybersecurity Awareness Month throughout October. Coordinate with leadership, IT, HR and other teams to ensure consistent messaging.
- **Think long term:** Talk with leadership and IT about adopting cybersecurity policies that include all of CISA’s best practices. Include your vendors and partners in the conversation so your whole supply chain is more secure.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month



Build Your Cybersecurity Awareness Campaign

Cybersecurity Awareness Month is the perfect opportunity to launch a campaign that protects your organization, your customers, and the nation's critical infrastructure. Whether you're a business, nonprofit, or government entity—every organization plays a role.

Start with Leadership

Leadership support is key to building a strong cybersecurity culture year-round. Present CISA's best practices to your executive and IT teams, and work together to improve your cybersecurity policies and procedures.



Engage Your Organization

Make cybersecurity a team effort with creative activities throughout October:

- **Send an Email:** Announce your plans and share key safety tips.
- **Update Signatures:** Add a Cybersecurity Month banner to your email signature.
- **Include in Newsletters:** Feature cybersecurity guidance in internal newsletters.
- **Go Public:** Share a video, press release, or proclamation showing your commitment.
- **Use Social Media:** Post safety tips and highlight your efforts using official hashtags.
- **Host Events & Games:** Organize virtual/in-person discussions or games
- **Offer Incentives:** Run giveaways, contests, or customer promos tied to awareness.
- **Wrap-Up:** Send a recap email highlighting successes and key lessons learned.



Cybersecurity Awareness Month



Educate Your Community

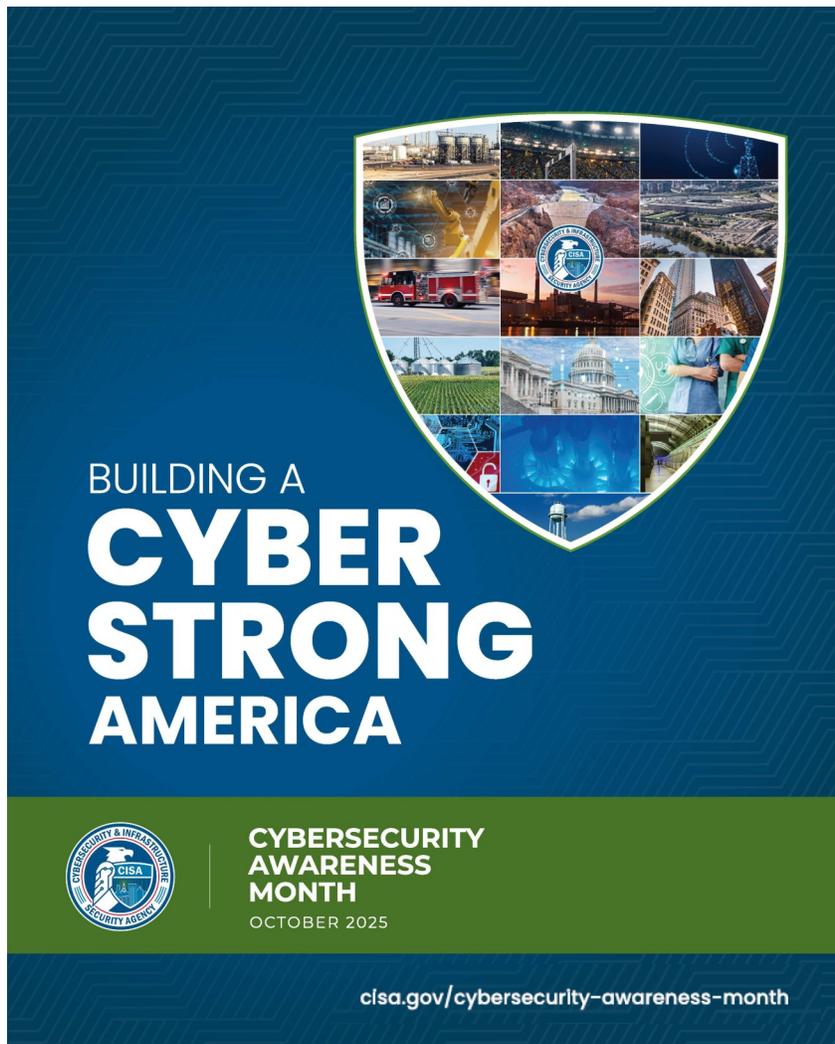
Be a cybersecurity advocate beyond your walls:

- Tailor a simple, jargon-free “Cyber Basics” talk.
- Use the CISA provided slide decks and handouts.
- Share resources so your audience knows where to turn for help.

Get Started with the Toolkit

Explore the [Cybersecurity Awareness Month 2025 Toolkit](#) for customizable templates, presentations, banners, and more to help you plan a successful campaign.

Learn more at [CISA’s Cybersecurity Awareness Month Page](#) or visit your organization's cybersecurity portal.





Charge into Fire Safety!

This year's Fire Prevention Week (FPW) campaign, October 5-11, “**Charge into Fire Safety: Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home,**” works to educate everyone about using these batteries safely. The campaign stresses how important it is to buy, charge, and recycle safely when it comes to lithium-ion batteries.



Charge into Fire Safety: 3 Steps

- **Buy only listed products:** When buying a product that uses a lithium-ion battery look for a safety certification mark such as UL, ETL, or CSA. This means it meet important safety hazard.
- **Charge devices safely:** Always use the cords that came with the product to charge. Follow the instructions from the manufacturer. Buy new chargers from the manufacturer or one that the manufacturer has approved. Charge your device on a hard surface. Don't over-charge your device. Unplug it or remove the battery when it's fully charged.
- **Recycle batteries responsibly:** Don't throw lithium-ion batteries in the trash or regular recycling bins because they could start a fire. Recycle your device or battery at a safe battery recycling location. Visit [call2recycle.org](https://www.call2recycle.org) to find a recycling spot near you.

For more information or resources visit: [NFPA | Fire Prevention Week](https://www.nfpa.org/fire-prevention-week)

Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drills



Get Ready to Shakeout!

Shakeout Day is an international event when millions of people worldwide participate in earthquake drills at work, school, or home. This year, the event will take place on October 16th at 1:16 PM EST.

While West Virginia isn't typically known for seismic activity, small earthquakes do occur from time to time. Most are minor—rarely felt and causing no damage—but they serve as a reminder that even low-risk areas aren't immune to tectonic movement. The state lies within the Appalachian region, where ancient faults occasionally shift, producing these low-magnitude quakes.

Shakeout day is a great chance to be prepared and ready in case an earthquake were to strike the region. The drills are a great opportunity to practice how to be safer during earthquakes.



How to Participate?

There are many ways for individuals, businesses, schools, faith-based organizations, community groups, government agencies, and others to participate in the ShakeOut, to get prepared for earthquakes, and to share what you're doing with others so they can do the same. To register and download flyers on how plan the drill and be better prepared for an earthquake click this link: [Great ShakeOut | How to Participate](#)



Flood Preparedness



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 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 electrical 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.



Disaster Exercise Series 2025



Functional Exercise will be held in October

The Functional Exercise will be held on Tuesday, October 28 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM EDT at the Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management EOC, located at 28 Industrial Boulevard, Kearneysville, WV 25430.

This is the operational phase of our 2025 regional exercise program. The 'To Hot to Handle' scenario is based upon a train car explosion at a local industrial plant after a brownout caused by extreme heat. The extreme heat mixed with dry gusty winds causes the plant along with other trains carrying toxic chemicals to catch fire. Multiple challenges spanning the list of Emergency Support Functions - <https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-esf-intro.pdf> - from law enforcement, to hazmat containment and clean-up, to mass care and beyond, come into play.

This will be a challenge for emergency management, LE, fire and EMS, along with all the other stakeholders in the community due to infrastructure outages brought about by the drought-like conditions, extreme heat, and catastrophic fire.

Lunch will be provided in the EOC and we hope to be able to provide box lunches for the first responders on-scene.



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



WV Public Service Training



Course	Date	Location
Vehicle Rescue Technician -Passenger-	10/11-12/25	Capon Bridge, VFD
Driver Operator -Ariel	10/11,17,19,25/25	Bedington, VFD
Emergency Services Instructor Course I and II— IFSAC	10/17-19/25	Berkeley County Emergency Ambulance Authority Station-97
Rope Rescue Awareness, Operations, Technician	10/17/25	Short Gap 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	10/14/2025	JCESA
Community CPR and Stop the Bleed	11/18/2025	JCESA
Community CPR and Stop the Bleed	12/09/2025	JCESA
Child and Babysitting Safety (CABS)	12/11/2025	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
West Virginia AUXCOMM	10/25-26/25	Hampshire County Emergency Services Agency

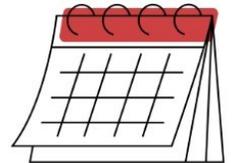
For more information contact: Eva Godbey at (304) 766-0011 ext. 22 or Jeff Cunningham (304) 414-7682



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.

SEPTEMBER 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 October 14 at the JCHSEM EOC at 2:00p.m.
- Jefferson County LEPC Meeting on October 15 at the Hospice of the Panhandle at 8:15a.m.
- Jefferson County Function Exercise on October 28 at the JCHSEM EOC at 9:00a.m.

STAFF:

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