

Fairfield County
Emergency
Management Agency

241 W Main Street
Suite 100
Lancaster, OH 43130

Jon Kochis, Director



Fairfield County Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security Quarterly Updates

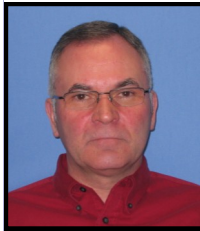
Volume 3, Issue 3

March, 2010

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EMA hires an Operations/Planning Manager



Recently the EMA has hired a new Planning & Operations Manager, Bill Gilliam.

Bill retired in 2009 as the State Command Sergeant Major for the Ohio Army National Guard.

Bill served as the senior enlisted advisor to The Adjutant General of Ohio. While serving as the State Command Sergeant Major, he was the personal advisor to the Adjutant General on all enlisted-related matters, particularly in areas af-

fecting Soldier training and quality of life for over 11,000 Soldiers assigned to the Ohio Army National Guard.

Bill has experience in Emergency Operations, and has been involved in several operations during State and National emergencies of various types. Additionally Bill served six months in Central America after Hurricane Mitch.

Bill is excited about his new position and is looking forward to becoming an integral part of the EMA team.

Become a
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Fairfield
County
EMA on
Facebook.



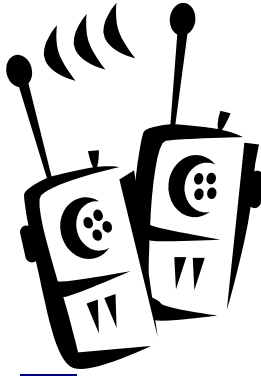
Weather Warning Siren Issues

You may have recently noticed that the Weather Warning Siren in your area did not work for several weeks over the past few months. The problem was discovered in



the main computer/radio at the Sheriff's Office. The radio tones that were sent out to test the sirens to activate somehow got changed, and so the radio numbers that corresponded to the local sirens were no longer included in the system tests. Please know that

we quickly addressed the issue and got it resolved. Thanks to everyone who let us know that their siren was not working. By letting us know of the issue and who it was affecting, we were able to isolate the issue and get it fixed.



All communication radios will need to be evaluated for narrowbanding capabilities.

Narrowbanding—All Radios will be Affected

The FCC has a firm deadline in which all radios will need to be “Narrowbanded” of January 1, 2013. As a county, we need to know how this will affect the communications, as well as the cost of the upgrade to the infrastructure. We will need to determine what radios in the county can be reprogrammed and what needs to be replaced. Radios purchased in recent years, should be able to be reprogrammed

to work within the new licensing frequencies.

Ed Campbell Jr. from the City of Lancaster IT explained the Narrowbanding mandate and what it means at the recent Homeland Security Meeting. Currently all frequencies are given 25 kHz on each side of the licensed frequency to limit over talk. The FCC is narrowing this to only 12.5 kHz on each side of the licensed frequency. Due to the country’s in-

creased demand on radio waves, this process will increase the number of frequencies that can be licensed. After the deadline of 1/1/2013, radios may still work, but will be considered illegal and can incur large fines from the FCC.

The county currently has a task force working on this issue. The EMA is also planning on contracting to do a Communications Study to determine the county radio need.

Citizen Corps Programs



All CERT Team members are invited to a “Meet and Greet” on March 23, 2010 at the Liberty Center @ 5:30pm (before the Weather Spotter Training)

Now that the coordinated response with the Medical Reserve Corps has passed, we will again be looking to offer continued training for the CERT and MRC Volunteers. The EMA is currently offering the Weather Spotter Class, if anyone is interested. We will be looking at another chain saw training class sometime this summer (date TBA). Please let Criss Manning know if you are interested.

We will also be planning another CERT Training course for those interested sometime before the summer begins and schedules get busy.

As always, there are hosts of online training courses available from FEMA. Go online to training.fema.gov.



The Medical Reserve Corps’ response to the H1N1 Vaccination activation is now complete. We are excited to an-

nounce that we had over 110 volunteers actually work a clinic that equaled 3190 volunteer hours. This assistance to the Health Department was invaluable.

The need for medically trained and non-medical volunteers does not stop with this activation. We will continue to engage our volunteers in training and activities throughout the year, so that in case of a future need, we are ready to be activated to once again help out our community. Thanks again to all those that went through the MRC training and are a valued part of the EMA team.



Special Operations Team

By Asst Chief Craig Spiller

The Fairfield County Special Operations Team has been very busy in 2010. All three branches of the FCSOT, the hazardous materials branch, the water/dive rescue branch, and the incident safety officer branch have responded with Fairfield County fire departments on many different types of responses.

The hazmat branch has responded to a mobile meth lab, a large methanol spill, and a mysterious white cloud that made multiple people sick when they drove through it. On all of these responses the team worked with the local fire departments' incident commander to contain and mitigate the situation.

The hazmat team is also preparing for the state hazmat team typing which is scheduled for June; our hope is that we will become a type 2 team.

The water/dive rescue branch has responded with Fairfield and Licking County fire departments on many reports of ice related emergencies. Luckily, all of the responses turned out to be false or good intent calls. The team also placed 2 new rescue BCD's (buoyancy compensating devices) in-service from a generous gift from the Fairfield County EMA.

The incident safety officers have responded to structure fires and entrapment auto accidents all across the county. The ISO

branch responded to incidents with Amanda Twp, Basil Joint Fire District, Bremen Rushcreek, Milersport, and Violet Twp fire departments. The ISOs assisted the incident commanders in being their eyes and ears for safety.

Through the EMA's Homeland Security Grant Award, the hazmat and dive branches are obtaining portable and mobile MARCs radios for each of their vehicles. This will greatly assist in responses out to areas where we have not been able to have direct communications in the past. Both branches have responded out of the county multiple times over the last 2 years.



Trainings



Meteorologists from the National Weather Service (NWS) will provide free training to the citizens of Fairfield County. Storm spotters play an important role in identifying and relaying important storm related information to the County

Emergency Management Agency (EMA), local public safety officials and the National Weather Service.

Course Topics:

- How to safely observe storms
- How to identify important features of storms
- Visual clues that may precede tornado development
- How to make accurate and timely reports

Cost: FREE

Date: March 23, 2010

Time: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Where: Liberty Center
951 Liberty Center Drive
(follow signs to the Board of Elections building) (For GPS use 2980 W. Fair Ave)
Lancaster, Ohio 43130

Call to Register:
Call 740-654-4357

Or go Online:
www.fairfieldema.com

Weather Spotter Class

March 23, 2010

6:30pm

Fairfield County
Emergency Management
Agency

241 West Main Street, Suite 100
Lancaster, OH 43130

Phone: 740-654-4357

Fax: 740-652-1520

E-mail: ema-lepc@co.fairfield.oh.us



We're on the WEB at
www.fairfieldema.com

***Make plans now for the
State Tornado Drill:***

March 24, 2010

9:50 AM

Our Mission

To establish, coordinate and sustain partnerships throughout Fairfield County, united in efforts to prepare for emergencies and to minimize loss of life and property and help the community to return to normalcy when they occur.

Severe Weather Awareness Week/Tornado Drill

Governor Ted Strickland has proclaimed March 21-27 as Severe Weather Awareness Week. In a coordinated effort with the governor and the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness, the state will participate in a statewide tornado drill and test its Emergency Alert System on Wednesday, March 24 at 9:50 a.m. Schools, businesses and households are encouraged to exercise



their emergency plans and tornado drills during this time.

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. They are spawned

from powerful thunderstorms and can cause death and destruction in mere seconds. April through July mark the peak months that tornadoes can occur in Ohio – usually between the hours of 2 p.m. and 10 p.m. But as history has shown, tor-

nadoes can happen at any time during any month.

The best defense when faced with tornadoes or any severe weather incident is ***preparedness***.

Know the conditions. Make a plan. Practice the plan. Be prepared.

Information taken from:
www.publicsafety.ohio.gov
www.weathersafety.ohio.gov/

Poster Contest Details:

http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov/Documents/JustForKids/2010_Letter_And_Poster_Rules.pdf