



BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

SUMMER, 2021 NEWSLETTER

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Eric Brewer, Emergency Services Director

Reflecting on the last year and upcoming personnel changes...

A year ago at this same time, we were well into the COVID-19 Pandemic. Employees were working remotely, masks were required everywhere, and some businesses were closed. In 2020, we saw a decline in calls to 9-1-1 because of many factors, including that people were driving less, weren't going out of their houses or they just didn't want to go to the hospital due to fear. While we are never going to be back to "pre-Covid" situations, we hope to be back to some normalcy by the end of 2021 or early 2022.

COVID changed a lot of employees' mindsets. For some of them, COVID sped up their decision to retire or move on from the public safety field. Our office will be one of those that is affected by personnel changes this year. After 38 years in public safety, including the last 23 of those being with the Department Of Emergency Services, Frank Parris has announced his retirement. His last day will be July 2nd. Frank spent the last few years as the Deputy Director of Emergency Management. EMA personnel are the "behind the scenes" staff who are getting paperwork done during disasters, grants, exercise and drill coordination and filling in at times overseeing 9-1-1 operations. It's time to hand over the phone, Frank. No more standing by waiting for it to ring during floods or snow storms and no restless nights during on call week. Now the fun begins! Congratulations on your retirement!

Cybersecurity reminder...

Recently we have seen an increase in cyber attacks. Government is not immune to these attacks even at the county or municipal levels. One recent and close attack was Fayette County Government. Cyber actors have been targeting desktop sharing software and computer networks running operating systems with end of life status to gain unauthorized access. Windows 7 became more susceptible to exploitation due to lack of security updates. Continuing to use any operating systems within an enterprise beyond the end of life is an invitation for cyber actors. Recommendations to help protect you include:

- Use multiple factor authentication
- Strong passwords
- Ensure anti-virus software and firewalls are up to date
- Keep your software updated

These are just a few recommendations, there are many more which your Information Technology person should be familiar with. Remember: safety is not convenient!



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NOAA'S WEATHER-READY NATION

Information compiled by Jeff McKay from the National Weather Service websites. Ready.gov provides additional information.

Weather, we deal with it every day, mostly good, but we have our bad days. We should be ready. You can make sure your community is **StormReady**[®]. Some 98 percent of all presidentially declared disasters are weather related, leading to around 500 deaths per year and nearly \$15 billion in damage. The StormReady program helps arm America's communities with the communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property - before, during and after the event. StormReady helps community leaders and emergency managers strengthen local safety programs.

NOAA's Weather-Ready Nation is about readying your community for extreme weather, water, and climate events. What can you do to help us build a Weather-Ready Nation?

Become a **Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador**! Building a Weather-Ready Nation requires action from other government agencies at the national, state, and local levels, America's Weather Industry, emergency managers, researchers, the media, nonprofits, and businesses. Any organization committed to serving as an example and engaging their stakeholders to make this country ready, responsive, and resilient can be an Ambassador. Weather-Ready Nation can help start a dialog within our local communities that will ultimately reduce the risk of being adversely impacted by extreme weather and water events and increase community resilience for future extreme events.

Being part of a Weather-Ready Nation is about preparing for your community's increasing vulnerability to extreme weather and water events. Americans live in the most severe weather-prone country on Earth.

SKYWARN[®] spotters provide essential information for all types of weather hazards. The focus is reporting on severe local thunderstorms. NWS encourages anyone with an interest in public service to join the SKYWARN[®] program. Volunteers include police and fire personnel, dispatchers, EMS workers, public utility workers and other concerned private citizens. Individuals affiliated with hospitals, schools, churches and nursing homes or those who have a responsibility for protecting others are encouraged to become a spotter.



EMERGENCY PLANNING NEWS



Douglas Humble

Now that we have totally and successfully completed the 2020 Beaver Valley Power Station Exercise, made difficult like everything else during the COVID-19 pandemic, we thought we might tell you a little about what goes on during the year between exercises.

We are currently updating our Beaver County Radiological Emergency Response Plan, which is a never ending process. However, this year will be more challenging as FEMA has made significant changes to one of the nuclear industry's guiding documents, the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program Manual. Thus, we are at work implementing the changes. The good news is that emergency responders and municipalities will hardly notice any changes because most of the work is administrative on our end. It will probably take most of the rest of 2021 to complete this project.

Additionally, there are planning changes associated with the Census, which need to be implemented this year. The largest part of this task is updating the required Evacuation Time Estimate Study. We have been supplying a Beaver Valley Power Station contracted engineering company with lots of Beaver County information including data in reference to: Schools, Recreational Facilities, Special Events, Lodging, Correctional Facilities, EMS, Buses, Major Construction Projects, Evacuation Routes and Traffic Control and Access Control Points with GPS verifications. This data will assist them in completing this project.

And perhaps the biggest news from the County's Radiological Program is that Dave Linkimer has accepted a position at another Nuclear Power Plant in Eastern Pennsylvania.

We are happy for Dave, but truly hate to see him go. We have appreciated his expertise, work ethic and friendship throughout the last 10 – 15 years, and he will be greatly missed.

His replacement as the Emergency Response Supervisor will be Jake Porterfield. Jake is currently a Nuclear Operations Instructor at BVPS and has previous experience as a licensed operator and Unit Supervisor at Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant in Florida. He is a native of the Pittsburgh area and graduated from the University of Pittsburgh. We welcome Jake as he transitions into this new role.

NEWS & NOTES

- Congratulations to Director Brewer who received his **Professional Level Certification** in May. He is pictured at right with PEMA Western Area Director Philip Barker.
- We are excited to introduce our two **newest part time employees** at Beaver County Emergency Services, Katie Sivewright and Brian Hanne. Both completed the dispatcher-training program, which began in January. We are excited to welcome both to the team!
- Emergency Services has also welcomed **4 new distpatch trainees**: Megan Hoenig, Patricia Klenovich, Leslie Mullin and Melissa Redmond.
- **ID badges** will be issued to Law Enforcement Officers who require an ID to enter the Beaver County Courthouse and EMS personnel only. Appointments and department head authorization are required in advance. Please call 724-775-1700 to schedule an appointment or for more information.



EVENTS CALENDAR

- **June 20:** First Day of Summer
- **June 29:** Hazard Mitigation Plan Public Meeting, 6 PM
- **July 4:** Happy Independence Day!
- **July 5:** Independence Day Holiday, County Offices Closed
- **July 8:** BVARA FCC Tests & Meeting, 5 PM & 6:30 PM
- **July 21:** Hazmat Team 700 Training, 6:30 PM, Garage
- **August 10:** VOAD & LEPC Meetings, 11 AM & 1 PM
- **August 12:** EMS Providers Meeting, 1 PM
- **August 18:** Hazmat Team 700 Training, 6:30 PM, Garage

ALL EVENTS ARE LOCATED AT THE BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

For more information on any of the above listed events, or to add your public safety event to future calendars, please email the editor at: smu@beavercountypa.gov



EMERGENCY SERVICES

351 14th Street
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BEAVER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
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The Beaver County Emergency Services Newsletter
is created and published by the Beaver County
Emergency Services center.

Beaver County Emergency Services is a division of Beaver County government, under the authority of the Beaver County Board of Commissioners. Emergency Services manages the county's 9-1-1 dispatch operations center and also serves as the county's Emergency Management office, working under the direction of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) on emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery.

The Emergency Services center is also the home of the county's Hazardous Materials Response Team, the Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) and is the contact point for many other public safety organizations, including EMS, Fire, Police, and Municipal EMA services. Emergency Services works in conjunction with a number of county and offsite agencies to provide comprehensive public safety guidance and emergency support to Beaver County.

Want to contribute?

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