



# Jefferson County Homeland Security & Emergency Management

<http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/homeland-security-and-emergency-management>

## January 2020



## Happy New Year!

The days of 2019 are officially gone. Many people are busy taking down Christmas decorations, making resolutions, and trying to make the most of the new year.

The first people to hold a New Years celebration were the ancient Babylonians. This celebration did not take place in January like ours does, but instead took place in mid-march when the crops were planted. This New Years celebration consisted of a 12-day festival in which they honored the current King or crowned a new one. The Babylonians were also the first to make new year resolutions. These resolutions however, were different than the ones we make today. Instead of things like eating better or spending more time with their families, the Babylonians would make promises to their pagan gods to pay their debts and return any items they may have borrowed during the year. It was believed that if they kept these promises, the gods would bestow favor on them for the coming year.

The ancient Romans had a similar tradition. Their celebration took place in January like ours. They would celebrate a two-faced god named Janus who looked back on the previous year as well as ahead to the future. During this time the Romans would make sacrifices to Janus and make promises of good conduct for the coming year.

The tradition of celebrating New Years changed slightly when carried over to England. English clergyman John Wesley created the Covenant Renewal Service which served as a spiritual alternative to the more raucous celebrations normally associated with New Years Eve.

Today, most New Years resolutions are centered around self-improvement. Some of the most common New Years resolutions are to exercise more, eat healthier, and become more financially responsible. Whatever your New Years resolution may be, we wish you a safe, happy, and healthy New Year!

In this edition of the Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management's (JCHSEM) newsletter, we will be discussing Winter Safety and the Resolve to be Ready Campaign.

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### JCHSEM Staff:

- Stephen S. Allen, Director
- James M. Sager, Deputy Director, Planner, Program Manager
- Brianna L. Gustafson, Administrative Assistant/Public Information Officer/Volunteer Coordinator

# Winter Safety



Winter has officially started in Jefferson County. We have already seen ice, snow, and freezing rain, and that was all before January had even begun. During this season, it is important to prepare yourself for the possibility for winter weather.

Make sure to update your emergency supply kit with necessary winter items to keep you and your family safe. It is also a good idea to put an emergency supply kit in your car in case you get stuck in bad weather while traveling. For more information on how to make sure your kits are winter ready visit: <https://www.weather.gov/safety/winter-before>.

Winter weather can involve, ice, snow, sleet, and extreme cold. Each of these can pose a range of threats to your friends, families, and pets. Winter weather can happen at any time. So it is important to prepare now!

From difficult travel to power outages, snow can cause many issues. There are many types of snow fall:

- Flurries: Light snow falling for short durations with little to no snow accumulation.
- Snow Showers: Snow falling at various intensities for brief periods of time. Some accumulation is possible.
- Snow Squalls: Brief, intense snow showers accompanied by strong, gusty winds. Accumulation may be significant.
- Blowing Snow: Wind-driven snow that reduces visibility. Blowing snow may be falling snow and/or snow on the ground picked up by the wind.
- Blizzard: Sustained winds or frequent gusts of 35 mph or more with snow and blowing snow frequently reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile for 3 hours or more.

Extremely cold weather, especially when it lasts for a long period of time, can cause many significant health hazards including frostbite and hypothermia. During the winter months, it is important to dress warm, even if you don't think it is that cold outside. Dressing in warm layers will help to keep you warm if the temperature drops. Hypothermia can occur when the body sinks below 96°F. If you or someone else begins to experience signs of hypothermia such as shivering, slurred speech, or a weak pulse. Call 911 immediately.



During the winter there are many ways to heat your home to stay warm. But did you know that heating equipment is a leading cause of fires in homes. Between 2012 and 2016 fire departments responded to an estimated 52,050 home fires involving heating equipment each year.



To help keep you and your family safe and warm this winter season here are some tips from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA):

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from any heating equipment.
- Turn off heaters when you leave the room or go to bed.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- If you have a fireplace, make sure it has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying around the room.
- Ashes should be allowed to cool before putting them in a metal container. This container should be kept a safe distance away from the home.
- Have your heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Check your smoke/carbon monoxide detectors. The danger of CO poisoning increases during the winter months when windows are closed and fire places and gas heaters are in use.

With changing weather during the winter months it is important to know the terms associated with winter weather. This graphic will help keep you and your family safe and prepared for winter weather.



**Winter Storm Watch:** Snow, sleet or ice is possible, be prepared! Confidence is medium that a winter storm could produce heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain and cause significant impacts

**Winter Storm Advisory:** Winter weather is expected, exercise caution! Light amounts of wintry precipitation or patchy blowing snow will cause slick conditions and could affect travel if precautions are not taken.

**Winter Storm Warning:** Snow, sleet, or ice is expected, take action! Confidence is high that a winter storm will produce heavy snow, sleet, or freezing rain and cause significant impacts.

## Winter Pet Safety



During the winter months and all year round, it is important to think about the safety of your pets. Just as cold winter weather can cause issues for you, it can cause issues for your pets too. To help keep your animals safe, happy, and healthy this winter, follow these tips provided by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AMVA)

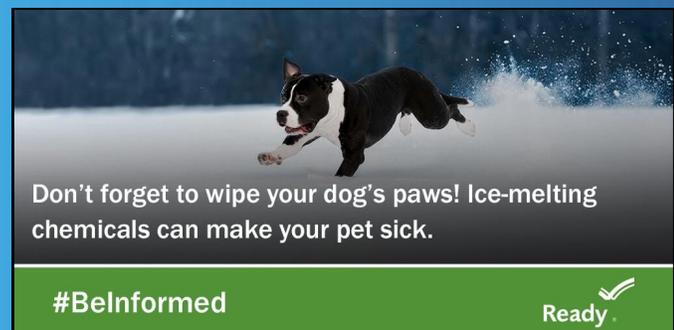
- Has your pet had their yearly wellness exam yet? Each year

you pet should be checked by a veterinarian to ensure they are in good health and to receive their annual vaccinations.

- Know your pets limits. Just like people, animals tolerance to the cold can vary widely. You will probably need to shorten your dog's walks in very cold weather to protect you both from weather-associated health risks.
- Keep your pets inside. If you are cold, your pet probably is too. Cats and dogs should be kept inside during cold weather. It's a common belief that dogs and cats are more resistant than people to cold weather because of their fur, but that is not true. Like people, cats and dogs are susceptible to frostbite and hypothermia and should be kept inside. If you suspect your pet has hypothermia or frostbite, consult your veterinarian immediately. Symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, weakness, and whining.
- Make some noise before starting your car. A warm vehicle engine can be an appealing heat source for cats left outside, but it can also be deadly. Check underneath your car, bang on the hood, and honk the horn before starting the engine to encourage feline hitchhikers to abandon their roost under the hood.
- Cold cars can be just as dangerous to your pets as hot ones. Never leave an animal unattended in a vehicle.
- Be prepared! Cold weather also brings the risks of severe winter weather, blizzards and power outages. Prepare a disaster/emergency kit, and include your pet in your plans. Have enough food, water and medicine (including any prescription medications as well as heartworm and flea/tick preventives) on hand to get through at least 5 days.

Livestock such as cows and horses have their own unique needs to consider during cold weather:

- Be sure they have a way to get out of the elements, especially the wind. Blankets can help protect horses, but a structural shelter with proper ventilation and dry bedding is the best method of protection.
- Besides taking shelter, livestock keep warm by expending energy, which means they need to consume enough calories to heat themselves. Be sure to provide adequate food.
- Ensure they have access to clean, unfrozen water.
- Schedule a veterinary exam to address any health concerns.



## Resolve to be Ready



Many people participate in the New Year's tradition of making resolutions. These resolutions can be anything from getting in shape to being more financially responsible. Have you made your New Year's resolutions yet?

This year, we urge you to consider a different type of resolution. A resolution that will help keep you and your loved ones safe if a disaster were to happen. This year we encourage you to resolve to be ready!

A disaster can happen anytime, anywhere. Are you prepared if a disaster would happen today? In 2020, we

encourage everyone to take simple steps to prepare themselves for a disaster.

Here are some tips from Ready.gov to help kickoff your resolution to be ready!

- Make an emergency plan: choose a safe place to meet, learn evacuation routes, and establish an out-of-town contact.
- Take a current photo of you with your pet in case you get separated during a disaster.
- Take a current photo of you with your children in case you get separated during a disaster.
- Get to know your neighbor and invite them to be a part of your emergency plan.
- Snap photos of important documents and save them in a secure place or online.
- Set up group text lists so you can communicate with friends and family during emergencies.
- Take a class in CPR and first aid.
- Keep and update emergency supplies; remember to include cash.
- Have back-up power sources available to charge devices in case of a power outage.
- Snap pictures of your property for insurance purposes.
- Check your insurance for coverage on disasters like floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes.
- Sign up for alerts and warnings. Download the FEMA app to get real-time alerts, safety tips, and locate open shelters.
- Save for a rainy day! Start and grow your emergency fund.
- Financially prepare for the New Year. Find out how with the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit.
- Spend within your means. Use a personal budgeting worksheet to help plan for holiday expenses and beyond.
- Build up your savings. Put a small amount in your account the first of every month beginning January 1.



When making an emergency plan, it is important to consider the specific needs of your family. Do you have an elderly individual living with you? Do you have small children? Do you care for an individual with disabilities? Do you have pets? All of the above will need different things in the event of an emergency. JCHSEM has an assortment of brochures, pamphlets, and other information to help you prepare for those specific needs. If you would like information on need specific preparedness please contact our office at (304) 724-8914. You can also visit <https://www.ready.gov/> for more information on how to prepare for specific needs, specific weather issues, as well as other general preparedness information.



### **Resolve to Be Ready This Year!**

## **Firework Safety**



Many New Years celebrations involve food, parties, and often times, fireworks. Fireworks, although fun and beautiful, can be very dangerous. If you are planning on using fireworks as part of your festivities this year, it is important to heed these safety tips from the National Safety Council:

- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol.
- Never allow young children to handle fireworks. Sparklers can reach temperatures hot enough to cause third-degree burns.

- Only light one firework at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting.
- Do not light fireworks off indoors.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.

Be sure to follow all local and federal firework guidelines. You can talk to your local law enforcement agencies or the WV State Fire Marshal's Office about laws and ordinances in your area. Be sure to think about your pets too. Animals have sensitive ears and can be very frightened by the noise fireworks produce. Keep pets indoors to reduce the risk that they will run away or get injured.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), fireworks start an average of 18,500 fires a year! Be smart and stay safe if you or your family plan on using fireworks this New Year's Eve.

# Disaster Exercise Series 2019

The West Virginia Region 3 Functional Exercise was held on Tuesday, December 10 at Hardy County OEM/911. This exercise, entitled “Smoking Mountains”, aimed to validate plans and test operational capabilities. The scenario of this exercise involved simultaneous arsons of forested areas in Western Maryland and the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Due to drought conditions in the area, these fires had spread and posed serious threats. In addition, there were several related and unrelated hazardous materials incidents that had occurred, exhausting available resources in the area.

We had 10 individuals from several different partnering agencies join us for the exercise. An effective exercise program is an essential component of our preparedness. Exercise program management involves a collaborative approach that integrates resources, organizations, and individuals in order to identify and achieve program priorities. We want to thank everyone who made the trip to Hardy county for their continued support of Jefferson County’s Emergency Preparedness.

## Quarterly Partnership Meeting

Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management will hold their January Annual Partnership Meeting at the Epic Buffet at Hollywood Casino at the Charles Town Races and Slots. The meeting will take place on Friday January 24, 2020 at noon and last approximately 1 hour.



Our guest speaker(s) for this meeting will be individuals from the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. They will discuss the Bomb Making Awareness Program (BMAP). With the increase in the use of common items to make homemade explosives (HME) and improvised explosive devices (IED), an educated and proactive public is the key to prevention. The BMAP program is designed to increase public and private sector awareness of the everyday products that terrorists and criminals can use to make a bomb or other dangerous device. It also helps provide public awareness and education to help businesses and their employees identify and report suspicious purchasing behaviors of common items that can be used to make bombs. This program aims to increase identification of suspicious purchasing behavior, strengthen prevention opportunities, promote community-based policing, and provide reporting mechanisms to track and measure success.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races for sponsoring our annual partnership luncheon gratis and for their continued support of JCHSEM activities and events! *Reservations must be made no later than Friday, January 17th, 2020* or until all seats are reserved. You must be registered to attend. If you are interested in attending this meeting please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/january-annual-partnership-meeting-tickets-87341116631> or contact JCHSEM by email at [jchsem@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:jchsem@jeffersoncountywv.org) or by phone at (304) 724-8914. Seating is limited to 100 participants.

## 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:

**West Virginia Military Affairs and Public Safety's Training Center, CourseMill.** If you are involved in emergency management in West Virginia, you can set up your free account at <http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov/dmapscm6/home.html>.

Here is a listing of upcoming state sponsored training opportunities. These courses are free to attend, however, registration is required.

### **Evacuation Planning Strategies and Solutions MGT-461**

**Date:** March 12, 2020

**Time:** 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Location:** WV RETI Center, Sutton, WV

**Course Description:** This eight-hour management-level course is designed to provide emergency managers, first responders, transportation professionals, security and safety professionals, and government administrators with the ability to utilize current tools and technologies to institute best practices and strategies to plan for and execute an emergency evacuation. This course discusses the hazard conditions for which an emergency evacuation could be an appropriate protective action and inform participants on resources and methods to help them better prepare for an emergency evacuation. This course will allow participants to explore data, modeling tools, and simulations that assist with the implementation of an emergency evacuation.

### **Incident Tactical Dispatcher Training**

**Date:** March 17–20, 2020

**Time:** 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Charleston Metro 911 Center

**Course Description:** An Incident Tactical Dispatcher is a specially trained individual qualified to operate away from the dispatch center in a command post, base camp or at the incident scene. Incident Tactical Dispatchers leverage the multi-tasking, communication, accountability and documentation skills of successful Tele communicators to provide public safety communications expertise and support at planned events and extended incidents such as hostage situations, multi-alarm fires, search and rescue operations, bombings, and active shooter incidents. Incident Tactical Dispatchers may support the Communications Unit as a single resource or as part of an incident tactical dispatch team. This course provides a basic understanding for the roles and responsibilities of an incident tactical dispatcher working in a tactical environment.

This course is taught by ECD/ICTAP instructors who have both dispatch and communications unit experience. The course provides a realistic, hands-on approach to mastering the tasks and skills of an Incident Tactical Dispatcher. This course is designed for experienced dispatchers who are familiar with the Incident Command System and dispatch operations. This course is four days long with an end of course INTD exercise on the fourth day. Each attendee participates in hands-on training exercises and receives a position task book.

To Register for these FREE Classes, go to: <http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov/dmapscm6>. Once you set up your account, you can log on and look at the list of available courses taught in West Virginia.

For questions about the course or registration, contact [Shawn.D.Dunbrack@WV.gov](mailto:Shawn.D.Dunbrack@WV.gov) or call 304-558-5380.

# Online FEMA Training

FEMA also 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 at the federal, state, local or tribal governments.

Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management 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 394 - Protecting Your Home or Small Business From Disaster

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to provide a foundation of knowledge that will enable participants to: Describe different types of natural disasters, Describe hazards that pose a risk to their home or small business, Explain how protective measures can reduce or eliminate long-term risks to their home and personal property from hazards and their effects, Explain how protective measures for small businesses secure people, business property, and building structures and prevent business loss from a natural disaster.

**Primary Audience:** The primary audience for this course is small business owners, homeowners, and individual citizens. It is presented in a non-technical format and includes protective measures that can reduce the negative consequences of disasters on homes or small businesses.

**Course Length:** Approximately 10 hours

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-394.a>

## IS 906 - Workplace Security Awareness

**Course Description:** This course provides guidance to individuals and organizations on how to improve the security in your workplace. No workplace—be it an office building, construction site, factory floor, or retail store—is immune from security threats. Employees are often the target of these threats as well as the organization's first line of defense against them. Threats endanger the confidentiality, integrity, and security of your workplace, as well as your virtual workplace and computer systems. This course presents information on how employees can contribute to your organization's security.

**Primary Audience:** All private-sector and public-sector employees.

**Course Length:** Approximately 1 hour

**Course Link:** <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-906>

## 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, resources 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 Homeland Security and Emergency Management-Committees

## **Steering Committee, John Sherwood, Chair**

The Steering Committee works with the JCHSEM Director to guide the activities of JCHSEM. A fourteen-member Steering Committee is made up of public and private representation. JCHSEM 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 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 JCHSEM's programs. They work with the Director and other staff to keep the entire community focused on the objectives of JCHSEM, 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. Additionally, they are responsible to assist the program manager in setting up speaking engagements and public awareness events. This committee meets monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, WVHSEM, and Federal Emergency Management Agency in July, 2003. The plan was updated in 2008 and 2013. The 2013 Plan was approved by WVDHSEM and FEMA in June 2013 and the 2018 plan was approved in November 2018.

## **Counter Terrorism Committee, Stephen Allen, Director, 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 counter terrorism or human-caused disasters. Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org)

Times, dates, places may need to be changed due to inclement weather, scheduling conflicts, or EOC activation. If you have questions, call the JCHSEM office at (304) 728-3290.

**Jefferson County  
Homeland Security and  
Emergency Management**

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**PUBLIC SAFETY;  
PUBLIC TRUST**



The Jefferson County Commission's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (JCHSEM) is responsible for the coordination of preparedness, planning, 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. JCHSEM is also responsible for the Jefferson County R.A.C.E.S. group.

## January Meetings & Events

- Sterling National Weather Service calls every Monday at 9 a.m.
- Weather calls every Monday and Friday at 10 a.m. with State EOC and National Weather Service
- January 1 - New Years Holiday, County Offices Closed
- January 8 - Public Awareness Committee Meeting
- January 14 - Counterterrorism Committee Meeting
- January 24 - Annual Partnership Meeting
- January 28 - IT Meeting