



This Week in Ohio EMA

A publication of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, a division of the Ohio Department of Public Safety

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Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association Trains in Swift Water Rescue at the Olentangy River



Officers of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Watercraft Rescue and Ohio Fire Chiefs' Associate prepare for their swiftwater rescue training along the Olentangy River.

Throughout the week, 34 Ohio firefighters received hands-on, in-water instruction in swift water rescue techniques during special classes held at various central Ohio locations.

Equipment and various other fees for the training program were funded by a \$125,000 grant from Ohio EMA to the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Watercraft provided the training. This training is part of the Ohio Homeland Security response system and its water rescue Technical Advisory Committee objectives.

On May 4, firefighters received training along the Olentangy River in southern Delaware County. Under the supervision of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, a release of water from the Delaware Reservoir made it possible to conduct realistic swift water rescue training.

Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association President Scott Skeldon; Ohio EMA's Technical Support Division Director Mark Patchen; Ohio EMA's Operations Division Director Mel House; and ODNR, Division of Watercraft Officer Eric Reed were available to the media.

Summit County in Emmitsburg, Maryland

Seventy representatives from various disciplines within Summit County participated in the Integrated Emergency Management Course (IEMC) at the National Emergency Training Facility in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The IEMC was a four-day exercise-based training facilitated by instructors from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The training was divided into classroom instructions and "real time" exercises. FEMA instructors shared their personal experiences from national incidents such as the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, the 1989 Loma Prieta (California) earthquake and last year's Hurricane Katrina.

Class participants were also given instruction on the Incident Command System, Emergency Operations Center and Disaster Management.



Homeland Security Threat Level:

ELEVATED



Ohio EMA Weekly Report Entries (ending May 2)

Ready.Gov Telephone Conference

The Ohio EMA Plans Branch participated in a Ready Campaign international conference call, which was moderated by Heather Blanchard of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Ready Campaign.



The DHS Ready Office is conducting a media outreach campaign that focuses on preparedness efforts for hurricanes and earthquakes. Other topics of discussion included pet preparedness, Ready business mentoring initiative and planning for September's National Preparedness Month.

State-level Judging: Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest

State-level judging of the regional-winning posters for the Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest will take place in the State EOC dining facility on May 9. First through sixth graders throughout Ohio drew posters illustrating safety and preparedness tips to protect people from Ohio's severe weather.

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness will present prizes and awards to all regional winners and announce the overall and state winners on August 12 at the Ohio State Fair.

Doom and Gloom to Befall the World in May - "Are We Prepared?" "Millions May Die!"

By: C.J. Couch, Chief of Public Affairs

If you've watched television, seen a movie or read a newspaper/magazine anytime during the past week, you know that doom and gloom will befall the world in May. During television prime time slots on May 9th, one network will air a movie about Avian Influenza, while another will air a special on mega disasters. No doubt, during a commercial break, you will see the preview for a summer movie about the sinking of a cruise ship.

So, given the general public will be inundated with images of doom, gloom, death and destruction, should emergency managers be surprised when the questions are asked "Could it happen here?" or "Are we prepared?"
No.



FEMA photo

Emergency Managers know these movies are playing off fears of the unknown, blurring the lines between fact and fiction, because there exists Emergency Operations Plans, Mutual Aid Agreements and Emergency Operation Centers that have been reviewed, tested, and are ready to handle any disaster. But for all of our knowledge, what does the general public know? If fears of pandemic outbreaks, mega disasters and civil

disorder reside in the minds of the people, can you blame them?

As these movies play out in our living rooms and movie theaters don't curse the message but instead embrace it. Use these fictional accounts as educational opportunities. Ask yourself, "What steps can I undertake to show people we are prepared?"

If people are unfamiliar with the county's EOCs, hold an Open House. Invite them to see what transpires behind the scenes during a disaster. Write an article for your local newspaper, that describes the Emergency Operations Plan or your mutual aid

agreements. Contact the local television or radio station and inquire about the possibility of doing an interview.

We can't stop the "presses," nor should we. Instead, develop partnerships with the media and have them help you to get in front of the story. Could a disaster happen in the county? Sure. Are we prepared? Yes. Can we do more? Absolutely. I know it, you know it; now let's work together so they (the general public) know it.

Introducing Columbiana County's New Emergency Management Agency and Operations Center

The Columbiana County Emergency Management Agency recently conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony that introduced the new county EMA and emergency operations center, located in Lisbon, Ohio, one block south of the Columbiana County Courthouse.

The building is 4,800 square feet, and contains a 1,200 square foot emergency operations center, which is equipped with 12 work stations and five video projectors that can be used to display maps, broadcast news coverage or share computer input. The EOC is named after the county's previous EMA director, Jay Carter, Jr.

The new EMA also included office space for the 911 director and new county 911 equipment; an office for First Energy Nuclear Operations Center (FENOC) staff; and office space for Ohio EMA's resident radiological analyst, Rudy Sacchet. FENOC operates the nearby Beaver Valley Power Station, a nuclear power plant in Shippingport, Pennsylvania.

Columbiana County EMA Director Darren Dodson said the EMA needed a larger, more technologically advanced headquarters to keep up with their growing demands, which expanded to include homeland security.



Held in conjunction with the Intergovernmental Technology Conference

Hosted by:
Ohio Department of Public Safety
& Ohio Homeland Security

Greater Columbus Convention Center
Downtown Columbus
May 10 & 11, 2006

Advance Registration: \$52.00
 On-site Registration: \$75.00

Additional Information at:
www.gov.resources.com/ohsshhomepage.html

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 30	May 1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Emergency Planning - Ohio EMA	State-level judging of Severe Weather Awareness posters; OCSWA meeting	Homeland Security Symposium Greater Columbus Convention Center	Communications TAC Teleconference - 9 am	Homeland Security Planning - Ohio EMA	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<i>Mothers Day</i>	Medical TAC Ohio EMA	HazMat TAC Ohio EMA	Incident Mgmt Ohio EMA	Water TAC Ohio EMA		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	L449 Incident Command System Train-the-Trainer - Ohio EMA (Columbus)					
28	 <i>Memorial Day</i>	31	June 1	2	3	4

Register for Ohio EMA courses by visiting <http://ema.state.oh.us/training>