

# **CENTRE COUNTY 911/EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

## **11.0 CENTRE COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

### **General**

The Centre County Office of Emergency Services (also known as the County Emergency Management Agency [EMA]) operates as an office of Centre County government under the direction and control of the Centre County Board of Commissioners. The Office of Emergency Services, or EMA, is the county office charged with the responsibility for the Emergency Management, Hazardous Materials, Counter-Terrorism (Homeland Security), and All-Hazards programs for Centre County in accordance with the provisions of Title 35, the Emergency Management Services Code, Act 1990-165, Hazardous Material Emergency Planning and Response Act, and Act 227 Counter-Terrorism Planning, Preparedness and Response Act.

### **11.1 Mission**

The mission of the Office of Emergency Services is to serve and protect Centre County citizens and property from natural and man-made hazards. Its primary responsibility is to aid all residents, public and private, providing MITIGATION through hazard vulnerability analysis; PREPARATION through planning, training, and exercises; RESPONSE through the effective coordination of available resources; and disaster RECOVERY through coordinated assistance.

### **11.2 Concept of Operations**

In accordance with Title 35, direction of response operations is the responsibility of the lowest level of government affected. In Pennsylvania this is the townships or boroughs (municipalities). Note: Centre Region (consisting of College Township, Ferguson Township, Halfmoon Township, Harris Township, Patton Township, and State College Borough) is considered a single political jurisdiction for emergency management purposes.

If all appropriate locally available resources of the affected municipality are fully committed or otherwise inadequate, assistance may be requested from the County EMA. In this case, the County EMA does not take charge, but provides support in coordinating the availability of additional resources.

If, on the other hand, the disaster or emergency affects more than one municipality and those municipalities declare disaster emergencies, the County EMA, by law, assumes a primary role and responsibility in the coordination and support of response operations. If the resources of Centre County are inadequate or if more than one county is affected and declare disaster emergencies, the State will assume the primary role through the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

Overall coordination of response and recovery operations will be exercised by the County EMA Coordinator (Director of Emergency Services), or his/her designee,

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under the authority and control of the Centre County Board of Commissioners and the guidelines of the Centre County Emergency Operations Plan.

Centralized coordination and support of the total county response and recovery efforts will be conducted through the Centre County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), located at the Willowbank Office Building, 420 Holmes Street, Bellefonte, PA.

During normal day-to-day functions, public information is generally provided directly to the news media by the respective agencies, organizations or individuals providing emergency services. However, upon activation of the EOC, all emergency public information will be released through the County Public Information Officer (PIO), the County EMA Coordinator (Director of Emergency Services), or County Commissioners, and all requests for information related to response and recovery operations should be so directed.

## **11.3 Pennsylvania Emergency Incident Reporting System (PEIRS)**

PEIRS has been implemented by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to establish uniform emergency situation reporting criteria and identifies PEMA as the single point of contact.

Primary responsibility for PEIRS reporting rests with the on-duty 9-1-1 Center personnel. However, the County EMA staff may provide updates either electronically or telephonically to the State EOC directly from the incident scene. EMA staff may provide updates to the 9-1-1 supervisor from the scene. When the Centre County EOC is activated, the EOC staff shall have primary responsibility for PEIRS reporting.

PEIRS reports should always be transmitted electronically via the internet based WebEOC Reporting System. On the rare occasions when the internet may not be available, PEIRS reports may also be transmitted via telephone (1-800-424-7362), fax machine (1-717-651-2021), or email (StateEOC@state.pa.us). This report is due within one hour of the incident, or as soon as practical.

Follow-up reports should be transmitted periodically, or at timeframes requested by the State EOC, until the incident is closed.

## **11.4 State Emergency Voice Alerting Network (SEVAN)**

The SEVAN system is the voice communications module of the PEMA statewide satellite communications and warning system. Terminals are located at county EOCs, EMA offices, 911 Centers, EMS Councils, the three PEMA area offices, the State Fire Academy, and the State PEMA EOC in Harrisburg. The State EOC is responsible for day-to-day management of the system.

The new, upgraded SEVAN system operates just like a normal telephone (with a slight delay due to the voice transmissions going over satellite. To use the system,

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merely dial the 4-digit telephone extension of the party you wish to contact. Some of the more commonly used extensions are:

1140 - Centre County Emergency Communications Center

1141 – Centre County EOC

1142 – Centre County EMA Director Desk

1143 – Centre County EMA Training Officer Desk

1000 – State EOC

1001 – State EOC

1002 – State EOC

For updated lists of the entire Commonwealth directory, contact the EMA office.

At no time will the SEVAN unit be turned off, nor the volume turned down so low as to not monitor communications.

## 11.5 **Emergency Alert System (EAS)**

***ONLY THE COUNTY EMA COORDINATOR CAN AUTHORIZE THE LOCAL ACTIVATION OF THE EAS.***

If any request for EAS activation is received, the County EMA Coordinator will be immediately notified.

## 11.6 **Weather Watches and Warnings (Tornado, Hurricane, Severe Snow Storm, Blizzard, Severe Thunderstorm, High Winds, Red Flag Warnings)**

Severe weather watches do not normally require any action by the CCECC. The CCECC will only page watch messages when authorized by the County EMA Coordinator.

In the event a severe weather warning statement is received by the CCECC, the County EMA Coordinator will be notified.

The CCECC will immediately page all warning messages:

Paging tones will be utilized for warning messages.

“Attention all Centre County Emergency Services personnel”

Text

“Additional updates will be provided as necessary”

Time

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## 11.7 **Flash Flood Forecast and Warning**

The EMA coordinates a Flood Forecast and Warning System consisting of automated (IFLOWS) and volunteer rain gauge and stream gauge observers situated throughout the County.

The purpose of this system is to provide rainfall and stream rise data to the EMA, which can be translated into meaningful terms and analyzed as to its direct impact on Centre County. This data can be computed into a reasonably accurate prediction of potential flooding situations both within Centre County and to adjacent downstream counties. The ultimate goal of the system is to provide local communities with advanced warning of potential flood hazards in an attempt to save lives and lessen property damage.

Upon receipt of any rain gauge or stream gauge report, the CCECC shall forward the CAD report to the EMA office.

The EMA Coordinator will be notified upon the occurrence of any of the following:

Any rain gauge observer reports 2.00" or more.

Any stream gauge observer reports a stream rising 0.50 feet, or more.

## 11.8 **Special Procedures**

### 11.8.1 **Enemy or Terrorist Attack**

In the event an enemy or terrorist attack warning statement is received by the CCECC, the County EMA Coordinator will be notified without delay.

### 11.8.2 **Hazardous Materials (including Radiological Incidents)**

Upon notification of a hazardous materials incident, the PST will respond as follows:

Determine as much about the nature of the incident as possible:

Time of spill

Name of material (exact spelling)

Name of manufacturer

Name of shipper/carrier

Mode of transportation

Approximate amount of material involved

Type and condition of container (intact, ruptured, etc.)

Status and anticipated movement of material (burning, leaking, etc.)

Color, words, and numbers on the vehicle placards

Apparent hazards (possible explosion, proximity to population, bodies of water or sewers, vapor clouds, etc.)

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Present weather conditions

Temperature

Wind speed and direction

Atmospheric conditions (clear skies, cloudy, fog, etc.)

Precipitation type and intensity (if any)

Injuries or entrapment involved

Fire involved other than material

Personnel on scene and actions initiated

Dispatch the appropriate police, fire, and ambulance services as required in accordance with existing dispatch procedures. Page the County EMA Coordinator to determine which hazmat team to dispatch.

Advise all responding units of the nature of the situation and possible hazards based on information received and the “US Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Guidebook.”

Once the Hazmat team is dispatched, **only** the responding hazmat team chief or County EMA Coordinator can cancel the response.

Initiate a PEIRS Report.

## 11.8.3

### **Airplane Accident**

Upon notification of an airplane crash, the PST will respond as follows:

Determine the exact location of the accident including any debris areas and areas which may be threatened by fire or explosion.

Determine the nature of the incident including:

Time of crash

Estimated size or type of aircraft

Tail identification number

Estimated number of injuries or casualties

Apparent hazards (proximity to or involvement of other structures, possible explosion, etc.)

Personnel on scene and actions initiated

Dispatch the appropriate police, fire, rescue and ambulance services. Page the County EMA Coordinator to determine which hazmat team to dispatch. **If the accident occurred at an airport, follow the appropriate Airport Disaster Plan, if one exists.** Advise all responding units of the nature and possible hazards of the situation.

Page the County EMA Coordinator.

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If necessary, the EMA Coordinator will request that the CCECC notify the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Flight Services and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) through the State EOC.

Notify the nearest hospital of all airplane incidents regardless of the number of injuries or deaths, even if no injuries or deaths have been confirmed. This is to eliminate rumors and false information received by the hospital from other sources. The hospital must be constantly updated as information is received and confirmed with respect to the number of injuries and deaths.

Page the Centre County Coroner in the case of possible fatalities.

Initiate a PEIRS Report.

### **11.8.4 Missing or Overdue Aircraft**

Upon notification of a missing or overdue aircraft, the PST will respond as follows:

Determine the nature of the incident including:

Pilot's name

Type of aircraft

Tail identification number

Number of passengers/crew

Point of departure and destination

Time of departure and expected arrival

Last known location on radar (latitude and longitude)

If a flight plan was filed

Page the County EMA Coordinator.

Initiate a PEIRS Report.

Upon confirmation of an aircraft accident, refer to the Section on Aircraft Accidents.

### **11.8.5 Mass Casualty**

Upon notification of any incident involving 10 or more patients, the PST will respond as follows:

Determine the nature of the incident including:

Cause of the accident (transportation, industrial, building collapse, etc.)

Number of injuries and/or deaths

Apparent hazards

Personnel on scene and actions initiated

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Dispatch the appropriate police, fire, rescue and ambulance services as required in accordance with existing dispatch procedures. Advise all responding units of the nature and possible hazards of the situation.

Determine from the Incident Commander if an ambulance staging area has been established for responding ambulances. Direct all responding ambulances to the staging area.

Page the County EMA Coordinator. If a HazMat response team is requested, County EMA will determine which team to dispatch.

Notify the local hospital(s) of the incident.

Page the Centre County Coroner and inform him/her of potential fatalities.

Initiate a PEIRS Report.

### **11.8.6 Dam Incidents**

Every dam has different and potentially unique notification procedures. Upon receiving information that a dam has failed or of the potential or imminent dam failure, the PST will ask for the following information:

The caller's name and phone number.

Name of the Dam.

Ask if this is a "Watch", a "Warning", or an "Evacuation".

Location of the failure (lat/long if possible, otherwise landmark description)

The height of the water from the top.

The PST will respond as follows:

Refer to the copy of the applicable Dam Plan in the ECC for the emergency response procedures for that dam.

Notify personnel in accordance with the procedures.

Page the County EMA Coordinator.

Initiate a PEIRS Report.

### **11.9 Notification of Other PEIRS Reportable Incidents**

The County EMA Coordinator should be paged when the CCECC is notified of any of the following incidents/conditions:

Any incident involving a county-owned property (ex: Centre Crest) or a property occupied by a county office (ex: transportation, senior centers).

Any incident with the potential to displace 25 or more people or affect 5 or more businesses.

Incidents involving hospitals, personal care homes, or assisted living facilities.

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Widespread utility outages.  
Reports of flooding, mudslides or landslide  
Incidents involving schools (public, charter, universities) or school buses  
Any quarantine whether public health or agricultural  
Civil disorder including prison escapes and riots  
Bomb threats/incidents, or explosions  
State or interstate road closures in excess of one hour for other than  
scheduled maintenance  
Any search and rescue incidents in Centre County

## 11.10 **Unmet Needs/Resources**

When a request for resources (other than day to day mutual aid) is received by the CCECC from an out of County agency, page the County EMA Coordinator.

At the request of any Incident Commander, the County EMA Coordinator should be paged.

## 11.11 **Paging of Municipal EMA Coordinators**

All municipal EMA Coordinators have been issued a pager and radio designator. Municipal EMA Coordinators can be paged at the request of an Incident Commander or the County EMA Coordinator.

As situations warrant, initially page the local Municipal Coordinator when an Incident Commander or on-scene personnel request EMA support or the need for additional logistical resources (i.e., food, water, gas, lights, etc.). (Note: The County EMA Coordinator may also be paged at any time if requested, questions arise, or assistance is needed).

Inform the Municipal Coordinator of the information received and actions initiated. If a Municipal Coordinator does not respond within ten (10) minutes, he/she will be re-paged. If no response within another ten (10) minutes, the CCECC will page the on-duty County EMA Coordinator.

Inform the County Coordinator of the information received and actions initiated. If the County Coordinator does not respond within ten (10) minutes, attempt contact by telephone.

## 11.12 **Centre County Animal Response Team (CART)**

The CART is a volunteer organization of people trained to assist in the rescue and handling of domestic animals (large, small, exotic) during major incidents or disasters. The team is NOT for the response to a loose dog, a cat in a tree, or a wild bear in a park.



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Should the CCECC receive a call or request for support from the Centre County CART, the PST should take the following actions:

Open an incident and document the request in the Incident Log.

Page the County EMA Coordinator. (The EMA Coordinator will contact the applicable CART Leader and provide instructions).

Initiate a PEIRS Report.

11.13 **Miscellaneous or Other Situations**

Since not all policies, procedures or guidelines can cover every possible situation, PST's should page the County EMA Coordinator at any time with questions.