

Common Vision

Newsletter for the Emergency Management Agency of Summit County

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Winter 2001

James B. McCarthy, County Executive

A Face With the Voice

A committee consisting of Summit County public safety telecommunicators was formed in the spring of 1999. Recognizing a need, the committee decided to develop and conduct a free training program using the expertise that existed in Summit County and concentrate on topics pertinent to the Summit County area. The local telecommunicators have substantial input determining the training topics.

As a result, many communities throughout the county have hosted training classes. The sessions are usually offered twice, once during the day and once in the evening, to allow all shifts the opportunity to attend. These training classes have also built a network throughout the public safety telecommunicators' community. Now there is a face to the voice!

Attendees at the first training viewed a video of all of the communications centers throughout Summit County with some background on their duties and staffing. The video allowed the different departments to obtain a better understanding of some of the differences and similarities between them.

Dr. David Hoover, Director of Fire Protection and Emergency Management for The University of Akron, maintains training records with the assistance of Phil McLean, Industrial Emergency Response Training Coordinator. Certificates are issued after each class.

The committees members are: Tim Baker, Richfield Village; Ginger Bates, Stow; Sharon Boone, Green; Valerie De Rose, co-chairperson, Summit County Emergency Management Agency; Karen Keifer, Ohio State Patrol; Sgt. Jim Kiehl, Copley Twp.; JoAnn Lowman, Hudson; Cathy Mitchen, Norton; Lt. Judy Neel, Ohio State Patrol; Bonnie Rininger, Franklin Twp.; Wanda Steiner, co-chairperson, Akron; Karen Tomlinson, Cuyahoga Falls; Melissa Wisener, Copley Twp.

If you have any training suggestions or would like to learn more about this committee, please contact one of the members listed above.

Summit County, Ohio "Charting a Course for the 21st Century"



James B. McCarthy, Executive

One of the goals of my administration is to develop partnerships between Summit County government and the public and private sectors. The county's Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is a good example of how these partnerships benefit the citizens of our community.

EMA works hard throughout the year to educate its citizens and public safety organizations how to effectively react in the event of a catastrophic incident in our county. Our goal is to provide state of the art equipment and training to respond to an emergency situation.

This newsletter is designed to update you on the advances that have

been made in public safety and provides you the opportunity to see for yourself what is being done in Summit County to make it an even better and safer place to live.

Plannin' with Petranic

Y2K!!!! It is over! After ending 1999 and beginning 2000 with this project, we've moved right into TERRORISM!

2000 has brought a lot of great training to Summit County. Hundreds of our public service personnel have taken advantage of training sponsored by our agency.

The Emergency Management Agency unveiled a three year project with the Disaster Operations Training (DOT) Program. DOT is a home study program based on the Summit County Emergency Operations Plan. DOT has been very well accepted and is the basis of our training program. If you have not begun this program, now is the time!

We also coordinated many Domestic Preparedness workshops and training classes such as the Senior Official Workshop, Initial City Visit,

not to mention the intensive week long Domestic Preparedness "Train the Trainers" Courses. It should make everybody very proud to have had the turnout and enthusiasm in this program that was demonstrated on that week in June. The Department of Defense personnel were excited to have full classes to teach. This was a great

see Plannin', back



Mission

Summit County Emergency Management leads, coordinates and supports the emergency management system, in order to protect lives and prevent loss of property from all hazards.

Upcoming Training

"Debris Management"

March 29th

Akron EOC

Public Works

"Tornado Spotters"

April 5th

Ocasek Auditorium

Any one interested

The Flu and You

The Flu is caused by a virus typically seen from November to April. It is spread from person to person by coughing or sneezing. People can get sick 3-4 days after becoming exposed to the flu. The national experience with flu epidemics is approximately 114,000 hospitalizations and 20,000 deaths. The healthcare community encourages annual vaccination especially for people over age 50, those with chronic health conditions and women in their second or third trimester of pregnancy.

Is it a Cold or the Flu? The flu characteristically is accompanied by a fever (102-104 F), lasting 3-4 days. A headache, body aches and prominent fatigue that can last up to 2-3 weeks often occur. It is also common to have chest discomfort and a cough, which in some cases, can lead to bronchitis or pneumonia without proper care.

What should you do if you get the flu? If you have the flu, stay home, drink plenty of fluids, get lots of rest and if you have a fever, take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen. You will need to consult your doctor if your fever last for more than a week, if you have a cough that begins to produce phlegm or if you don't seem to be getting better. People with breathing or heart problems or that are on medication that weakens your body's natural defenses, such as cancer fighting drugs, would also need to consult their doctor.

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Visit us on the web at:
www.co.summit.oh.us/executive/ema.htm

Planmin' continued

demonstration of Summit County's and the City of Akron's dedication. There will be much more in the coming year with the Akron/Summit County Domestic Preparedness Program.

In 2001 we look forward to establishing many new programs and continuing to support already established programs. As always, we depend on volunteers (professional and recreational) to help us make Summit County a resistant and prepared community that is ready to respond and recovery from any possible disaster.

Thank you very much.

Reading, Writing and Mass Decontamination

This past year has been a busy year for the Summit County Hazardous Materials Response Team. The team had three zone calls and eighteen technical assistance team (TAT) calls throughout the county. In addition to calls, the team kept a rigorous training schedule to stay proficient in all areas of hazardous materials response and containment. Some of the areas of training covered this past year included cargo tank incidents, radiation, propane emergencies and level A suit emergencies.

The team also began an in-depth training covering all areas of response to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents. This training began with "Train-the-Trainer" courses held at The University of Akron in June sponsored by Summit County Emergency Management Agency and presented by the Department of Defense. The training lasted 5 days with a tabletop exercise conducted on the last day. The courses that team members participated in were: Responder Awareness, Responder Operations, Technician HazMat, Technician EMS and Incident Command. In Addition to other classes, the team's medical director, Dr. Mary Jo McMullen, also attended Technician Hospital Provider. The entire team will receive this training throughout the upcoming year.

The Summit County Hazardous Materials Response Team dedicates many hours for training to ensures that in the time of a chemical, biological or nuclear incident they are prepared to respond and assist the residence of Summit County.

You Can't Fool Mother Nature

Dr. Dennis Mileti, Director of the Natural Hazard Observer, University of Colorado at Boulder, spoke to emergency management directors and guests at the Winter 2000 County Commissioners' Conference. Dr. Mileti's revolutionary approach to emergency management mitigation efforts sparked much discussion among members of the audience on how we try to "prevent" natural hazards from occurring. Dr. Mileti challenged emergency managers, development officials and government leaders to consider the future effects of their efforts to mitigate natural disasters. For example, when building a dam, consider all of the environmental ramifications as well as the future development down stream, now that the dam is "protecting" the town. Dr. Mileti asks us to think before we develop, before we dry up the wet lands or dam up the river. How long can these types of measures last? Are we just passing the buck to our children's children who will suffer the consequences? In the end, government is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of it's citizens. Do we think we can fool Mother Nature? "Life will not be contained. Life, it breaks free, it spreads to new territories, it crashes through barriers, painfully, maybe even dangerously but well, there it is, life fines a way." (Dr. Malcolm,) Jurassic Park.



*Dr. Dennis Mileti
(third from the left)
and members
of the EMA staff,
Annette Petranic,
Barry Gradwohl,
Tina Merlitti,
Valerie De Rose,
Michael Oberuch
and EMA volunteer
Charmaine Zawacki*