

EMA News & Views



County of Lycoming Emergency Management Agency

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Fall 2017

COUNTY OF LYCOMING EMA QUARTERLY TRAINING

(Emergency Management Coordinators serving the municipalities of Lycoming County)

The next County of Lycoming EMA Quarterly Training will be held on:

THURSDAY - December 14, 2017 - 7:00 pm

At

LYCOMING COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

**ALTERNATE EOC - THIRD STREET PLAZA
33 WEST THIRD STREET, 5TH FLOOR
WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Joshua Schnitzlein, Lycoming County Planning & Community Development

MEETING TOPIC DETAILS

For the next EMA quarterly training Josh Schnitzlein, Hazard Mitigation Planner, will discuss the Lycoming County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. It is most effective when implemented under a comprehensive, long-term mitigation plan. State, tribal, and local governments engage in hazard mitigation planning to identify risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural disasters, and develop long-term strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events. Mitigation plans are key to breaking the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.

Developing hazard mitigation plans enables state, tribal, and local governments to:

- Increase education and awareness around threats, hazards, and vulnerabilities;
- Build partnerships for risk reduction involving government, organizations, businesses, and the public;
- Identify long-term, broadly-supported strategies for risk reduction;
- Align risk reduction with other state, tribal, or community objectives;
- Identify implementation approaches that focus resources on the greatest risks and vulnerabilities; and
- Communicate priorities to potential sources of funding.

Hope to see you there!

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Winter Driving Tips From AAA



Severe weather can be both frightening and dangerous for automobile travel. Motorists should know the safety rules for dealing with winter road emergencies. AAA reminds motorists to be cautious while driving in adverse weather. Contact your local [AAA club](#) for more information.

AAA recommends the following winter driving tips:

- Avoid driving while you're fatigued. Getting the proper amount of rest before taking on winter weather tasks reduces driving risks.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated.
- Never mix radial tires with other tire types.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.
- If possible, avoid using your parking brake in cold, rainy and snowy weather.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand).
- Always look and steer where you want to go.
- Use your seat belt every time you get into your vehicle.

Tips for long-distance winter trips:

- Watch weather reports prior to a long-distance drive or before driving in isolated areas. Delay trips when especially bad weather is expected. If you must leave, let others know your route, destination and estimated time of arrival.
- Always make sure your vehicle is in peak operating condition by having it inspected by a AAA Approved Auto Repair facility.

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- Keep at least half a tank of gasoline in your vehicle at all times.
- Pack a cellular telephone with your local AAA's telephone number, plus blankets, gloves, hats, food, water and any needed medication in your vehicle.
- If you become snow-bound, stay with your vehicle. It provides temporary shelter and makes it easier for rescuers to locate you. Don't try to walk in a severe storm. It's easy to lose sight of your vehicle in blowing snow and become lost.
- Don't over exert yourself if you try to push or dig your vehicle out of the snow.
- Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna or place a cloth at the top of a rolled up window to signal distress. At night, keep the dome light on if possible. It only uses a small amount of electricity and will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- Make sure the exhaust pipe isn't clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust could cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the passenger compartment with the engine running.
- Use whatever is available to insulate your body from the cold. This could include floor mats, newspapers or paper maps.

If possible run the engine and heater just long enough to remove the chill and to conserve gasoline.

Tips for driving in the snow:

- Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Applying the gas slowly to accelerate is the best method for regaining traction and avoiding skids. Don't try to get moving in a hurry. And take time to slow down for a stoplight. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- Drive slowly. Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads. Accelerating, stopping, turning – nothing happens as quickly as on dry pavement. Give yourself time to maneuver by driving slowly.
- The normal dry pavement following distance of three to four seconds should be increased to eight to ten seconds. This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- Know your brakes. Whether you have antilock brakes or not, the best way to stop is threshold breaking. Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal.
- Don't stop if you can avoid it. There's a big difference in the amount of inertia it takes to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.
- Don't power up hills. Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads just starts your wheels spinning. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed down hill as slowly as possible.
- Don't stop going up a hill. There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Get some inertia going on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.

Stay home. If you really don't have to go out, don't. Even if you can drive well in the snow, not everyone else can. Don't tempt fate: If you don't have somewhere you have to be, watch the snow from indoors.

Retrieved from the AAA website, aaa.com.

Notes from the Director...

I thank you all for your untiring efforts and dedication to Public Safety during 2017. This past year included numerous outbreaks of severe thunderstorms that impacted our municipalities. The May 2017 T-storm events resulted in several large scale / long-term power and communications outages in the County.

Based upon assessments after these severe weather events, does your municipality offer mobile communications device (smart phones, tablets, and other similar devices) charging facilities for those without commercial power? It is by these devices that many of our residents receive news or make contact with one another or family members. The ability to offer “charging stations” is something to consider for future events and the importance of being able to provide assistance with the relay of information.

Many local governments have elected NEW officials to include supervisors, mayors, and council members. Now is a great time to introduce yourself and the role of the EMC to these new officials. DPS is planning to provide training programs for new (and existing) local official’s early in 2018. Please pass on training information to the newly elected officials and encourage their participation.

On a closing note, PLEASE ensure you forward copies of your certification or training certificates to the DPS Office. Many of these programs are available on-line for your convenience. Don’t forget to update YOUR Emergency Operating Plan and your Notification and Resource Manual for your municipality and make sure to keep the County EMA “in the loop”!

THANKS!

John

VACANT EMC POSITIONS

In accordance with Title 35, all municipalities in the Commonwealth must have an Emergency Management Coordinator. Currently, the following do not. If you or anyone you know would be interested in this position, please contact the Lycoming County EMA office at 570-433-4461.

BRADY TOWNSHIP
MCHENRY TOWNSHIP
MCINTYRE TOWNSHIP
MCNETT TOWNSHIP

Portable Fireplace Safety



There is nothing like sitting by an open fire on a cold night. Indoor and outdoor portable ethanol burning fireplaces have become more popular in recent years. While these products provide ambiance and a little warmth, keep in mind the fuel, device and open flame can be dangerous.

Fireplace Safety

- » A portable ethanol burning fireplace, and the fuel, should only be used by adults.
- » Clean up any fuel spillage and be sure all liquid has evaporated before lighting the fireplace.
- » Light the fireplace using a utility lighter or long match.
- » An adult should always be present when a portable fireplace is burning.
- » Place the fireplace on a sturdy surface away from table edges.
- » It's a good idea to crack a window open for a fresh supply of air.
- » Never try to move a lit fireplace or one that is still hot.
- » Don't pour ethanol fuel in a device that is lit or not completely cool. It may result in a fire or injury.
- » Allow the device to cool down for at least 15 minutes before refueling.
- » Extinguish the flame when you leave the room, home or go to sleep.

General Fire Safety

- Keep anything that can burn, children and pets at least 3 feet from the fireplace.
- Store lighters and matches out of the reach of children, in a locked cabinet.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

Ethanol Fuel Smarts

Store ethanol fuel in a closed container, away from the fireplace and out of the reach of children.

It may not be easy to see the ethanol fuel flame. Always close the lid or use a snuffer to be sure the flame is extinguished before refueling into a cooled fireplace.

Use only fuel made specifically for the fireplace.



FACT

Ethanol is a plant-based product that does not release new carbon monoxide into the air.

Name of Organization Goes Here

Contact Information Goes Here

UPCOMING EMA CLASSES

Classes listed below with an (*) are required for one or more of the certification levels for municipal Emergency Management Coordinators. **Attendees must register on-line or through the County EMA office.** Contact Kelle Robinson with any questions concerning these classes.

HAZMAT AWARENESS ANNUAL REFRESHER COURSE

Thursday, January 4, 2018 6:30 pm - 10:30 pm, Nisbet VFD

AIRCRAFT EMERGENCY AWARENESS COURSE

Monday, February 12, 2018 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm, Duboistown VFD

Other Training Resources:

PEMA TRAINING CALENDAR:

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=5051&mode=2>

PEMA (ON-LINE) TRAINING:

https://www.centrelearn.com/login_pa.asp

FEMA (EMI) (ON-LINE) TRAINING:

<http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>



Christmas Tree Safety



Christmas Tree SAFETY CHECKLIST



Get a fresh tree whose needles don't easily fall off -or- a UL-Listed artificial tree that is "flame resistant/retardant."



Place the tree away from heat sources!



UL-Listed Christmas Lights
(Pay attention to Indoor/Outdoor use)



Check your decor for damage and replace as needed.



Don't overload your sockets -- no more than 3 light strands in a row.



Turn off your lights before bed or while you're away from home.



Dispose of your live tree soon (less than 4 weeks after putting it up) and recycle, don't light it on fire!



Take down decorations outside sooner to help them last longer. Go ahead and replace decorations that didn't make it by hitting up the after-Christmas sales.

Merry Christmas



Heating Safety

There is something about the winter months and curling up with a good book by the fireplace. But did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions you can prevent most heating fires from happening.

BE WARM AND SAFE THIS WINTER!

- » Keep anything that can burn at least three-feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- » Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- » Never use your oven to heat your home.
- » Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
- » Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- » Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- » Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.
- » Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- » Test smoke alarms at least once a month.



Heating Equipment Smarts

Install wood burning stoves following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation. All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

Install and maintain CO alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. If you **smell** gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.



FACT

Half of home heating fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

Name of Organization Goes Here

Contact Information Goes Here

GETTING TO KNOW OUR EMCs

For the Next edition in the series of “Getting to Know Our EMCs”, we will be featuring Mr. Frank Pile. Emergency Management Coordinator for Loyalsock Township. He was appointed EMC by the Township Supervisors on June 22, 2004.

Born and raised in Loyalsock Township. Grew up in the Heshbon area next to Lycoming Creek. As a teenager he witnessed first-hand what excessive rainfall can do, having experienced major flooding to his family home from the remnants of Hurricane Agnes in 1972.

Graduated from Loyalsock Township High School and Mansfield University. He earned a bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice Administration.



Frank served in the United States Coast Guard from 1980 to 2000 and retired at the rank of Lieutenant Commander. While in the Coast Guard he held numerous positions that were similar to emergency management. He also was a member of the Elizabeth City NC Fire Dept and the Deputy Chief of the Harvey LA Fire Dept.

Lifetime member of Loyalsock Volunteer Fire Company. He joined as a junior firefighter in 1973 and rejoined after moving back to the area following his career in the Coast Guard. He has held positions as Trustee, Fire Captain and Lieutenant.

Frank and his wife Karen have been married for 37 years. They are the proud parents of a daughter and son. Jennifer is a school teacher in Baltimore County and Brandon is an engineer with UGI in the Harrisburg area.

When Frank is not involved in public safety activities, he enjoys spending time with family and friends at the family cabin in Slate Run.

Lycoming County EMA would like to thank Mr. Frank Pile for his many years of service within the county and his communities.

Happy Holidays!



*From Your Friends at the
Lycoming County Department of Public Safety!*

2018 QUARTERLY TRAINING

March 22	6:30 pm	Thursday	Holiday Inn
June 28	7:00 pm	Thursday	County EMA Office
September 27	7:00 pm	Thursday	County EMA Office
December 13	7:00 pm	Thursday	County EMA Office



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

Just a reminder, this newsletter is written for you, the emergency responder in Lycoming County. If there is something that you wish to see in the newsletter or you have a story that you would like to share, please let us know. We are always looking for ideas for upcoming newsletters!

COUNTY EMA STAFF

Your County EMA staff is proud to serve you, and will always welcome your comments and suggestions to promote a better EMA community. Please contact us at any time.

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