

Butler County EMA

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MONTHLY



ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE NEXT TORNADO?

Volume 3, Issue 5
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Training Opportunities:

- July 11 & 13—Ohio Cancer Awareness Workshop
- July 16—G402 ICS for Elected Officials
- July 23, 24 & 25 —Rail Safety & HazMat Emergency Response Training
- July 30-31—MGT-319 Medical Countermeasures for POD Planning & Response
- August 9—AWR-362 Flooding Hazards: Science & Preparedness

Information for registering for any of the above courses can be obtained on our website at butlercountyohio.org/ema

Butler County EMA

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Butler County EMA Mission Statement

Coordinating people and resources to protect the lives and property within Butler County by working together to achieve one goal for Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery for Disasters and Emergencies

With the increased weather patterns we are seeing in Ohio, specifically in central Ohio, it is important that we all look at how prepared we are, both individually and as a community. The late evening of this past Memorial Day proved historic for Indiana and Ohio with close to twenty (20) tornado touchdowns in Ohio alone. On average we only see nineteen (19) tornadoes in a given year. This reinforces theories touted by experts that the proverbial "tornado alley" has shifted slightly east to now include portions of Ohio.

In response to this tornado outbreak, experts from around Butler County answered the call to help our neighbor counties. Initially, BCEMA was dispatched an hour after the Montgomery EF-4 touchdown to assist the American Red Cross with two shelters. Butler County EMA staff assisted in the setup of shelters at The Ridge Church and Morton Middle school in Brookeville (Ohio) and Vandalia, respectively. Butler County EMA has two (2) shelter trailers staged in the County to hold (150) cots, blankets, pillows, hygiene kits, as well as a shelter kit (tables, chairs, water, documentation, etc...). This was the first time we have fully expended our local mass sheltering capability since originally purchasing the trailers a decade ago. This is already the fourth activation of these resources for overnight sheltering this year.

The remainder of the first 24 hours brought challenges to gain situational awareness, onboarding of resources not previously activated in Ohio, and implementation of the or-

dering process of local and State assets (Logistics). Partners like the United Way began to source request and the Salvation Army provided the trucking to distribute from the warehouse. Volunteer groups ran the donations center and most importantly the local communities saw some relief and could truly appreciate the generosity from folks wanting to assist.

As members of public safety it is important that we are as prepared as we can be to respond to the next disaster. Our equipment needs tested and procedures need reviewed. Recently, West Chester Township reviewed and updated their Township Emergency Operations Plan and their operational procedures for Emergency Operations Area (EOA/EOC). In May they ran a functional drill of their EOA with EMA simulating an EF-3 Tornado impacting just one mobile home community. Many of the same challenges faced in Dayton were tested with this functional EOC exercise. For example, we looked at how West Chester would order up, track, and pay for resources such as US&R response teams and even tub grinders used for debris management, while under a Township Declaration of Emergency. We also discussed how we would locally deal with the challenges of looting and volunteer and donations management. All of these encounters can be preplanned for and exercised on a regular basis.

Too often emergency management is viewed as special operations response capabilities such as hazardous materials response or technical rescue,



(both of which were utilized in Dayton), but the truth is emergency management is the planning and preparedness arm which feeds the incident response in high consequence, low frequency events. In Butler County, we are fortunate to have some of the most respected response teams in the State because of the talented individuals and the leaders within who collaborate on a routine basis. This enhances our ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from major disasters we face in Ohio. ■ For more information regarding the Butler County EMA, go to butlercountyohio.org/ema/

BUTLER COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENTS SUPPORT MONTGOMERY COUNTY WITH WATER TANKERS

In addition to the staff from the Butler County EMA and the members of the Butler County Incident Management Team, local fire departments were also requested to assist relief efforts Montgomery County. Milford Township Fire Department and Ross Township Fire Department each sent a water tanker and personnel to affected communities to ensure that water was available in the event of a fire.

The tornadoes which impacted Montgomery County also impacted several pieces of critical infrastructure, including the pumps used to pressurize the county's water system. Officials were concerned that excessive water use could result in a depressurization of the system and issued a water conservation notice

and water boil advisory for the entire county.

Officials were also concerned that the water pressurization issue could present challenges for fire crews attempting to deal large fires in the county. This prompted the activation of the Ohio Fire Chief's Emergency Response Plan, a plan designed to bring in resources to affected communities from throughout Ohio in an attempt to provide the necessary resources while also not depleting any particular community of critical fire apparatus.

Tankers from Milford Township Fire Department and Ross Township Fire Department were able to respond into Montgomery County to assist with recovery efforts. The Ohio Fire Chief's Emergency Response Plan is an



Tankers from Milford Township Fire Department (pictured) and Ross Township Fire Department were activated to assist in the Tornado Relief efforts in Montgomery County

excellent example of how communities can pull together resources in an efficient and effective manner. ■ For

More Information on the Ohio Fire Chief's Emergency Response Plan, go to <http://www.ohiofirechiefs.com>

BUTLER COUNTY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM DEVELOPS LSA, STAFFS EOC AFTER STORMS

In the early morning hours of May 28th after the Brookville and Vandalia shelters were up and running the Butler County Incident Management Team (BCIMT) was requested by Montgomery County through the County Communication Center to manage a Logistics Staging Area (LSA) for the four (4) Urban Search and Rescue Teams (US&R) activated to search the destructive aftermath of a tornado outbreak. Upon arrival to UD Arena around 5AM EMA / BCIMT worked with Emergency Support Function (ESF) 9 desk (Search & Rescue) at the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to determine that US&R, including Ohio Task Force 1, would immediately be sent to work in Trotwood and Harrison Township, providing lifesaving

efforts. The BCIMT was then re-deployed to the Montgomery County EOC to support US&R command and control, logistics for the Montgomery County, and develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP) for the first two operational periods of the incident.

The IMT short team of a dozen specialists supported this mission for departments throughout the region including Fairfield Township, West Chester Hospital, Morgan Township, Liberty Township, Oxford Township, and even our partners with Toledo Fire. Later, recovery was supported by the countless fundraiser and donation drives that many of you supported truly helping our neighbors!

■ For more information regarding the Butler County EMA, go to butlercountyohio.org/ema/



Members of the Butler County Incident Management Team work in the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center. The Butler County IMT worked to help coordinate search and rescue operations after the tornadoes and to assist in the development of the Incident Action Plan, or IAP. The Butler County IMT has had the opportunity to serve affected communities in Butler County, Southwest Ohio and the nation on several occasions since 2011.