



Knox County Emergency Management Agency

EMA Director's Report

February 2023



To: Commissioners Glaser, Pohlman, and Parent:

Below are the operational activities of the Knox County Emergency Management Agency for February 1 – 28, 2023.

EOC Activations:

Ongoing

KX2201(prior KX 2101 and KX2002): 2019 Novel Corona Virus outbreak (2019-nCoV/COVID-19) 1/20/20-5/11/23	Currently (as of 3/11/23) there have been 8,147 cases in Knox County total, with the state having a total of 318,130 cases to date. Knox County has had 55 deaths, the state has had 2,928. Knox County has had 143 hospitalizations since the pandemic began, the state is showing 7,096.
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New

KX2303: Extreme Cold 2/3-4/2023	EOC open at Level 2 (we were already at the office) to start, then moved to Level 1 (remote monitoring) after-hours. The worst cold we've had in several years started to really get going on Friday, February 3 rd , with the worst temperatures on Saturday the 4 th . Due to wind gusts we did have some power outages but the highest amount was sometime Friday night - we got up to 624 outages. CMP worked throughout the night and most outages were already resolved by Saturday morning, with some stragglers being taken care of throughout the day.
KX2304: Winter Storm 3/4/2023	EOC open at Level 1 (remote monitoring) since this storm was on the weekend. In some areas we got up to a foot of (heavy/wet) snow, but thankfully there were less than 100 power outages in Knox County over the course of the entire weekend.

Current Operations Updates

1. Expected Disaster Declaration:

While it hasn't actually happened yet, the state is still positive that the storm on Christmas Eve in 2022 will be given a disaster declaration. The request from the Governor was sent to the feds in February and we're just waiting on the official word either way. In the meantime, MEMA has asked counties to start working with the municipalities on updating information in the public assistance grant portal.

2. Disaster Declarations: DR-4522 (COVID-19):

Assuming no one has any arguments with the items included in the request, we should be receiving \$13,545.81.

3. Training:

Past:

- Heartsaver CPR AED course (for certification) February 22 at 2 p.m.
- Stop the Bleed / Hands-Only CPR course February 22 at 6 p.m.

Future:

- **MGT-383: Emergency Operations Plans for Rural Jurisdictions** – we are still working on getting this one rescheduled.
- **MGT-406: Community Threat Group Identification, Assessment and Information Reporting for Rural Law Enforcement Officers** has finally been rescheduled for April 18th. As soon as I get the poster announcement for the course I will start sharing it with everyone.
- **ICS (Incident Command System) 402 Course** – this class is a requirement for policy makers/leadership at the municipal level as part of NIMS (National Incident Management System) compliance. FEMA has never

released this as an independent study course because it's designed to be a discussion. Whenever select board members from a town are signed up, we highly encourage the EMA director from that town to attend as well so they can discuss information relevant to their own jurisdiction and have a chance to review the town's Emergency Operations Plan. Commissioners should be taking this course as part of our NIMS compliance but the only two I can find records for are Dorothy Meriwether and Carol Maines so I strongly encourage all three of you to sign up at one of our future classes. The next session of this class is scheduled for **Thursday, March 9 at 5 p.m. at the EMA office**. If any of you are interested in attending, please let me know.

4. Exercises:

- **Camden Hills Regional High School TTX:** I was asked by the district to facilitate a table-top exercise on March 8th. Because the discussion was going so well, we only covered the first of the three scenarios we had prepared and we will now go back on a few other occasions to do the others, as well as assist with drills and later a larger exercise. I'll be having additional meetings with school staff and local law enforcement to expand the exercises.

5. Sheltering:

There's a lot going on behind the scenes but I wanted to at least try to give you a summary. I had invited several staff from the Knox County Homeless Coalition, Rockland City Manager Tom Luttrell, and Rockland Fire/EMS Chief/EMA Director Chris Whytock to a meeting in our offices on February 28th to give everyone a chance to meet and discuss the various types of sheltering needed in the area. It gave us the opportunity to learn about what each of us is responsible for with regards to the safety and security of the public, and let everyone (myself included) clear the air about why a specific church was not supported by the City or the County during the recent cold snap and develop a list of action items. Members of the public can have their hearts in the right place but it's not as simple as opening your door to let people spend the night – we have a responsibility to ensure the safety of people in buildings supported by taxpayer dollars. We also cannot treat one church, or any other kind of organization, differently from others. I will be continuing to work with KCHC and reaching out to other local organizations to start layering in additional help. Chief Whytock and I also have a meeting scheduled with the Red Cross to make sure we're all on the same page and to make sure we are reflecting the same message. I am encouraging and facilitating communication between organizations like the KCHC and the town-level EMA directors, and our office will be working on a sort of guide book for any community group (e.g. church, etc.) interested in wanting to act as a warming center or over-night shelter so that all of the applicable codes and rules will be covered prior to anyone spending the night there. I won't say more than that here because there are a lot of moving parts, but if you'd like to know more about this, please contact me for a chat.

6. Infectious Diseases:

- **COVID:** As of 3/11/23, the moving seven-day sum for Knox County is 31. Community **LEVELS = LOW** and Community **TRANSMISSION = HIGH** for Knox County (per USCDC).

For those who don't know, the federal government has decided to end both the COVID-19 National Emergency and the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency for COVID-19 as of May 11, 2023. The formal end of these emergency declarations does mean that some federal funding will disappear. One program that will continue is the funeral assistance for those whose death can be in part attributed to COVID-19.

Vaccination Clinics in KNOX COUNTY			
<i>Location</i>	<i>Date & Time</i>	<i>Ages & Vaccines</i>	<i>Details</i>
ROCKPORT - Pharmacy at PenBay Medical Center, 6 Glen Cove Drive	Monday–Friday: 9 am – 7 pm. Weekends/Holidays: 10 am – 3 pm.	Ages 5+. *For walk-in's, first dose only. Make appointment for other doses.	Open to the public, walk-in's for first dose Make appointment here for other doses.

- **Influenza:** The most common virus strain currently circulating is influenza A (99% of cases).
- **Mpox:** The US CDC has started distributing information on cases using “Mpox” instead of “Monkeypox”. The US currently has a total of 30,225 cases. Every state in the US now has some cases. Maine still currently

has 13 cases total, with Knox County still having 1 case reported so far. World-wide there are 86,231 confirmed cases in 110 countries. As of right now, the US has the most cases of all of the countries reporting them – just over a quarter of the cases world-wide. World-wide there have only been 105 reported deaths in 18 countries; 38 of the deaths occurred in the US.

7. Grants:

- **2019 HSGP (Homeland Security Grant Program)** – September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2019. This grant should have been closed out at the end of August but is still held up at the Maine Emergency Management Agency because of internal technical issues.
- **2022 HSGP (Homeland Security Grant Program)** – September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2025. I was relieved to finally be able to give Zach Greene the go-ahead to start spending the nearly \$30,000 I had earmarked for cyber-security improvements.
- **2023 HSGP (Homeland Security Grant Program)** – the Notice of Funding Opportunity for this grant was released February 27th. In preparation for this grant I have been contacting school districts to work on their security priorities so we can start including projects to fund upgrades to the local schools to hopefully make them safer.

8. Grant Reimbursement Backlog:

Currently we are at about \$35,000 in payments we're still waiting on from the State from both 2022 and 2023. The bulk of that is from the HSGP FY2019 that the state is still trying to resolve.

9. Hazard Mitigation Plan Update:

I am still waiting to hear whether our application for hazard mitigation funds (to fund the plan review process) is approved. The current Knox County Hazard Mitigation Plan doesn't expire until August 20, 2024, but at the end of March we will start a hazard vulnerability review with the help of staff from the Maine Emergency Management Agency, which will then be used as part of the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.

10. GIS Program:

We provided support during the February EOC activation(s). A particular focus for the month of February was scoping out county-based web-applications (ex visual budget, LEPC, planning), including looking at transitioning the Knox Hub to a wider focus. Leticia attended the February meeting of the Beginning With Habitat GIS Subcommittee, chaired the February meeting of the Maine GeoLibrary Board, and has been asked to speak to classes at both Bowdoin & UNC Chapel Hill regarding hazard mitigation planning. We continue to collaborate with MEMA's Natural Hazards Planner, shifting focus to developing the adopted Hazard Mitigation Plan application; there may be the possibility of student/intern support from Bowdoin for this project. GIS support of GIS planning & support for the Knox County Mutual Aid Association continues, and application development, support, and planning continues for Rockland FD/PD, Camden FD, and Cushing FD. Support for and development of county GIS solutions continues (KCRA/KRCC/KXEMA/Maintenance/Administration).

Ongoing County GIS efforts:

- a) GIS Infrastructure maintenance, monitoring, management, development/expansion and
- b) Program planning, needs assessment, data sourcing, project development, outreach, training development, documentation. We continue to work with CGIS Solutions to develop, integrate, and maintain our enterprise GIS system.

Municipal Work:

- **Appleton** – public parcel viewer updated
- **Camden** – cemetery mapping support continues
- **North Haven** – printed large format maps for land use ordinance public hearing; provided Island Fellow GIS support
- **Rockland** – technical support for assessor and wastewater continues

- **St. George** – the “advanced” resilience viewer is in BETA phase; provided large format SLR maps for community resilience meeting; updated conservation commission web-app
- **So. Thomaston** – parcel viewer development continues
- **Union** – began work on cemetery web-viewer

KXGIS continues to maintain and update the Knox Hub. Since initial launch, the site has been visited 25,395 times. As always, please let us know of any content that might be appropriate to include on Knox Hub and please, feel free to share - <https://knox-hub-knoxme.hub.arcgis.com/>.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about anything in this report or if you just want to come down to EMA and see what we're up to!

Respectfully,

Director Richards

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