PEORIA COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

THE EMERGENCY CONNECTION

SEPTEMBER 2025

Each September, we pause to reflect on the importance of preparedness, not just as individuals, but as a united community. National Preparedness Month reminds us that disasters can strike anywhere, at any time, and that our ability to respond effectively depends on how well we prepare today.

This month also carries a profound weight of remembrance. On September 11, 2001, our nation experienced one of its darkest days. Nearly 3,000 lives were lost in the attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and aboard Flight 93. In the years that followed, thousands more first responders, service members, and civilians made the ultimate sacrifice in the ongoing fight against terrorism. As we honor their memory, we reaffirm our commitment to safeguarding our communities against all threats, whether man-made or natural.

The attacks of 9/11 were meant to break our spirit, but instead, they revealed our nation's unshakable resolve. We remember the courage of firefighters, police officers, paramedics, and everyday citizens who ran toward danger to save others. We remember the passengers of Flight 93, who gave their lives to stop further destruction. And we remember the quiet heroism of the days and weeks that followed, as communities across the country came together, united in grief but determined to carry on. Honoring their sacrifice means more than simply remembering, it means living in a way that protects the freedoms they died defending and building communities that can withstand whatever challenges come our way.

For Peoria County, preparedness is more than a national campaign; it's a daily mission. Our region faces its own unique challenges, including severe storms, tornadoes, floods, and threats of terrorism. Building resilience starts at home, with families creating emergency plans, assembling disaster kits, and staying informed. But it also relies on our collective strength as a community; neighbors checking on neighbors, local businesses planning for continuity, and first responders training tirelessly to protect lives and property. Preparedness is also a way of honoring those lost on 9/11. Every time we take steps to strengthen our families, neighborhoods, and critical infrastructure, we are sending a clear message: we will not be intimidated, we will not be caught unprepared, and we will continue to live free. Resilience is an act of defiance against those who seek to do us harm, and it is a tribute to those who gave everything for the safety and security of others.

Most importantly, preparedness is something everyone can take part in. This month, we challenge every household in Peoria County to take one new step toward preparedness whether that's building a family communication plan, learning how to turn off utilities in an emergency, or attending a CPR or first aid class. By taking these small steps, we honor the legacy of those we lost on 9/11 by building a stronger, more resilient Peoria County. One ready to face tomorrow's challenges together.

This September we urge all residents to take action. Together, we can honor the memory of those lost on 9/11 by building a community that is prepared, resilient, and united in the face of adversity. We owe it to them, to ourselves, and to future generations to never take our safety or freedom for granted.

Every disaster begins and ends locally!

The 17 Standard Lines of Effort

In times of crisis, whether it's a natural disaster, technological failure, or human-caused emergency, communities rely on a structured response to restore order and safety as quickly as possible. The Community Lifeline construct, developed by FEMA, is a framework that helps emergency managers, first responders, and local leaders prioritize resources and actions during response and recovery efforts. Community Lifelines are essential services and infrastructure that, when disrupted, can significantly impact public safety, health, and economic security.

By using the Community Lifeline construct, our local community can quickly assess damage, prioritize stabilization efforts, and allocate resources effectively. Whether it's restoring power after a tornado, ensuring access to clean water, or keeping emergency communications running, these lifelines serve as a guide for response efforts. Over the next several editions of *The Emergency Connection* we will take a deeper dive into these lines of effort.

Public Information and Warning Standard Line of Effort

The Public Information and Warning Line of Effort is a foundational component of any mission to protect life and property during emergencies and disasters. This LOE focuses on ensuring that timely, accurate, and actionable information reaches the public before, during, and after a crisis. The goal is simple but critical: give individuals and communities the knowledge they need to make informed decisions that will reduce risk and save lives.

At its core, this LOE emphasizes coordinated messaging across all levels of government—federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial—alongside private-sector partners and community organizations. FEMA supports jurisdictions in developing integrated public warning systems that can deliver clear and consistent messages across multiple platforms, including television, radio, mobile devices, social media, and emergency alert networks. By leveraging tools such as the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) and the Emergency Alert System (EAS), emergency managers can push life-saving messages to millions of people in seconds.

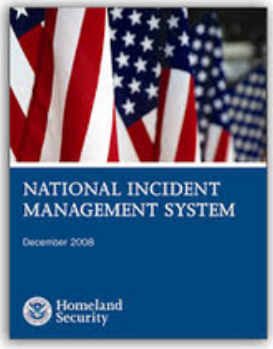
However, public information is more than technology; it's also about building trust before disaster strikes. Equally important is crafting messages that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, accessible to individuals with disabilities, and designed to reach vulnerable or hard-to-reach populations. By treating the public as a partner rather than just a recipient of information, we aim to foster a culture of shared responsibility where residents are not just warned, but are also motivated to take protective action.

Response Security and Protection

The Security and Protection Line of Effort (LOE) within FEMA's response framework focuses on safeguarding people, critical infrastructure, and essential resources during emergencies and disasters. Its primary objective is to ensure that life-saving and life-sustaining operations can proceed without disruption, while maintaining public safety and order in affected areas.

One of the key priorities under this LOE is the protection of critical facilities and emergency response personnel. During large-scale disasters, security forces may be tasked with guarding shelters, hospitals, points of dispensing (PODs), and emergency operations centers (EOCs) to ensure that these vital operations remain functional and accessible to those in need. Additionally, this LOE provides guidance on securing supply chains for food, water, medical supplies, and fuel—critical lifelines that, if disrupted, could severely impact response and recovery efforts. Maintaining public safety and order is another major component of the Security and Protection LOE. In disaster-affected areas, law enforcement and security personnel work to prevent looting, protect evacuated neighborhoods, enforce curfews when necessary, and ensure safe evacuation and re-entry operations.

The National Incident Management System (NIMS)

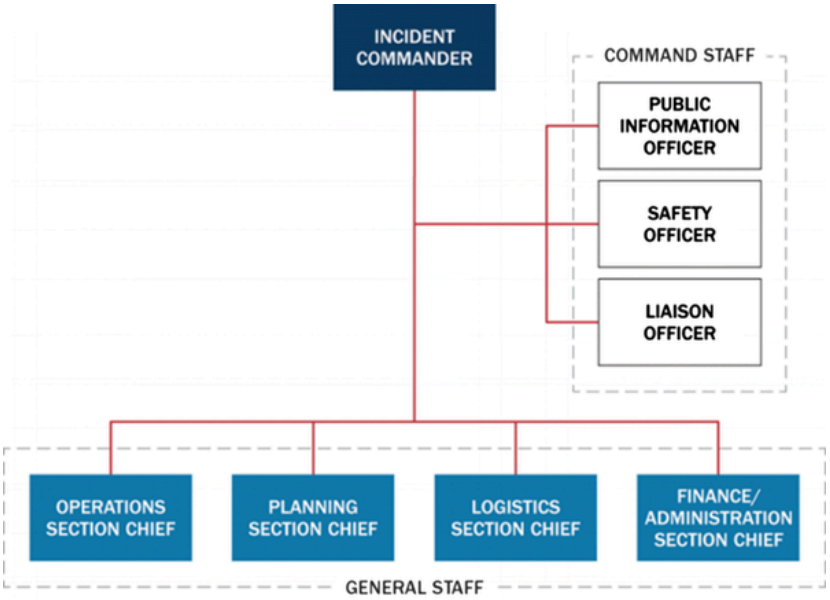


Emergencies and disasters rarely happen on a schedule, and when they do occur, they often require multiple agencies, organizations, and jurisdictions to work together quickly and effectively. To ensure that this coordination happens seamlessly, the National Incident Management System (NIMS) was developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). NIMS provides a standardized approach to incident management for all types of hazards, from natural disasters and public health emergencies to acts of terrorism. It is designed to improve coordination among federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, as well as private and nonprofit organizations.

At the heart of NIMS is the Incident Command System (ICS), a structured framework that allows responders to manage incidents of any size or complexity. ICS provides a clear chain of command, standardized terminology, and flexible organizational structures that can expand or contract depending on the incident. Whether it's a single-unit response to a small fire or a multi-agency operation following a major hurricane, ICS ensures that resources are used efficiently, communication flows effectively, and decision-making is streamlined.

One of the greatest strengths of ICS is its scalability. A small local incident might have only one Incident Commander and a few supporting staff, while a large regional disaster might involve multiple branches, divisions, and sections coordinating simultaneously. This flexibility allows emergency managers to adapt to changing conditions while maintaining a clear organizational structure. The system also emphasizes accountability, resource tracking, and situational awareness all essential components for saving lives and protecting property.
Over the coming months, we will take a deeper look at the various components of ICS in this newsletter. Future editions will highlight each of the major functional areas: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. Understanding how these elements work individually and together will help our community partners, volunteers, and emergency management professionals better prepare for and respond to incidents of any scale.

By building a shared understanding of NIMS and ICS, we strengthen our collective ability to respond to emergencies. Whether you are a first responder, public official, volunteer, or community member, familiarity with these systems ensures we can work together effectively when it matters most.



The Medical Reserve Corps: Strengthening Communities Through Volunteer Service

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a national network of community-based volunteers committed to strengthening public health, emergency response, and resilience. Established in 2002 after the September 11 attacks, the program was created to harness the skills of medical and non-medical volunteers who wanted to help their communities prepare for and respond to emergencies. The MRC is overseen by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Peoria City/County Health Department, MRC Unit 75 is one of the longest-standing MRC Units, established in 2002.

What Do Volunteers Do?

MRC volunteers are trained to serve in a wide range of roles, including:

- Disaster Response: Assisting with shelters, first aid, and medical support during natural disasters, wildfires, floods, and pandemics.
- Public Health Initiatives: Supporting vaccination clinics, health screenings, and disease prevention campaigns.
- Community Resilience: Educating the public on emergency preparedness, mental health, and wellness programs.
- Specialized Response: Assisting with opioid crisis initiatives, supporting vulnerable populations, and augmenting healthcare surge capacity.

Why It Matters

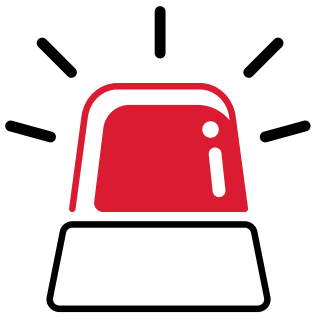
The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the critical importance of a trained volunteer force. MRC volunteers staffed vaccination sites, distributed protective equipment, and provided surge capacity when hospitals were overwhelmed. Beyond crises, they strengthen everyday community health systems and build trust between residents and public health officials.

Current Team Efforts

The Community Trauma Team (CTT) is a specialized group of MRC volunteers. In collaboration with the Children's Home Association of Illinois, this team offers trauma-informed support in the aftermath of crisis situations like community violence, natural disasters, school or workplace trauma, and more. This team, originally founded in 2016, was re-established with the help of the MRC-STTRONG Grant, training 19 volunteer responders in Psychological First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid, in addition to developing updated marketing materials. The team is prepared to respond quickly and thoughtfully to community needs, you can find more information here: Community Trauma Team | Children's Home

The PCCHD MRC represents the spirit of community service and resilience. It unites people with diverse skills and a shared commitment to public health, drawing on the expertise of medical professionals, first responders, and dedicated community volunteers. Members play an essential role in emergency preparedness, health education, and disaster response, often providing support during severe weather events, disease outbreaks, or large-scale public gatherings. By building a network of trained and ready volunteers, the Corps ensures that Peoria and its surrounding communities are better equipped to face challenges, recover more quickly, and foster long-term resilience.

Does Emergency Management = Emergency Services?



Emergency Services are the first on the scene in any crisis. These are the professionals we call when a fire breaks out, a car accident occurs, or severe weather causes damage. Their focus is immediate: stabilize the situation, protect life and property, and maintain public safety. Whether it's firefighters extinguishing flames and performing rescues, law enforcement officers securing a scene, or paramedics delivering lifesaving medical care, these responders are the frontline heroes of emergency response. Their work is fast-paced, action-oriented, and often dangerous. But it's only one part of a much larger effort to protect our community.

While Emergency Services handle the urgent response, Emergency Management is all about planning, coordination, and long-term support. Your local EMA is responsible for preparing the community before disaster strikes, supporting coordinated response during the event, and managing recovery after the immediate threat has passed. We develop emergency operations plans, conduct hazard risk assessments, organize training and exercises for all stakeholders, and work across agencies from schools and hospitals to nonprofits and private businesses to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency. When a disaster occurs, we activate coordination centers, deploy resources, and facilitate communication across local, state, and federal partners. And after the dust settles, Emergency Management helps residents access disaster assistance, recover essential services, and begin rebuilding stronger than before.

Though the roles are different, Emergency Services and Emergency Management are deeply interconnected. We rely on each other. Emergency Management ensures that first responders have the resources, plans, and logistical support they need to act quickly and effectively. And when the initial danger has passed, we help guide the community through recovery, focusing on everything from mental health services to rebuilding infrastructure.

Understanding these roles helps our residents see the full picture of public safety. From the flashing lights on the front lines to the planning sessions months in advance, it all works together to build a safer, more resilient community.

Weather Watch - Are NOAA Weather Radios the Missing Link in Home Safety?

Most of us wouldn't think twice about installing a smoke detector or carbon monoxide alarm in our homes. But as extreme weather events like tornadoes, flash floods, and severe weather become more frequent, it's time to ask: should NOAA Weather Radios be just as common?

NOAA Weather Radios provide continuous updates and emergency alerts directly from the National Weather Service even when the power is out or cellular service is down. A weather radio with a loud alarm and battery backup can wake you up and warn you of danger, even in the middle of the night. However, despite their proven reliability many households don't have one and some residents aren't even aware they exist. Instead, we often rely on smartphone for alerts, but these can fail when we need them most. Weather radios are purpose-built for emergencies and don't rely on cellular networks or internet access. We wouldn't wait for someone to be harmed by carbon dioxide before installing a detector. Let's not wait for a missed tornado warning to see the value in owning a weather radio.

Local emergency officials and preparedness experts strongly encourage families to include a NOAA Weather Radio in their home emergency kits. These radios are easy to use, cost as little as $20–$40, and are widely available online and at local retailers. Staying alert can save lives making sure your household is ready for whatever the skies may bring.

Code of Ethics and Professional Standards of Conduct for Emergency Management Professionals

I recently read in the Journal of Emergency Management about the Code of Ethics and Professional Standards of Conduct for Emergency Management Professionals. Developed to strengthen the professional identity of emergency management (EM), this Code establishes clear ethical principles and behavioral expectations for those who serve communities before, during, and after disasters. At its core, the Code emphasizes honesty, integrity, respect, impartiality, professionalism, and moral courage urging EM professionals not only to think ethically but to act with a deep sense of responsibility to the public good.

The Code is built on key tenets:

- obeying the law while striving to exceed its basic requirements
- maximizing societal benefit while protecting the most vulnerable
- honoring individual rights and obligations
- fostering trust through transparency and competence
- avoiding conflicts of interest
- applying inclusive decision-making when balancing competing community needs.

These principles are intended to guide practitioners through complex, real-world dilemmas where public safety, individual rights, and limited resources often collide. The Professional Standards of Conduct further outline EM professionals' responsibilities to affected populations, partners, employers, colleagues, and the environment. Practitioners are called to serve all communities equitably, communicate risk clearly, collaborate with stakeholders, advocate for sound policies, and base decisions on evidence and emerging best practices. The Code also emphasizes mentoring peers and students, supporting diversity in the field, and fostering trust and ethical culture within organizations. Importantly, it stresses self-care and lifelong learning, recognizing that ethical leadership begins with personal well-being and professional growth.

Finally, the Code encourages the use of structured ethical decision-making tools to ensure fairness and transparency in difficult situations. By embedding these standards into training, education, and organizational culture, the EM profession continues its evolution toward a fully recognized and trusted field, grounded in ethics and dedicated to safeguarding lives, livelihoods, and the environment.

Resilience Reading Room

What is a Disaster? New Anwers to Old Questions by Ronald Perry and E.L. Quarantelli examines one of the most debated issues in disaster research, the problem of definition. The book compiles perspectives from leading scholars across multiple disciplines and countries, each offering their interpretation of what qualifies as a disaster. Perry and Quarantelli frame the volume around the question of whether disasters should be confined to natural hazards such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and floods, or whether they also include technological accidents, terrorism, riots, or other human-made crises. By addressing these questions, the book emphasizes that how we define disasters directly shapes both theoretical development and practical response strategies in the field.

The editors organize the work as a forum in which each author presents their definition and reasoning, followed by critiques and responses, encouraging critical debate rather than consensus. This structure reveals a wide range of views about the nature of disasters, the role of social context in shaping their impact, and the importance of distinguishing between academic definitions that advance theory and operational definitions that guide emergency management practice. Perry and Quarantelli conclude the volume by proposing a framework for unifying disaster research and setting a forward-looking agenda for the twenty-first century. In doing so, they highlight the need for conceptual clarity in order to advance both scholarly understanding and the effectiveness of disaster preparedness and response.

Word Search Puzzle

Find the words listed below. Answers found on the page 12.

Back Up Plan
Emergency Kit
First Aid Kit
Leaks
Water Supply

Cell Phone
Escape Route
Food Storage
Preparedness

Communicate
Evacuation
Gloves
Safety Glasses

E T A C I N U M M O C O N L G
S J I D A V O B G G K O F L H
S E V K S N T P Z E I F O B D
E P B E Y V W W C T B V O A U
N O R X Y C Q C A D E V D C E
D S K A E L N U C S N O S K T
E Z Y E G T C E X C P R T U U
R V W U L A L A G X Y V O P O
A W G D V L H A P R A N R P R
P W B E P I R F M L E P A L E
E Y C H K P G K K R I M G A P
R V O I U L J L B O M J E N A
P N F I R S T A I D K I T L C
E S A F E T Y G L A S S E S S
Y L P P U S R E T A W W J W E

The Wisdom of Preparedness: "The Boy Who Cried Wolf – A Lesson for Emergency Management"

The timeless fable of The Boy Who Cried Wolf is more than just a children's story, it's a cautionary tale for every community when it comes to emergency preparedness. In the story, the boy repeatedly raises false alarms, and when danger finally arrives, no one believes him. But here's the twist: in emergency management, the alarms we sound aren't cries for attention they're warnings based on science, history, and the responsibility we carry to protect our neighbors. The true danger lies in ignoring them.

From tracking severe storms to mapping out evacuation routes, the job of emergency planners is to expect the unexpected. But unlike in fairy tales, forecasts aren't about absolute certainty, they are about probability. A storm may shift direction, a flood may recede, or a wildfire may be contained faster than predicted. That doesn't make the warning any less important; it means the system worked to keep people safe.
Unfortunately, many people fall into what we call "warning fatigue." If a forecasted storm turns out to be mild, some begin to question whether future warnings are worth heeding. But this mindset is dangerous. Disasters don't follow schedules, and one quiet season doesn't mean the next won't bring devastation. Ignoring alerts because "nothing happened last time" is the very mistake that leads to tragedy the same mistake the villagers made when they ignored the boy's final plea.

Preparedness is not just the responsibility of emergency management it is a community effort. Local Emergency Management Agencies coordinate shelters, organize first responders, and issue lifesaving alerts, but they rely on all of us to do our part. That means creating family emergency plans, keeping a disaster supply kit, staying informed through official alerts, and helping vulnerable neighbors when needed. Personal preparedness reduces strain on emergency services and saves lives when every second counts.

The wisdom of preparedness is simple: trust the warnings, even when the danger seems distant. It is far better to be prepared for an event that never comes than to be caught unprepared when it does. The "wolf" of disaster will come sooner or later—it might be a flood, a tornado, or even a public health emergency. When it does, let us not be the villagers who ignored the cries for help. Instead, let's be a community that listens, prepares, and stands ready—together.

Notable Quotables

Emergency Management = When your failure to prepare becomes our emergency

Trust but verify!

Manage expectations!

Understand your why!

POETE – Equipping

We've recently introduced the foundational concept of POETE, FEMA's framework for building and maintaining strong emergency management capabilities. POETE stands for Planning, Organizing, Equipping, Training, and Exercising, five interconnected pillars that guide communities in preparing for and responding to all types of disasters. Each month we take a deeper dive into another component. This month we focus on Equipping.

Equipping is more than simply having supplies on hand it's about ensuring the right resources are available, functional, and accessible when they're needed most. In emergency management, this means providing responders, volunteers, and the community with the tools, technology, and protective gear necessary to perform their roles effectively. Whether it's radios for clear communication, shelter supplies for displaced residents, or personnel protective equipment, equipping is the tangible link between planning and action. Without it, even the best-written plans can fall short in the face of a real-world disaster.

In practice, equipping starts with a thorough assessment of needs based on potential hazards in our area. That means looking at local risk data, past incidents, and projected threats to determine what resources are critical. For example, communities in flood-prone areas might prioritize high-water vehicles, sandbagging equipment, and portable pumps, while those facing wildfire risk would focus on fire suppression tools and personal protective gear. By aligning equipment investments with hazard profiles, we ensure that our capabilities match the threats we face.

Maintaining and updating what we already have is critical. Emergency gear that sits idle for years can become outdated, damaged, or ineffective without proper upkeep. Regular inspections, replacement of expired items, and technology upgrades are essential. Partnerships with local agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector can expand our resource pool, ensuring that equipment is shared and available when needed. Additionally, modern equipping strategies must integrate technology and data systems into the preparedness effort. Beyond physical supplies, digital tools such as GIS mapping platforms, mobile alert systems, and real-time data sharing networks serve as essential "equipment" in today's emergency management environment. These resources improve situational awareness, streamline decision-making, and enhance coordination between agencies and the public. By investing in both physical assets and technological infrastructure, communities create a layered safety net that maximizes the effectiveness of their response when hazards emerge.

Finally, equipping isn't only for emergency responders as it extends to our residents as well. Encouraging households to maintain basic emergency kits and critical supplies strengthens community resilience and reduces strain on first responders during widespread crises. Public education campaigns, neighborhood preparedness workshops, and accessible guidance on what to include in a home kit can help families take practical steps toward readiness. When individuals are equipped to handle the first hours or days of a crisis, emergency services can focus on the most urgent and life-threatening needs, improving outcomes across the whole community. This shared responsibility model ensures we are all part of the solution when disaster strikes, creating a culture of preparedness where resilience is built household by household, block by block.

Full-Scale Exercises: Putting HSEEP into Action

As we wrap up our series on the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), it's fitting to conclude with the most comprehensive and realistic component of the exercise cycle: the Full-Scale Exercise (FSE). Full-scale exercises are where plans, training, and prior exercises are tested in the most operationally realistic way possible. They bring together multiple agencies, jurisdictions, and disciplines to respond to a simulated, but highly realistic, incident under real-time conditions.

Within the HSEEP methodology, full-scale exercises represent the culmination of the progressive exercise approach. Building on the foundation of seminars, workshops, tabletops, drills, and functional exercises, an FSE validates whether the capabilities developed in earlier phases can be successfully executed in a real-world environment. For example, policies discussed in a tabletop exercise are now applied by field personnel; equipment tested during a drill is now deployed under pressure; and command staff must make decisions in real-time as injects evolve.

HSEEP emphasizes the importance of using FSEs to validate core capabilities and operational coordination. Because FSEs involve boots on the ground, deployed equipment, and coordination across multiple operational areas, they provide an unmatched opportunity to identify gaps in communications, resource management, and interagency cooperation. Evaluators observe and document actions in alignment with HSEEP's evaluation methodology, ensuring that lessons learned are accurately captured. Just as important as the exercise itself is what comes after. The FSE serves as the final test before entering the improvement planning phase of the HSEEP cycle. Through After-Action Reports (AARs) and Improvement Plans (IPs), agencies document strengths, capability gaps, and corrective actions, ensuring that the lessons from the FSE directly inform future training, planning, and policy updates.

For a local community, embracing a full-scale exercise means treating it not just as a test for emergency services, but as a community-wide event. Local government, schools, healthcare providers, nonprofits, and even businesses can all play a role in making the exercise realistic and comprehensive. Involving volunteers as role players such as evacuees, patients, or concerned family members can add realism while also deepening public understanding of emergency operations. Communities that fully engage in FSEs also reap long-term resilience benefits. When residents, organizations, and agencies come together to practice under realistic conditions, they uncover not only gaps in response capabilities but also opportunities to leverage local strengths. For example, a church that provides shelter during the exercise may be formally integrated into emergency planning afterward, or a local business may commit to donating supplies during disasters. By embracing FSEs as collaborative endeavors rather than isolated responder events, communities build a culture of preparedness where every sector has a role to play in both planning and response.

In short, full-scale exercises are where plans meet reality. They are the critical link between preparedness planning and operational readiness, allowing local emergency management agencies, first responders, and community partners to work side by side in a realistic, stress-tested environment. By completing the HSEEP cycle with an FSE, communities strengthen their ability to respond effectively when the next real-world incident occurs.

Recent Happenings

HSEEP Training

EMA staff recently participated in the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) training, gaining valuable skills in exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. During the session, they worked with peers from across multiple disciplines to explore real-world scenarios and strengthen emergency preparedness strategies. The training emphasized the importance of building consistent, scalable exercises that test core capabilities and enhance organizational resilience. Staff returned from the training with practical tools and insights that will directly support our agency's ongoing efforts to refine response plans, improve coordination with partners, and build a more resilient community.

Emergency Management Awareness Month

Peoria County EMA proudly recognized Emergency Management Month with a series of activities designed to raise awareness, strengthen community preparedness, and highlight the importance of coordinated response efforts. Throughout the month, staff shared weekly emails with county partners and residents that included preparedness tips, resource links, and videos covering topics such as family emergency planning, severe weather safety, and community resilience. These digital outreach efforts ensured that critical information reached a broad audience and provided practical tools for households and organizations to improve their readiness.

In addition to public education, Peoria County EMA engaged in important conversations with state and federal leaders. Staff met with Senator Dave Koehler, Representative Travis Weaver, and a member of U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth's staff to discuss current emergency management priorities, recent local preparedness initiatives, and opportunities for state and federal support. These meetings underscored the value of strong partnerships across all levels of government and reinforced Peoria County's commitment to maintaining a robust and coordinated emergency management program.

By combining community outreach with legislative engagement, Peoria County EMA's Emergency Management Month activities showcased the agency's proactive approach to building resilience. From equipping residents with accessible preparedness resources to ensuring that policymakers remain informed of local needs, the month-long campaign highlighted the importance of collaboration in strengthening the county's ability to respond to and recover from emergencies.

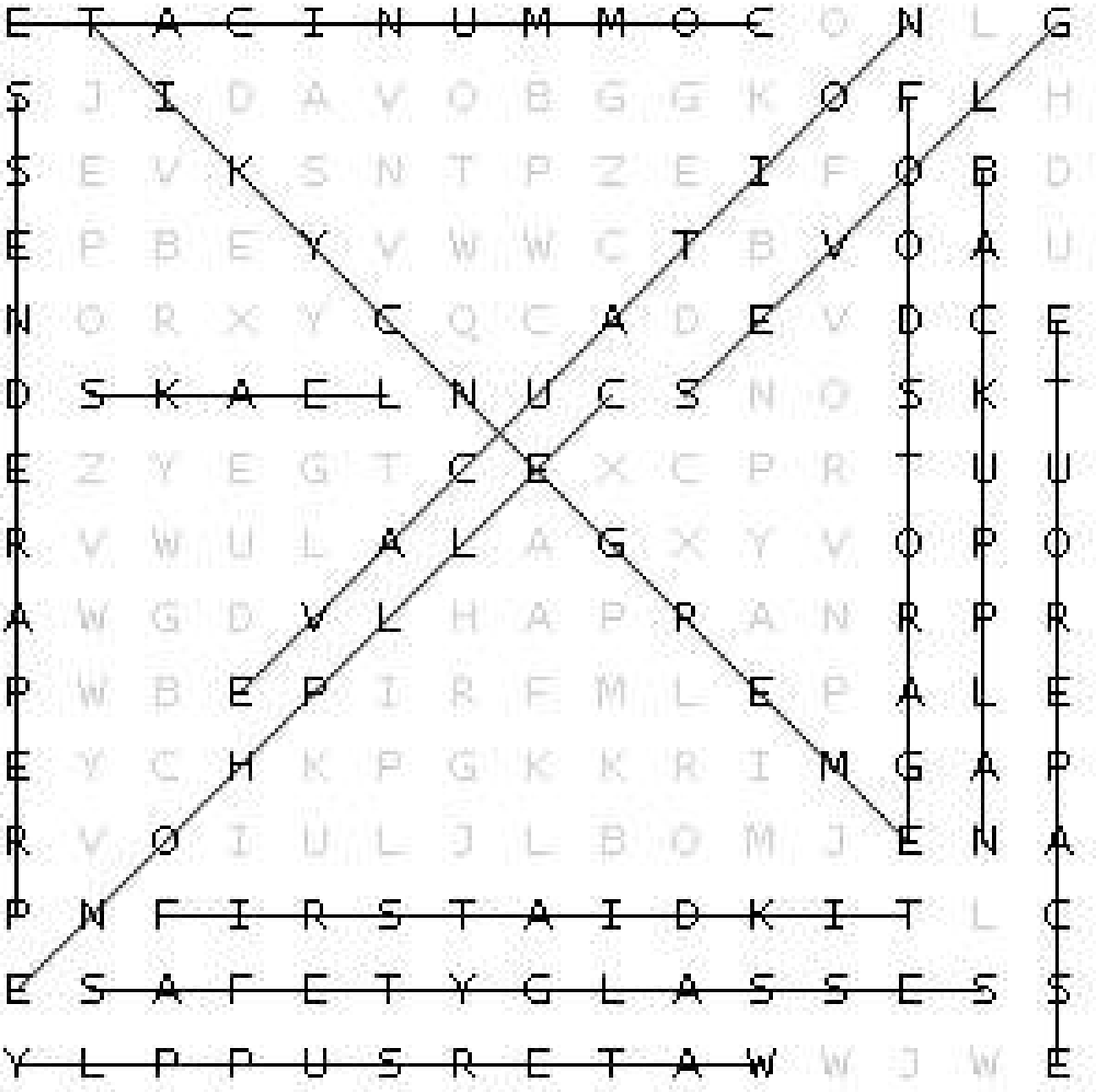
TEDCON

Staff recently attended the 2025 TEDCON at the Embassy Suites in East Peoria, IL, where emergency preparedness and healthcare professionals from across the region gathered to share best practices and strengthen response capabilities. A highlight of the conference was the hands-on decontamination training, which provided participants with the opportunity to practice donning and doffing personal protective equipment (PPE) in a controlled environment. This session reinforced critical safety procedures and emphasized the importance of proper technique to prevent contamination during real-world incidents.

Our staff came away with enhanced confidence and practical experience that will directly support our agency's ability to respond effectively to hazardous materials and public health emergencies.

Word Search

Answers to the puzzle found on page



Back Up Plan
Emergency Kit
First Aid Kit
Leaks
Water Supply

Cell Phone
Escape Route
Food Storage
Preparedness

Communicate
Evacuation
Gloves
Safety Glasses