PEORIA COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

THE EMERGENCY CONNECTION

JULY 2025

As we move into the heart of summer, fireworks and festivities fill the skies across the nation in honor of our country's birthday. This milestone is more than just a celebration of freedom and independence. It is a powerful reminder of our collective responsibility to strengthen our communities and prepare for the challenges ahead. Since 1776, the United States has faced adversity and emerged stronger through unity, courage, and planning. From natural disasters and public health crises to acts of terrorism and economic upheaval, the American spirit has endured. This year as we prepare for our Semiquincentennial we are invited, not just as citizens, but as community stakeholders, to reflect on how we can ensure that our neighborhoods are safe, connected, and prepared for whatever may come.

Community resilience, the ability to withstand and recover from disasters, starts at the local level. Whether you're a resident, business owner, teacher, volunteer, or emergency responder, your involvement makes a difference. A resilient community is one where:

- Neighbors check on each other during heatwaves, storms, and power outages.
- Local businesses have continuity plans in place to minimize economic disruption.
- Families have go-kits and communication plans ready.
- Schools, places of worship, and civic groups collaborate on disaster planning.
- Volunteers teams are trained and active.

When we invest in these actions, we are honoring our founding ideals of independence and self-governance, not just with parades and fireworks, but with real-world readiness.

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As we celebrate American independence, Peoria Co. Emergency Management Agency encourages every household to take this time to reassess and recommit to emergency preparedness. Begin with small steps, update your family's emergency plan, sign up for local alerts, or attend a community preparedness training. Think about your neighbors: who might need extra help in a crisis? Who are your local emergency contacts? These are the building blocks of a resilient, prepared, and truly patriotic community.

This year also offers a unique opportunity to pass on the values of resilience and readiness to younger generations. Involve youth in safety drills, teach them how to respond in emergencies, and engage them in community service projects. Our children are the future custodians of our independence, and resilience is one of the greatest legacies we can pass on.

As we mark another anniversary of American independence, let us remember: True patriotism is about protecting what we love. That includes our families, our neighborhoods, our economy, and our natural resources. Just as our forebears came together to build a nation, we must come together to prepare, protect, and uplift our communities. Our freedom endures when we are resilient, when we can stand tall in the face of adversity, rebuild stronger, and never leave anyone behind.

This July, celebrate more than fireworks. Celebrate resilience!

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 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. In this issue of The Emergency Connection we continue to take a deeper dive into these lines of effort.

Healthcare Systems Support

The Healthcare Systems (Health and Medical Services) Lifeline represents the ability to provide critical medical care to the public during and after a disaster. This includes ensuring hospitals, clinics, EMS services, public health agencies, pharmacies, and long-term care facilities remain operational or can be restored quickly. When this lifeline is disrupted lives are at risk.

Key Lines of Effort in Healthcare Systems Support include:

- Emergency Power Planning: Working with hospitals and healthcare facilities to ensure backup power.
- Resource Coordination: Coordinating distribution of medical supplies and pharmaceuticals.
- Support for At-Risk Populations: Enhancing registries and outreach to vulnerable residents.
- Public Health Integration: Collaboration with local health departments to share situational awareness and rapidly disseminate public health guidance during infectious disease outbreaks.

We encourage all healthcare partners, whether you're a hospital administrator, a pharmacist, or a home health nurse to stay engaged with our planning efforts. Strong partnerships are essential to ensuring this lifeline remains intact during crises. Together, we can safeguard the health of our community when it matters most.

Medical Transportation

Ensuring access to life-saving care doesn't stop at hospital doors it starts with the ability to get there. In emergencies, whether it's a flood, tornado, winter storm, or prolonged power outage, medical transportation systems are often stretched to their limits. At-risk residents depend on reliable transportation to access treatment and evacuation support. When ambulances, wheelchair-accessible vans, and non-emergency medical transport services are disrupted:

- Emergency departments face surges from delayed care.
- Medically dependent individuals can deteriorate rapidly.
- Evacuations for long-term care facilities become more complex and time-sensitive.
- Stranded populations face disproportionate risk—particularly those in rural or low-income areas.

Community planners should be working to strengthen this vital line of effort through:

- Coordinating transportation resources available for evacuating medically fragile populations.
- Supporting voluntary registries for individuals ensuring they are accounted for in disaster planning.
- Integrating GIS data to identify clusters of residents who will need transport support and ensuring route planning accounts for road conditions and access needs.

Strengthening medical transportation infrastructure is not just about logistics—it's a lifeline for the most vulnerable. By integrating data-driven planning, fostering coordination, and prioritizing accessibility, communities can ensure no one is left behind when every second counts.

Weather Watch – July is Extreme Heat Preparedness Month

As summer temperatures rise, Central Illinois residents are facing more frequent and intense heat waves. The National Weather Service has recorded an increase in the number of days with heat index values above 100˚F. While many view extreme heat as a minor inconvenience, it remains one of the most dangerous weather-related threats, responsible for more deaths annually than hurricanes, floods, or tornadoes. With longer-lasting heat events becoming more common, now is the time for individuals, families, and communities to prepare.

Extreme heat poses a serious risk to public health, especially for older adults, young children, people with chronic illnesses, and residents without access to air conditioning. Socioeconomic factors, limited access to transportation, and high concentrations of older housing stock increase the risk of heat-related illnesses like heat exhaustion and heat stroke, particularly during prolonged events or power outages. Planning ahead can help reduce these risks. Keeping homes cool by closing blinds, using fans, and staying hydrated throughout the day are all important. Local emergency management officials also recommend assembling a "heat safety kit".

All members of our families are vulnerable to heat-related illnesses including our pets, especially during the sweltering days of July. Never leave pets in parked vehicles, even for a moment as temperatures can rise to deadly levels within minutes. Make sure pets have plenty of fresh, cool water and access to shaded or air-conditioned spaces throughout the day. Watch for signs of heat distress in pets, such as excessive panting, drooling, lethargy, vomiting, or unsteady movements, and contact a veterinarian immediately if you suspect heatstroke. Your pets rely on you to keep them safe plan ahead to ensure they stay cool, hydrated, and healthy all summer long.

As we move deeper into summer, Peoria Co. EMA encourages all residents to make a heat safety plan, look out for one another, and take heat warnings seriously. Being proactive today can prevent a heat emergency tomorrow. Extreme heat doesn't have to turn into an emergency. With awareness and preparation, we can protect ourselves, our families, and our neighbors.

Summer Safety Tips

As the temperature rises and summer fun kicks into full gear, Peoria Co. EMA wants to ensure everyone in our community stays safe while enjoying the season. Whether you're heading to the trails, the pool, or hosting a backyard BBQ, here are some essential summer safety tips to keep you and your family protected.

- Summer is a prime time for hiking, biking, and exploring the great outdoors, but heat and weather conditions can pose serious risks. Drink plenty of water before, during, and after outdoor activities and wear lightweight, light-colored, and breathable clothing.
- Pools, lakes, and beaches offer great relief from the heat but they also come with risks, especially for children and non-swimmers. Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 1–4. Supervision and barriers are critical.
- Backyard cookouts are a summer staple, but fires and burns are a leading cause of summertime injuries. Be sure to check Your equipment and inspect propane hoses and connectors for leaks. Keep a fire extinguisher or a bucket of sand nearby, and know how to use it.

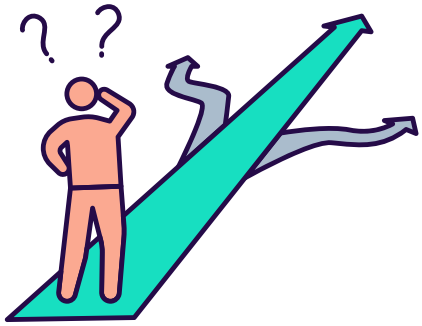
Let's protect what matters most—our families, friends, and neighbors.

The Power of Choice: How Decision Making Shapes Our Everyday Safety

Did you know the average American makes around 35,000 decisions every single day? From small choices like what shirt to wear to life changing ones like buying a house, decision making is an essential part of daily life and plays a crucial role in keeping ourselves, our families, and our communities safe. At its core, decision making is simply choosing between two or more options. But good decision making goes beyond impulse. It requires careful thought, gathering facts, and adapting as new information comes in. In emergencies, indecision can cost precious time and lead to greater harm. That's why building your decision-making skills before a crisis hits is one of the most powerful ways to protect what matters most. Choosing to nothing is also a decision, and sometimes the riskiest one!

Most of our daily choices fall into three categories:

- Life-Changing Decisions: Getting married, having children, buying a home. All choices that shape your future in profound ways.
- Major Decisions: Daily choices that affect your wellbeing and responsibilities, like whether to go to work or what to eat.
- Minor Decisions: Simple, everyday picks what shoes to wear, what to have for breakfast.



Whether big or small, every decision can influence your day and your safety, especially during emergencies. When making important decisions especially under stress try this simple 7-step process, adapted from UMass Dartmouth:

Step 1: Identify the Decision

- Clearly define what you need to decide. Ask: What is the situation? Why act now? Who is affected? Is there a deadline?

Step 2: Gather Relevant Information

- Collect the facts. Knowing where to get accurate information is key whether from trusted local authorities, official weather updates, or reliable news sources.

Step 3: Identify the Alternatives

- List all possible options. More choices give you flexibility if circumstances change.

Step 4: Weigh the Evidence

- Consider the pros and cons. Visualize the outcome of each option. Which one best solves the problem?

Step 5: Choose Among Alternatives

- Select the option or combination that feels right for you and the situation.

S**tep 6: Take Action**

- Act on your choice. Good plans are only useful when put into practice!

Step 7: Review Your Decision and Consequences

- Reflect on how things turned out. Did it solve the problem? If not, revisit the process with your new insights.

In emergency management, decisions save lives. Whether you're stocking your emergency kit, planning for a storm, or deciding whether to evacuate, every step you take can reduce risk and help your community recover faster. Take charge of your choices, stay informed, stay prepared, and remember: the best decision is an informed one! Every moment counts when disaster strikes, and having a clear plan in place can make the difference between chaos and control. By educating yourself on local hazards and response strategies, you empower not only yourself but those around you. Communication with family and neighbors ensures that no one is left behind when it matters most. Preparedness isn't just personal, it's a community commitment to resilience and safety.

Resilience Reading Room

Red Wagons Critical Thinking for Modern Emergency Managers and Responders introduces a revolutionary philosophy for emergency preparedness when championing critical thinking, foresight, and adaptability. Author E.G. Weiss Jr. uses symbolic storytelling, such as a clever boy outsmarting guards and Cassandra's prophetic warnings to reframe conventional approaches to emergencies. Weiss contends that traditional emergency management methods too often focus on what has already happened. Instead, he advocates for a proactive mindset that anticipates "hidden risks" and prepares for the unpredictable. Real-world case studies illustrate how rigid plans break down in chaotic situations and how creative problem-solving can avert disasters

Throughout its 83 pages, the book offers the following tools crafted for emergency managers, first responders, organizational leaders, and anyone who must make high-stakes decisions under pressure.

- Diagnostic questions to identify overlooked vulnerabilities.
- Exercises designed to train adaptive, lateral thinking.
- Templates for flexible response planning that can pivot during crises.

Weiss draws from a variety of real incidents and mythic analogies to show how preparedness can be perverted without critical thinking. The "red wagon" motif symbolizes overlooked yet essential elements in crisis planning that often fail due to narrow assumptions.

Targeted toward professionals in emergency management, law enforcement, fire service, healthcare, and civic leadership, the book emphasizes moving beyond checklists to cultivate strategic insight and building teams that can adapt rapidly when plans fail. This means developing a culture of questioning and challenging norms to improve readiness. Red Wagons is a concise, but impactful manual for modernization in crisis management:

- It urges a shift from reactive to anticipatory planning.
- It equips readers with mental frameworks for rapid adaptation.
- It makes a compelling case that preparedness is a dynamic, creative discipline.

For those seeking to elevate their emergency response from daily operations to catastrophic events, Weiss offers a blueprint for future disaster resilience. Red Wagons doesn't replace established emergency frameworks it fills critical gaps:

- Enhancing NRF/NIMS by fostering flexibility within structure.
- Deepening whole-community resilience by democratizing preparedness.
- Bridging theory and practice, translating systems thinking into exercises that boost cognitive agility.

Notable Quotables

If you think you are too small to make a difference, you haven't spent a night with a mosquito.
African Proverb

When people are financially invested, they want a return. When people are emotionally invested, the want to contribute.
Simon Sinek

Hope is not a Strategy!
Vince Lombardi

Does a Local Disaster Relief Fund Play in Peoria?

Every disaster whether it's a flood, wildfire, tornado, or winter storm begins and ends locally. The time to prepare is now. Recent changes at the federal level have made one fact clear: Washington D.C. will not be bailing out communities every time disaster strikes. FEMA and the federal government are raising the disaster threshold, meaning smaller-scale disasters may no longer qualify for federal aid even if they cause significant local disruption.

What does that mean for Peoria County? It means we must take responsibility for our own resilience by establishing Local Disaster Relief Funds, dedicated financial reserves for disaster response and recovery. A Local Disaster Relief Fund is a publicly or privately supported financial resource set aside by local governments, communities, or nonprofits to:

- Provide immediate assistance after disasters (shelter, food, medical care).
- Support small businesses and residents in recovery.
- Fund emergency infrastructure repairs not covered by federal aid.
- Keep critical local services functioning.

Why We Need to Act Now

- Federal aid is not guaranteed and our community could be left without recovery dollars.
- Delays in federal assistance can take weeks or months. Local funds allow immediate, life-saving action.
- Every $1 invested in disaster mitigation and preparedness saves $6 in recovery costs.

Communities should take immediate action and:

- Introduce or support local ordinances creating a disaster relief fund.
- Allocate annual budget funds toward disaster preparedness and resilience.
- Encourage local businesses, philanthropies, and nonprofits to contribute to the fund.
- Designate a management and oversight structure to ensure transparency when disaster strikes.

This is not just fiscal policy this is lifesaving preparedness. Communities that thrive after disaster are those that are prepared before it. Let's not wait for another headline to make this urgent. Let's lead by example starting today. Resilience starts with us!

A Closer Look at Drills in Community Disaster Preparedness

In our last newsletter, we provided an overview of the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), highlighting its role in shaping consistent, objective, and measurable emergency preparedness exercises. This month, we're taking a deeper dive into one of the most practical components of that framework, drills, and how they directly support building disaster resilience across our communities.

Drills are short, focused exercises designed to test specific operations or procedures in a controlled environment. Whether it's activating a tornado warning system, conducting an evacuation of a public facility, or simulating a shelter-in-place order, drills allow agencies and community partners to rehearse critical actions in real time. These exercises help reinforce individual roles, enhance interagency communication, and uncover gaps in existing plans that might otherwise go unnoticed until a real emergency occurs.

More importantly, drills engage a broader slice of the community from schools and healthcare providers to faith-based groups and neighborhood associations. This inclusive approach fosters shared ownership of preparedness and helps build trust between public safety officials and the communities they serve. By routinely practicing for the unexpected, our region grows stronger, more connected, and better prepared to recover quickly from disasters of any scale.

Double Puzzle

Solve the scrambled clue words, then use those letters to form the final answer. Answers found on the page 12.

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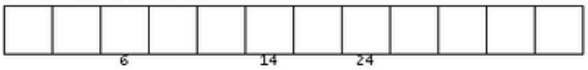

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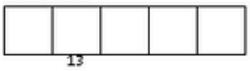

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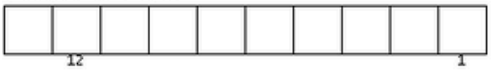

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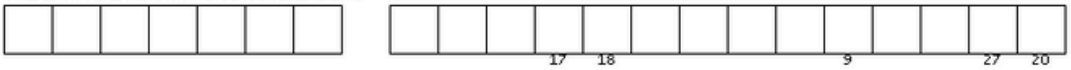

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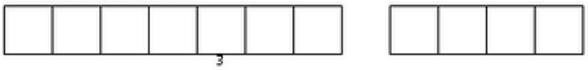

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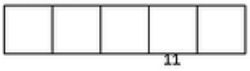

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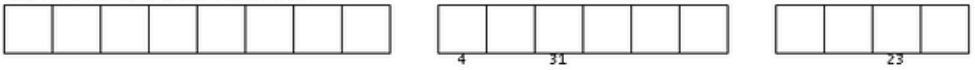

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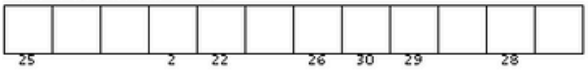

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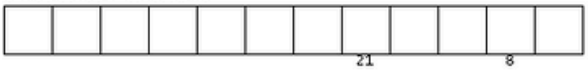

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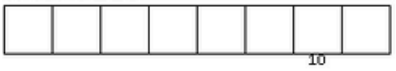

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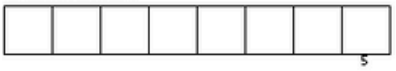

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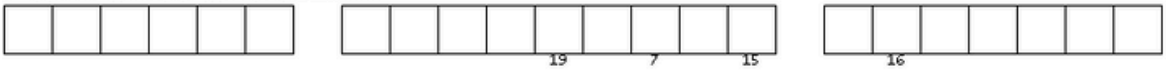

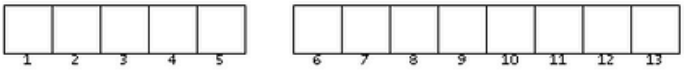

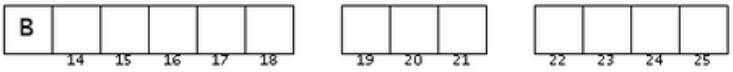

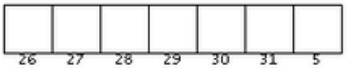

Spotlight on Planning: The Foundation of POETE

In last month's newsletter, we 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. This month, we begin a deeper dive into each component by focusing on the first and most fundamental element: Planning.

Planning is where the blueprint for emergency readiness begins. It's not just about having a plan it's about building a collaborative, flexible, and inclusive framework that outlines who does what, when, where, and how in any disaster scenario. Planning is a dynamic, continuous process that brings together diverse stakeholders from first responders and public health officials to local businesses, schools, and residents. It defines roles, outlines procedures, anticipates challenges, and ensures that everyone involved in an emergency response is operating from a shared, well-understood playbook.

Our planning efforts are rooted in collaboration. We work closely with local fire departments, law enforcement, hospitals, and community organizations to ensure our plans are comprehensive and actionable. Planning sessions are not one-time events but instead ongoing conversations, driven by data, past experiences, and input from our partners. One recent example includes a multi-agency workshop we hosted to discuss a regional measles outbreak.

We believe that community participation is essential to successful emergency planning. Residents and local organizations bring valuable perspectives to the table and play a crucial role in helping us identify gaps, improve outreach, and strengthen resilience. Whether you are a business owner reviewing your continuity plan, a school administrator updating your safety protocols, or a family putting together a home emergency kit, you are part of this process.

As we continue exploring POETE in the months ahead, we encourage you to stay engaged. Next month, we'll turn our focus to Organizing and how we build the systems and structures that bring our plans to life during an emergency.

CBRNE Response Guidebook: A Critical Resource

In today's complex emergency landscape, the threat of CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive) incidents remains a pressing concern. From accidental chemical spills to intentional biological or radiological attacks, preparedness is not just a federal responsibility. Local emergency responders, public health officials, and community leaders play a vital role in protecting public safety. That's why the CBRNE Response Guidebook is an essential tool in our local emergency management arsenal.

Developed by federal agencies in coordination with first responders and public health professionals, the CBRNE Response Guidebook offers clear, concise, and actionable guidance for responding to high-risk incidents involving hazardous materials. The guidebook serves as both a reference and a training tool, ensuring that personnel can quickly identify threats, initiate protective actions, and coordinate across agencies effectively.

Whether it's a train derailment involving toxic chemicals or a suspicious package reported downtown, local responders are often first on the scene. The CBRNE Response Guidebook equips our teams with critical knowledge during the first minutes and hours of a crisis—often the most crucial window for life-saving decisions.

Wisdom of Preparedness : Adapting to a New Era of Emergency Management

In today's rapidly changing world, emergency management is no longer confined to the playbooks of the past. The challenges we face are evolving faster, more complex, and more interconnected than ever before. To meet these demands, our mindset must evolve, too. Preparedness is no longer just a checklist it's a way of thinking, planning, and living. Three powerful truths are reshaping how we approach emergencies, and though each presents real challenges, they also offer clarity and direction.

The Disasters We Prepare For Aren't Always the Ones We Face

Traditionally, emergency preparedness centered around the familiar risks of floods, fires, tornadoes, and blizzards. We knew their patterns, developed detailed plans, and built response protocols around historical precedent. But the past few years have rewritten the rules. A global pandemic disrupted every layer of our society. A cyberattack took down a city's water system. A container ship stuck in a canal created global ripple effects on food and fuel supplies. These weren't in the binders and yet they happened.

This reminds us that planning must be more than prescriptive. It must be adaptive. Flexibility isn't a luxury; it's a survival strategy. Communities that can pivot, improvise, and adjust in real-time are better equipped to manage the unexpected. We urge every sector to ask not just, "Are we ready for X?" but, "Are we ready to adapt to anything?"

Yesterday's Isolated Events Have Become Today's Cascading Crises

A single hazard rarely stays contained. A thunderstorm may damage power lines but that loss of electricity can impact everything from dialysis machines at hospitals to traffic lights, fueling stations, and digital communications. One disruption often ripples outward, creating a web of secondary impacts that can overwhelm even well-resourced communities.

This new reality requires us to think not just in terms of hazards, but in terms of systems. What happens when those systems (healthcare, infrastructure, transportation, agriculture) intersect? For example, what will we do if a flood damages both a bridge and a regional fiber optic line, knocking out access and communication in one blow? Are we asking harder questions, challenging our assumptions, and planning for what used to be considered "unthinkable."?

No Single Entity Can Manage This Alone

Today's emergencies require a whole-community approach. Schools, hospitals, utility companies, nonprofits, faith groups, businesses, and individuals all have unique strengths and roles to play in protecting our community. Preparedness is now a shared responsibility. Every neighbor who checks on someone during a power outage… every small business with a continuity plan… every teacher trained in lockdown procedures… all contribute to a stronger, safer Peoria County.

This is the wisdom of preparedness: it's no longer about waiting for the storm. It's about building systems, relationships, and skills that endure long after the rain has passed. As Peoria County continues to grow and change, so will the challenges we face but so too will our readiness. And that readiness will be built not by any one agency, but by all of us together. Preparedness is a mindset we carry into our everyday lives, not just something we activate in a crisis. The more we invest in each other's safety and resilience now, the stronger and faster we'll recover when the next disaster strikes.

Recent Happenings

Ameren Gas Storage Field Tour

Ameren Illinois recently hosted an informative briefing on their natural gas storage site located in Glasford, Illinois. The event brought together local emergency management officials, first responders, and members of the public to learn about the facility's operations, safety protocols, and ongoing maintenance strategies. Company representatives provided a detailed overview of how natural gas is stored underground in depleted reservoirs, as well as the rigorous safety monitoring in place to detect and mitigate potential hazards.

The briefing underscored Ameren Illinois' commitment to maintaining a safe and secure energy infrastructure. EMA officials emphasized the importance of ongoing collaboration between utility providers and emergency response agencies. The Glasford site, one of several strategic storage locations across the state, plays a crucial role in ensuring a stable natural gas supply during peak demand months. Attendees were also briefed on coordinated emergency response plans and the availability of rapid response resources in the event of an incident.

GPSD Wastewater Surveillance

The Greater Peoria Sanitary District (GPSD) and the Peoria City/County Health Department (PCCHD) have recently engaged in productive discussions regarding the implementation of wastewater surveillance using BioBot technology. This collaboration aims to enhance local capacity for early detection and monitoring of infectious diseases through community-level wastewater analysis. BioBot, a national leader in wastewater intelligence, provides a unique and non-invasive way to detect pathogens such as COVID-19, norovirus, influenza, and potentially measles by analyzing sewage samples from municipal systems.

This advanced surveillance method offers the ability to track infection trends in near real-time, giving public health officials a critical early warning system for outbreaks and reemergence of diseases. PCCHD is particularly interested in expanding BioBot's utility to monitor for measles, which has seen a resurgence in various parts of the country. By integrating wastewater data with existing public health tools, local agencies hope to respond more swiftly and effectively to emerging infectious threats. EMA supports this data-driven initiative and will continue to work with both GPSD and PCCHD to assess the feasibility and preparedness needs associated with this innovative public health surveillance strategy.

Flooding Hazards: Science and Preparedness

EMA staff participated in the AWR-362: Flooding Hazards: Science and Preparedness course, offered by the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center (NDPTC). This training emphasizes the different types of flooding such as riverine, flash, and urban while exploring the meteorological and hydrological conditions that lead to each. Through case studies and real-world data, participants gain a deeper understanding of flood behavior, risk assessment, and the tools available for monitoring and forecasting flood events.

Designed for emergency managers, planners, public works officials, and community leaders, the course highlights the importance of floodplain management, resilient infrastructure, and public education in mitigating flood impacts. It also reinforces the role of interagency coordination and community-based preparedness in reducing flood-related injuries, property damage, and loss of life.

Recent Happenings (cont.)

Bringing the Boom!

Peoria's annual Independence Day celebration along the Illinois River brought together an estimated 100,000 residents and visitors for an unforgettable evening of patriotic festivities, capped off with a spectacular fireworks display and a flyover by the Illinois Air National Guard's 182nd Airlift Wing. This year's event was particularly notable not only for its entertainment value but also for the robust coordination and security planning that went into ensuring a safe experience for all attendees in light of ongoing international threats and heightened homeland security concerns.

The success of this major regional event was a direct result of seamless collaboration among multiple agencies and jurisdictions, The City of Peoria Fire Department played a pivotal role in leading development of an Incident Action Plan ensuring all agencies had shared situational awareness and contingency protocols in place. The Illinois Air National Guard's 182nd Airlift Wing added a highlight to the evening with an impressive flyover featuring C-130 aircraft, honoring the nation's service members and showcasing the strength of the local military community.

From crowd management and river safety to rapid response capabilities the event served as a real-time demonstration of the value of preparedness and interagency cooperation. EMA thanks all our partners for their professionalism and dedication and reminds residents to stay connected with local alerts and resources for future events and emergencies.

Hooves, Harvests & Hazards: Partners Train for All-Hazard Resilience

Local preparedness partners recently participated in two nationally recognized training programs, AWR-328: All Hazards Preparedness for Animals in Disasters and MGT-448: All Hazards Planning for Animal, Agricultural, and Food-Related Disasters. Hosted through the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC), these courses provided crucial education on responding to emergencies involving animals, agriculture, and food systems, critical but often under-addressed components of community resilience.

AWR-328 focused on preparing responders for the complexities of animal care during disasters, including sheltering, evacuation, and public health concerns. MGT-448 expanded on this foundation, offering strategic planning tools to support coordinated responses to disruptions in the agricultural and food supply chains. The training scenarios included infectious disease outbreaks, natural disasters affecting livestock operations, and bioterrorism threats to the food system.

One of the key takeaways from the training was the importance of cross-sector communication and establishing relationships before a crisis hits. Participants reviewed real-world incidents and discussed lessons learned from zoonotic disease outbreaks and animal sheltering challenges. These insights will be directly applied to local planning efforts.

As threats to public health, food systems, and animal welfare continue to evolve, EMA is committed to staying ahead of the curve through training, planning, and partnerships. These courses reaffirm the agency's dedication to comprehensive emergency management, where no community sector is overlooked. We thank representatives from the Peoria Humane Society and Wildlife Prairie Park for participating and encourage other partners to join us in future training opportunities that strengthen our whole-community preparedness.

Double Puzzle

Answers to the puzzle found on page 7

NPINDDEENECE

I	N	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	E
		6			14		24				

DLRLI

D	R	I	L	L
	13			

ETHHCALERA

H	E	A	L	T	H	C	A	R	E
	12								1

PLETNOIRAATMAOTRDICSN

M	E	D	I	C	A	L

T	R	A	N	S	P	O	R	T	A	T	I	O	N
			17	18				9				27	20

HTEEREEXATM

E	X	T	R	E	M	E
				3		

H	E	A	T

TEOPE

P	O	E	T	E
			11	

UDRFFENSIESITELARD

D	I	S	A	S	T	E	R

R	E	L	I	E	F
4		31			

F	U	N	D
		23	

INECVLASULER

S	U	R	V	E	I	L	L	A	N	C	E
25			2	22		26	30	29		28	

PASERSPEREDN

P	R	E	P	A	R	E	D	N	E	S	S
							21			8	

NRSPOEES

R	E	S	P	O	N	S	E
						10	

OCVREREY

R	E	C	O	V	E	R	Y
							5

CRCATGEMNOUEIPNPOOIRTM

C	O	M	M	O	N

O	P	E	R	A	T	I	N	G
				19		7		15

P	I	C	T	U	R	E
	16					

E	V	E	R	Y
1	2	3	4	5

D	I	S	A	S	T	E	R
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

B	E	G	I	N	S
	14	15	16	17	18

A	N	D
19	20	21

E	N	D	S
22	23	24	25

L	O	C	A	L	L	Y
26	27	28	29	30	31	5