



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
Homeland Security and Emergency Management
N.H. Department of Safety, John J. Barthelmes, Commissioner
33 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03305
1-800-852-3792
newsletters@hsem.nh.gov

November 2007



Fall has been a busy season for exercises. *Operation Gatekeeper* was held in Nashua on October 21st, involving Nashua PD's Special Response Team, Dive Team, Bomb Unit and Hostage Negotiations Unit; the Central N.H. Special Operations Unit and the Nashua Fire Department. The exercise scenario involved a bomb incident, hostage-taking and a hazardous materials response and was several months in planning. HSEM photo by Leigh Cheney.

EARTHQUAKE SHAKES UP SEACOAST – A Magnitude 2.4 earthquake struck the Seacoast just before noon on Tuesday, November 20th, prompting dozens of calls to E-911 and local authorities, but causing no serious damage. The quake was centered 3.28 miles WSW of Exeter. It was felt most strongly in Portsmouth and Rye. Residents reported noises like explosions and items falling off walls, tables and shelves. That was the second earthquake in New Hampshire during November. A Magnitude 1.8 quake 15.6 miles WSW of Concord on Wednesday, November 7th, passed without notice.

IEMG MEETS IN RHODE ISLAND – HSEM directors and staff are meeting this week in Newport, R.I., with their colleagues from the International Emergency Management Group to discuss cross border issues and other common problems. The state and provincial representatives are working on protocols to allow for a seamless response to emergencies that affect communities on both sides of the international border. In a recent incident in Upstate New York, Canadian firefighters responding on a mutual aid call were delayed by eight minutes while crossing the border, long enough for the historic inn that was on fire to be destroyed. Vermont is seeking advance approval for Canadian electric utility workers to be able to cross the border to assist with a major power outage in that state. A number of breakout sessions are scheduled on emergency management issues affecting both countries.

IEMG is made up of the New England states and New York, Quebec and the Maritime provinces.

HSEM DIRECTOR VOICES SUPPORT FOR HS STUDIES – N.H. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Christopher M. Pope was among several local, state and federal officials invited to meet with DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff on November 7th to discuss higher education programs to support Homeland Security. Pope and the other participants are all graduates of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School's Program in Security Studies and Homeland Defense, a master's degree-level curriculum. They voiced support for the program, but also stressed the need to maintain its academic independence. Pope said the group assured Chertoff that the program was a valuable investment of Homeland Security resources.

While he was in Washington, Pope also met with other Department of Homeland Security officials on intergovernmental programs and the establishment of an All-Hazards Information and Analysis Center in New Hampshire.

TOWNS SEEK TO MOVE RESIDENTS OUT OF FLOOD DANGER – After the experience of three major floods in less than two years, some New Hampshire communities are planning to acquire flood-prone properties and help residents relocate out of harm's way. Allenstown, Merrimack, Pembroke, Goffstown, Salem and Raymond have sent letters of intent to seek Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants that will allow them to buy out the owners of the homes at fair market value. The homes will be demolished and the land put to public use. Future residential construction would not be allowed on the land. The towns have until January 1st to submit applications to HSEM. FEMA is expected to review them early next year. If the applications are approved, the communities could receive their grants by September.

HSEEP TRAINING CLASSES SCHEDULED – Training classes for Module 6 of the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program are being scheduled around the state over the next three months. This four-hour class is for exercise evaluator certification. Certified evaluators are required for any exercise funded by Homeland Security grants. There is no charge for the class, but advance registration is required.

The N.H. Fire Academy's General Admissions Application should be used to register for classes. They will be offered at the following locations, all beginning at 6 p.m.:

December 12th–N.H. Fire Academy

January 12th–Keene State College

January 23rd–Nashua Fire Department's Lake Street Station

February 6th–Lakes Region Fire Mutual Aid, 62 Communications Drive, Laconia

February 20th–Newington Fire Station, 80 Fox Point Road

REGIONAL MEETING OUTLINES STATE PANDEMIC PLANS – Representatives of states in FEMA's Region I and II, that is, all of New England, New York and New Jersey, met in New Haven, Conn., on November 6th to present summaries of their pandemic flu plans. Each state made a presentation on its plan, and they turned out to be quite similar. They faced the same problems: insufficient supplies of medications and other resources and the expectation that up to 40 percent of medical and public safety personnel would be out sick. States are planning to deal with an extended disease outbreak modeled on the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic and expect to have to deal with the crisis without significant help from the federal government or other states. Most state plans are based on the assumption that the disease outbreak would start somewhere overseas, providing some advance warning before it struck in the U.S. But, as some participants noted, the 1918 pandemic started in Kansas.

New Hampshire was represented at the meeting by personnel from HSEM, DHHS, State Police and the National Guard.

HSEM COMMUNITY RESILIENCY TRAINING SCHEDULED – N.H. Homeland Security and Emergency Management is offering a program on Community Resiliency to be held in three locations around the state in January. Resilience is the capacity to cope, adapt and return to effectiveness in the wake of severe stress or trauma. The program is aimed at mental health professionals and anyone involved in disaster planning and response. Resilience during disease outbreaks and in wartime will be a special focus of the program. It will be held 1:30 – 4 p.m. at the following locations:

January 11th–Cheshire Medical Center, Keene

January 18th–N.H. Fire Academy, Concord

January 23rd–Dion Center, Rivier College, Nashua

There is no cost for this program. To register, or for more information, contact Rhonda Theriault at 223-3617 or RhondaTheriault@hsem.nh.gov.

FITNESS PROGRAM FOR EMERGENCY WORKERS AT UNH – Federal, state and local public safety workers can start the new year by improving their health. A Physical Fitness Symposium, sponsored in part by the UNH Police Department, will be held on Saturday, January 5th at the Durham campus. The day-long program includes creating a training program, improving on-the-job nutrition and improving strength and coordination. More information is available at www.safetyfitnesseducation.com or 603-218-9477.