



**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS**  
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of  
**Homeland Security and Emergency Management**  
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President Barack Obama is sworn in on Jan. 20 with his family and former chief executives looking on. Story on Page 2. New York Times photo

**GOVERNOR PAYS TRIBUTE TO RESPONDERS IN INAUGURAL** – Governor John H. Lynch was inaugurated for a third term on Jan. 8. In his inaugural address before a Joint Session of the Legislature, the governor expressed gratitude to everyone who responded to the storm and its aftermath: “Many dedicated men and women worked through the cold and subsequent storms to restore power to their fellow citizens. And we should thank them for their efforts. We are all mindful that some of our people lost their lives during the storm. This ice storm was incredibly difficult for all the people it affected. It could have brought out the worst. Instead it brought out the best and showed the true character of New Hampshire and our people. We saw volunteers, themselves without power, working at local shelters so others could have a warm bed and a hot meal. We saw state and local employees working tirelessly to help ensure the needs of people were met. We saw first responders on-duty around the clock to help keep families and their communities safe.” He received a standing ovation for those comments.

**STATE GETS DISASTER DECLARATION FOR ICE STORM** – Last month’s ice storm, which caused power outages for 420,000 utility customers, was declared a major disaster by former President Bush on Jan. 2, paving the way for federal disaster aid. The declaration, which was for Public Assistance, will allow communities and non-profit

organizations that suffered damage or incurred storm-related expenses to recoup some of those losses. Between Jan. 13 and 16, HSEM and FEMA personnel held a series of 10 applicant briefings around the state to help municipal officials work on their applications. Those applications are due Feb. 2.

Federal aid typically covers 75 percent of actual losses, but Governor Lynch and U.S. Sen. Judd Gregg are both seeking 100 percent reimbursement for ice storm expenses. In letters to President Obama, Lynch and Gregg noted the unprecedented series of weather events experienced by the state in 2008. They said the additional aid is needed to help in the recovery efforts and to prevent overburdening of state and local resources. There has been no word on whether the 100 percent reimbursement will be granted.

**ICE STORM STIMULATES INTEREST IN HAM RADIO** – Some people who lost their normal means of communication during last month’s ice storm are making sure they are better prepared next time by getting their amateur radio licenses. The Nashua Telegraph reported on Jan. 26 that nearly 20 people signed up for a two-day class at the Brookline Safety Complex to prepare for the ham radio technician’s license exam. Ham radio has a strong tradition of public service, and many of the state’s public safety dispatch centers, local emergency operations centers and the state EOC have ham equipment and volunteers to staff it. Ham radio operators use their own equipment and operate on frequencies designated for their use. During major disasters, amateur radio is often the only means of communications. For more information on amateur radio communications, go to <http://ares.arrlnh.org/>.

**CHANGING OF THE GUARD** – Barack Obama became the nation’s 44<sup>th</sup> president at noon on Jan. 20. The new administration got right to work reviewing government policies and appointing key officials. One of the first to be confirmed by the Senate was the new Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, the former governor of Arizona. On her first day on the job, Secretary Napolitano issued the first of a series of action directives, aimed at reviewing existing strategies and programs dealing with critical infrastructure protection, risk analysis, state and local intelligence sharing, transportation security and state, local and tribal integration.

In a statement, Secretary Napolitano said, “One of my top priorities is to unify this department and to create a common culture. These action directives are designed to begin a review, evaluation and dialogue between the various functions of this department and me.”

The Inauguration ceremony itself attracted an estimated two million people to Washington and was the subject of a massive security operation among more than 58 federal, state and local agencies. The N.H. Emergency Operations Center was activated at a Level 2 to monitor events in Washington. There were no incidents.

**SAVE THE DATE** – The fifth annual New Hampshire Emergency Preparedness Conference is coming up on Tuesday, June 23, at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester. Details to be announced.

**WEBEOC TRAINING SCHEDULED** – The HSEM Operations Section is offering training during February on the WebEOC computer program used to keep track of emergency operations. The program is employed in the state Emergency Operations Center and can also be accessed by local EOCs to provide real time monitoring of state activities. Training will be conducted on Feb. 12 from 9-noon for state agency personnel and 1-4 p.m. for local emergency management personnel and other partners. So far, more than 500 people from towns and state agencies have been trained. Anyone interested in taking the training or who needs more information should contact [Lorri.Sargent@hsem.nh.gov](mailto:Lorri.Sargent@hsem.nh.gov).

**VY REDUCES POWER FOR MINOR REPAIRS** – The Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant reduced power twice in January so that plant operators could repair minor leaks. On Jan. 8 the plant was reduced to 40 percent to repair a water leak in the feedwater system that supplies water for steam generation in the reactor. That leak, which was at the rate of 60 drops per minute, was discovered by plant staff during a routine inspection. The plant was returned to 100 percent two days later after the leak was isolated and repaired. The plant was reduced to 70 percent for several hours on Jan. 12 for repair work on a breaker in its switchyard. That breaker had developed a leak of its insulating gas. Plant officials said such a leak is not unusual during cold weather.

The Vermont Yankee exercise sequence is coming up this spring. The Combined Functional Drill #1 will be held on March 18, with CFD #2 on April 15. The Graded Exercise will be held on June 10.

**ICE STORM AFTER-ACTION BEING PLANNED** – HSEM and the N.H. Public Utilities Commission are planning an after-action review of the December ice storm, to evaluate the response by state and local emergency management organizations and the utilities. The review is still in the planning stages, but the agencies will be seeking comments from state and local officials and members of the public. The plan calls for comments to be taken at public meetings and via the Internet. Details of the review will be announced later.