



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
Homeland Security and Emergency Management
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Winners of the 2009 Stovepipe Awards, for breaking down barriers among emergency response organizations. (L-R) Stephen Pixley, Emergency Management Coordinator at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon; Julie Boyer, RN, of Granite State Independent Living Foundation; Chief Joseph Lennox of the Peterborough Fire Department and Bette Bogdon, RN, of the Granite Sate Independent Living Foundation. The selection committee said it tried to narrow the list of recipients to one, but found it could not and picked four winners this year.

N.H. Department of Safety photo

EM CONFERENCE SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD – The fifth annual Emergency Preparedness Conference, held Tuesday, June 23, at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, was the most successful yet, with attendance topping 450. That was about 100 more than last year. Participants represented local emergency management organizations and state, federal and private sector agencies from around New Hampshire and the region.

The keynote speaker was James S. Blumenstock, Chief Program Officer, Public Health Practice, of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. He discussed the status of public health preparedness from a national perspective, including the recent H1N1 flu outbreak. Workshop topics throughout the day included evacuation planning, communications among first responders and communicating with the public, with and without the mass media, legal issues and lessons learned from the ice storm and other disasters of 2008.

The annual Stovepipe Award was presented, this year to four people: Stephen Pixley, Emergency Management Coordinator at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon; Julie Boyer, RN, and Bette Bogdon, RN, of the Granite State Independent Living Foundation and Chief Joseph Lennox of the Peterborough Fire Department. The award is given to emergency managers who make the greatest effort to improve cooperation among response organizations and break down barriers between them.

KLAUBER NAMED EMD OF THE YEAR – George Klauber, fire chief and emergency management director of the Town of Derry has been named New Hampshire’s Emergency Management Director of the Year by the Northeast States Emergency Consortium (NESEC). Christopher M. Pope, Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, said Klauber was nominated for the award for his work in directing his community’s response to the December 2008 ice storm, which caused widespread power outages, blocked roads and disrupted communications. Pope said Chief Klauber instituted door-to-door wellness checks on Derry residents to ensure their safety and used innovative means of communication, such as the town’s AM radio station and flyers delivered to homes by mail carriers and included with deliveries of take-out food to provide information on shelters and other assistance. The award was presented at the N.H. Emergency Preparedness Conference.

HIGH WIND, RAIN POUND CENTRAL N.H. TOWNS – Officials in Northwood and some Lakes Region towns could be forgiven if they had a feeling of déjà vu during the last weekend of June. On Friday, June 26, high winds caused by thunder storms moved through Northwood, bringing town trees and limbs that knocked out power for several hours and blocked 16 local roads. The damage turned out to be mostly minor. The following evening thunderstorms returned, washing out roads and driveways in the Lakes Region. Belmont, Gilmanton and Laconia were particularly hard hit. Most of the damage was to local roads, but routes 140, 106 and 107 were also damaged.

VY GRADED EXERCISE A SUCCESS – The graded exercise for the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, held on June 10, was very successful, according to federal regulators. The exercise scenario, which involved a coolant leak and the release of radioactive materials greater than federal limits, triggered a response by New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts that included transfers of school children and evacuations. More than 500 players took part in the exercise, which was observed by 90 evaluators. At a meeting for exercise participants in Brattleboro on June 15, FEMA Region I Radiological Assistance Committee Chairman Steve Coleman said the utility and the states successfully executed the emergency plan to protect the public health and safety.

Of more than 550 procedures evaluated, only seven minor issues were reported. FEMA will issue a written report on the exercise in several weeks.

VY REPAIRS COOLING LEAK – Vermont Yankee was reduced to 25 percent power June 23-25 as technicians repaired a leak in the plant’s condenser. The leak, of about a half gallon of water per minute, was in the system that circulates 360,000 gallons per minute to cool reactor steam before the water is returned to the Connecticut River. The leak was not considered safety related.

NEWFIELDS USES SEABROOK SIREN FOR FIRE DISPATCH – The Town of Newfields has begun using a warning siren for the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant in dispatching its fire department. Seabrook Station emergency officials agreed to the siren use in cooperation with HSEM. The siren will use a “high/low” tone for fires, which is different from the pattern used for Seabrook alerting. The siren will be tested by the town every Saturday at 12:30 p.m. Seabrook Station has 104 sirens in New Hampshire and Massachusetts as part of its emergency alerting system. At least one other New Hampshire community uses a Seabrook siren for local emergency alerting.

REGION EXPECTED TO HAVE SUFFICIENT POWER FOR SUMMER – New England’s electric power grid operator is predicting that the region will have sufficient supplies to meet peak summer demand, in part because of the sluggish economy. ISO-New England says peak demand this summer is not expected to increase much over 2008 levels. The agency expects regional power demand to reach 27,875 megawatts (MW) during normal summer weather conditions, while the generation resources available total 31,225 MW. The region also has another 1,900 MW available in demand-response resources such as load management and on-site generators. This year’s peak demand is expected to exceed last year’s peak by 110 MW.

The region’s all-time record demand of 28,130 MW occurred on Aug. 2, 2006 during an extended heat wave.

WEB EOC TRAINING SCHEDULED – The HSEM Operations Section has scheduled training days for Web EOC through the summer and fall. Web EOC is an electronic logging system that allows emergency personnel to monitor response operations or exercises whether they are in the state Emergency Operations Center, local EOCs or anywhere else they have a computer and Internet access. Training will be held on July 9, Aug. 13, Sept. 10 and Oct. 8. Morning sessions, from 9 a.m. to noon, are for state agency personnel. Afternoon sessions, from 1-4 p.m., are for local emergency management workers. For more information or to register, contact Lorri Sargent at HSEM Operations at 223-3606 or lorri.sargent@hsem.nh.gov.

CORRECTION: Last month’s Emergency Management News said in an article on lightning safety that three people were killed by lightning in New England in 2008. That was incorrect. The actual total for the region last year was five fatalities: two in Maine and one each in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. (Thanks to John Jensenius of the National Weather Service Office in Gray, Maine.)