



**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS**  
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of  
**Homeland Security and Emergency Management**  
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Kingston Police Chief Donald Briggs tells state Public Utilities Commissioners, meeting in Exeter, about his community's efforts to deal with the December ice storm. Chief Briggs said he realized immediately that power would be out for a long time and began to put local officials and townspeople to work to clear roads and take care of vulnerable people.

N.H. Department of Safety photo

**AFTER-ACTION REVIEW ON ICE STORM UNDERWAY** – Three months after the December ice storm that knocked out power to two-thirds of New Hampshire's people an extensive after-action review is being carried out to improve the state's response to another such massive event. The state Public Utilities Commission has scheduled a series of 10 public meetings around New Hampshire where members of the public and local officials can relate their experiences on the record. At the first two meetings, in Peterborough on March 18, and in Exeter on March 24, the common theme was the lack of communication from the electric utilities on when power restoration would be complete. People said company representatives repeatedly told them that their power would be back on "by midnight tonight." It wasn't. They said they would have made better arrangements if they had known that power would be out for a week or more.

Additional PUC hearings will be held in Raymond, Salem, Plaistow, Milford, Derry, New London, Goffstown and Rochester. All are scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. See the PUC website for dates and exact locations: [www.puc.nh.gov](http://www.puc.nh.gov).

HSEM is also meeting with people who took part in the ice storm response. Director Chris Pope and other agency personnel met with local officials and first responders in Hampton, Derry, New London and Rindge. Other meetings have been held or are scheduled, with state public information officers, news media representatives and personnel from all organizations who staffed the state Emergency Operations Center during the event.

**ICE STORM AID TOPS \$5 MILLION TO N.H. COMMUNITIES** – Federal aid to New Hampshire communities to assist in recovery from the ice storm that wreaked havoc on the state between Dec. 11 and 23, 2008 has surpassed \$5 million. To date, \$5,022,578 in FEMA relief funds has been allocated to affected communities, mostly for debris cleanup and emergency protective measures. FEMA and the N.H. Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management continue to work with towns, state agencies, and eligible non-profits throughout the state to provide financial assistance. Requests for aid have been received from 205 eligible applicants statewide.

The funds allocated through FEMA's Public Assistance program are distributed on a cost share basis with FEMA providing 75 percent of eligible costs and state and local government paying 25 percent.

**DIRECTOR ADDRESSES ENGINEERS** – HSEM Director Chris Pope gave a presentation on recent activities at the agency during a breakfast meeting of the N.H. chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies in Manchester on St. Patrick's Day. Pope provided the engineers with an overview of emergency management operations, and discussed the December ice storm, the state's most recent disaster. The engineers expressed interest in the mutual aid system used by the electric utilities to bring in reinforcements from other states and Canada. This was a massive logistical operation, but Pope noted that it was entirely operated by the utilities. Several of the engineers said they had received training on structural damage evaluation and would be willing to help with that work in the wake of future disasters.

The ACEC chapter represents 40 engineering companies in New Hampshire with 750 employees with specialties in all branches of engineering.

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY DISCUSSED AT RIVIER** – The December ice storm was the springboard for a lively discussion of business continuity planning at a President's Circle Roundtable at Rivier College in Nashua on March 25. Thirty-nine executives of Southern New Hampshire businesses and non-profit organizations, Nashua Mayor Donnalee Lozeau and HSEM Director Chris Pope related their experiences during the storm and the power outage it caused and offered suggestions for keeping businesses functioning during disasters.

Most participants said they were working on ways to improve protection of core business functions, especially information technology resources, and helping employees and their families. One important suggestion was to plan ahead for using generators during power outages. Companies should consult with a licensed electrician to determine exactly what kind of generator they would need and do preliminary installation work to operate it safely if a generator is needed.

**TIPS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS ON PERSONS WITH FUNCTIONAL NEEDS NOW ON HSEM WEBSITE** – The Tips field guide is an easy-to-use 14-page, color-coded, 4.5 x 5.5-inch, resource that responders can reference to communicate more effectively with persons with functional needs. Developed at the University of New Mexico’s Center for Developmental Disabilities (CDD), the field guide offers information to first responders on how to assist persons with a wide-range of disabilities, as well as seniors, people with service animals, people with mobility challenges, people with autism, people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, people who are blind or visually impaired, people with cognitive disabilities and other issues. Many responders across the country have ordered the guides for use in the field as well as general disability awareness training, such as how to recognize and respond to an individual with a disability in an emergency situation. There is no copyright for the Tips so reproduction can be done locally. To inquire on mass quantity pricing directly from CDD, go to <http://cdd.unm.edu/products/tipsforfirstresponders.htm>.

**GUARD TESTS WATER PURIFICATION SYSTEMS** – The N.H. National Guard has two new water purification systems to provide drinking water during emergencies. The systems are operated by the 3643<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Support Battalion. They are a new asset for the Guard. The smaller system produces 120 gallons of water per hour. The larger system produces 1,500 gallons of water per hour. Both use reverse osmosis and membrane-based filtration to remove dissolved ionic material from water. The generator-powered systems can turn seawater, saltwater and water contaminated by nuclear, biological and chemical agents into fresh water. They were tested at the Somersworth water treatment plant on March 15, drawing water from the Salmon Falls River.

**RISK COMMUNICATION COURSE SCHEDULED** – The state Department of Health and Human Services is offering a two-hour training class on Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication, which would be of value to anyone involved in emergency management or public health and safety. The course is scheduled for 9-11 a.m. on April 29 at the Brown Building, 129 Pleasant Street, Concord. For more information or to register, call Nicola Whitley at 603-271-6526, or e-mail [nwhitley@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:nwhitley@dhhs.state.nh.us).

**EM CONFERENCE COMING UP** – HSEM’s fifth annual emergency preparedness conference is scheduled for June 23 at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester. The theme of this year’s conference is “Looking Back. Moving Forward.” Registration information will be available soon. Save the date.