

A black and white photograph of the Warren County Courthouse. The building features a prominent portico with several tall, fluted columns. To the right, a clock tower with a dome and a clock face is visible. The building is surrounded by trees, and the overall scene is in grayscale.

WARREN COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

2020-2022 Annual Report

Issued December 2022

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Partners,

To make it simple, 2021 was one of the most challenging years of our lifetime. The challenges of 2020 and 2021 were like no other in my tenure here as the emergency management director since 1996.

The COVID-19 pandemic placed stress on individuals, families, businesses, local and state governments, and our community. The emergency management office worked along side our local hospitals, local and regional health departments, the Kentucky Department for Public Health, Western Kentucky University, and many local health providers. This was all done on a concerted effort to ensure we provided the best possible opportunities for individuals to choose the best possible health care for themselves and their families. In following the health directives and orders, the emergency management office implemented local plans, procured supplies to support local healthcare facilities, monitored community needs, and provided consultation to local and state officials on conditions as they changed. This pandemic response was probably the largest coordinated event in the history of Bowling Green and Warren County.

The pandemic began to reduce its hold on our local citizens in the summer of 2021, as we thought we can get back to a normalcy, that had not been experienced in the previous eighteen months. The untamed tendencies of mother nature had instore for us another event that brought our community to see the wrath of a devastating tornado on December 11th, 2021. The unfortunate loss of 17 individuals in our community, the most ever by a tornado in Warren County since 1974. This event tested the years of planning, training, and exercising that validated the efforts put forth by all emergency services, in providing the best possible emergency services to our victims and survivors. Our community was hit hard, but with resiliency, fortitude, perseverance, and dedication our community is returning to its vibrant, growing, and diverse status.

We commend and thank each person that has assisted in making our emergency management program grow and expand. Thanks to the elected officials of Bowling Green and Warren County, especially Warren County Judge-Executive Mike Buchanon for support and guidance in making our mission is to provide the most safe and protected environment and community to raise our families.

Ronnie Pearson
Executive Director

Table of Contents

Section 1: Agency Mission Statement

Section 2: Agency Vision

Section 3: History

3.1 History of EM

Section 4: About the office

4.1 Staff

4.2 Response Breakdown

4.3 Notable Responses

4.4 Office Location

Section 5: Emergency Preparedness

5.1 Training

5.2 Exercises

5.3 Technical Rescue Team

5.4 Warren County LEPC

Section 6: Community Outreach

6.1 Community Preparedness

6.2 Public Information and Warning

6.3 Accomplishments

6.4 EM Staff Time Reports

Section 1: Agency Mission Statement

To provide comprehensive state and local emergency management for the coordination of people and resources to protect citizens, property, and environment of Kentucky from all hazards through mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery to cultivate a safe, prepared, and resilient Warren County.

Section 2: Agency Vision

The vision for Warren County Emergency Management is to become a state and national model in shaping and sustaining the culture of preparedness and resiliency in Bowling Green and Warren County.

Section 3: History

Emergency management in Kentucky began as Civil Defense in 1941. The original intentions of civil defense were to continually monitor chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats. It also included managing and monitoring disasters both manmade and natural in nature. Civil defense became Disaster and Emergency Services in the mid 1970's with an all hazards approach.

In the 1980's, Civil Defense reappeared as nuclear planning across the world had an uptick. This continued with both Civil Defense and DES logos prominent in emergency services through 1998.

In 1998, DES in Kentucky transferred to what is known today as Emergency Management. Emergency management still exists today and manages larger-scale emergencies set forth by KRS 39. KY Emergency Management is a division of Kentucky Department of Military Affairs. The main KYEM Office is located in Frankfort with 10 field offices across the state. Each area is coordinated with an area EM manager.



Civil Defense Logo



Disaster and
Emergency Services
Logo



Emergency Management Logo

Section 4: About the office

4.1 Our Staff

The daily and emergency operations of Warren County Emergency Management are facilitated through our staff. Warren County Emergency Management staff includes personnel from all disciplines of emergency services in both a paid and volunteer mode. Volunteer deputy directors are called upon in times of disasters and to serve as the command in the absence of full-time staff.

Our Staff

Director – Ronnie Pearson

Deputy Director – Travis Puckett

Deputy Director – Tim Robinson

Volunteer Deputy Director – Craig Peay (HAZ-MAT)

Volunteer Deputy Director – Jason Duckett (WCFD)

Volunteer Deputy Director – Stephen Harmon (WCRJ)

Volunteer Deputy Director – David Oliver (WKU)

LEPC Chairman – Michael Webster (HAZ-MAT)

Administrative Specialist – Vicki Duckett

Administrative Assistant Intern – Casey Archey

4.2 Response Breakdown

Emergency Management Response Breakdown

Call Type	2020	2021	2022	Total
Fires				
Arson	1	5	0	6
Business	0	1	0	1
False Alarm - WKU	43	70	69	182
Fire Alarm - WKU	43	70	69	182
Fire Marshal Assistance	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	0	0	1	1
Residential	7	7	0	14
School	0	3	1	4
Vehicle	4	0	1	5
Wildfire	0	0	0	0
Law Enforcement Incidents				
Explosives Devices	0	0	2	2
Illegal Dumping	2	1	0	3
Suspicious Devices	1	1	0	2
Miscellaneous				
Assist Other Agency	2	0	1	3
Earthquake	0	1	0	1
IMT Activation	1	1	1	3
KCCRB Request	0	1	0	1
KYEM Notification	1	7	51	59
Underground Storage Tank	30	24	24	78
Search and Rescue				
Amber Alerts	0	0	0	0
Animal	0	0	2	2
Golden Alerts	1	3	2	6
Missing Persons	4	4	7	15
Search and Rescue - Land	6	4	1	11
Search and Rescue - Water	13	13	1	27
Spills and Releases				
Air Releases	0	0	2	2
Facility	1	1	1	3
Fuel	3	6	3	12
Oil/Other	8	13	2	23
Transportation Incidents				
Aircraft Incidents	1	0	2	3
Railroad Incidents	0	0	0	0
School Bus Incidents	0	0	2	2
Vehicle Accidents	7	16	3	26

Utility Incidents				
Boil Water Advisories	6	3	0	9
Drinking Water Problems	0	13	11	24
Natural Gas Leaks	0	0	0	2
Sewer Main Breaks	0	1	0	1
Water Main Breaks	0	0	2	2
Water Incidents				
Body Recovery	0	1	1	2
Drownings	0	1	0	1
Water Rescue	0	0	0	0
Water Recovery	0	0	0	0
Weather				
Flooding	0	1	0	1
Weather Notification/Event	41	82	161	284
Response Total	173	269	354	796

4.3 Notable Responses

In 2022, we had 2 notable responses. First, on September 9th Warren County EM was requested to respond to a hazardous material leak at Country Oven Bakery. Facility representatives reported that a refrigerant line broke causing a release of anhydrous ammonia. Factory workers were displaced and due to the elevated temperatures outdoors, GoBG was requested for transportation of workers to a cooling site while BGFD mitigated the release. Bowling Green Fire Department responded with their HAZMAT team to make entry into the building to stop the leak. EM staff remained on scene for nearly 6 hours.

The second notable response for 2022 was a suspicious device found on the campus of Western Kentucky University. At 10:28 AM, Warren County EM was notified by WKU Police of a suspicious package that was found behind Cherry Hall. Director Pearson and

Intern Archey responded to the scene. Upon arrival, it was found that an object was struck by construction workers in the area. Due to the nature of the incident, nearby buildings were evacuated, and the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms agency was requested. An ATF agent responded to the scene and began the investigation. It was later determined that the object was not an explosive but rather a technological device from a previous building that located in the area. An all-clear was given at 12:07 PM. EM staff were on scene for around 2 hours.

4.4 Office Location

The office for Warren County Emergency Management is located inside the former Warren County Jail, next to the Warren County Courthouse. The official address for the office is:

429 ½ East 10th Avenue
Bowling Green, KY 42101

To contact us, call our office (270-781-8776) during normal business hours which is Monday-Friday 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

Section 5: Emergency Preparedness

5.1 Training

Training is pivotal for our staff to maintain our situational awareness and ability to respond to emergencies. Because of COVID-19, most training through 2020 and 2021 was held in a virtual format. In-person format returned in 2022. Training hour break-downs are as follows:

Name	2020	2021	2022	Total
Ronnie Pearson	33.5	36.75	110.5	181
Travis Puckett	90	35	25	150
Tim Robinson	32	31.1	79.25	142.35
Casey Archey	N/A	N/A	49	49
	155.5	102.85	263.75	522.35

5.2 Exercises

Similar to training, exercises are critical in preparing emergency management staff for major disasters. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, exercises were held virtually in 2020 and 2021. With subsiding case numbers, we were permitted to return to an in-person modality in 2022. Warren County EM staff participated in 1 exercise in 2022.

Director Pearson, Deputy Puckett, and Intern Archey traveled to Hart County for this exercise hosted by Hart County EM. With more than 20 state and local agencies in attendance, a train derailment was simulated incorporating a large manufacturing facility. Since this was simulated as a mass-casualty incident, this tested the response of multiple EMS units transporting patients, fire service for search and rescue, and law enforcement for simulating shutting down Interstate 65 and rerouting traffic. EM Staff operated as communications, weather, and planning for the command post. This exercise lasted around 5 hours. We thank Hart County Emergency Management for the assistance request, Dart Container for the facility use, and White Squirrel Weather for responding with us to provide on-site weather support.

5.2 Technical Rescue Team

The Warren County Technical Rescue Team, or TRT, is a branch within the Warren County Emergency Management. The TRT is comprised of members from all nine Warren County Fire Departments, Emergency Management, Warren County Sheriff's Office and various other public safety agencies.

The Warren County TRT is responsible for responding to incidents that require a rescue or recovery via ropes, water, or any other technique that is not a traditional method. The TRT is often called to assist in larger incidents, missing person searches, and to assist other counties with a rescue or recovery. Members of the WCTRT are required to maintain their technical rescue certifications in order to remain a member of the team. Statistics for the Warren County TRT are as listed below:

	2020	2021	2022
Exercises	0	1	0
Responses	0	1	0
Trainings	9	7	5
Training Hours	1115	204	390

For additional information about the Warren County Technical Rescue Team, please call:

Chief Jason Duckett – 270-202-8500

Deputy EM Director Travis Puckett – 270-781-8776



5.3 Warren County LEPC

Within Warren County Emergency Management is the Warren County Local Emergency Planning Committee, or LEPC. Pursuant to KRS 39, each Kentucky county is required to have an LEPC chair whose purpose is to develop an emergency plan to prepare for and respond to chemical emergencies. The LEPC chair oversees the LEPC committee which consists of members of local response agencies, government officials, public health and medical, and facility representatives. The plans set forth by the LEPC chair must be reviewed, tested, and updated annually.

The LEPC can most effectively carry out its responsibilities as a community forum by taking steps to educate the public about chemical risks and working with facilities to minimize those risks. Because the information that the LEPC carries is sensitive, it cannot be shared unless citizens are given the means to understand the information and its implications.

The Warren County LEPC chair is Mr. Michael Webster. Mr. Webster is a firefighter and hazardous materials coordinator with Bowling Green Fire Department. Michael started his role as LEPC Chair in January of 2022 after former chair Todd Bernard retired from his position.

For more information on the Local Emergency Planning Committee for Warren County, please call 270-846-2488.



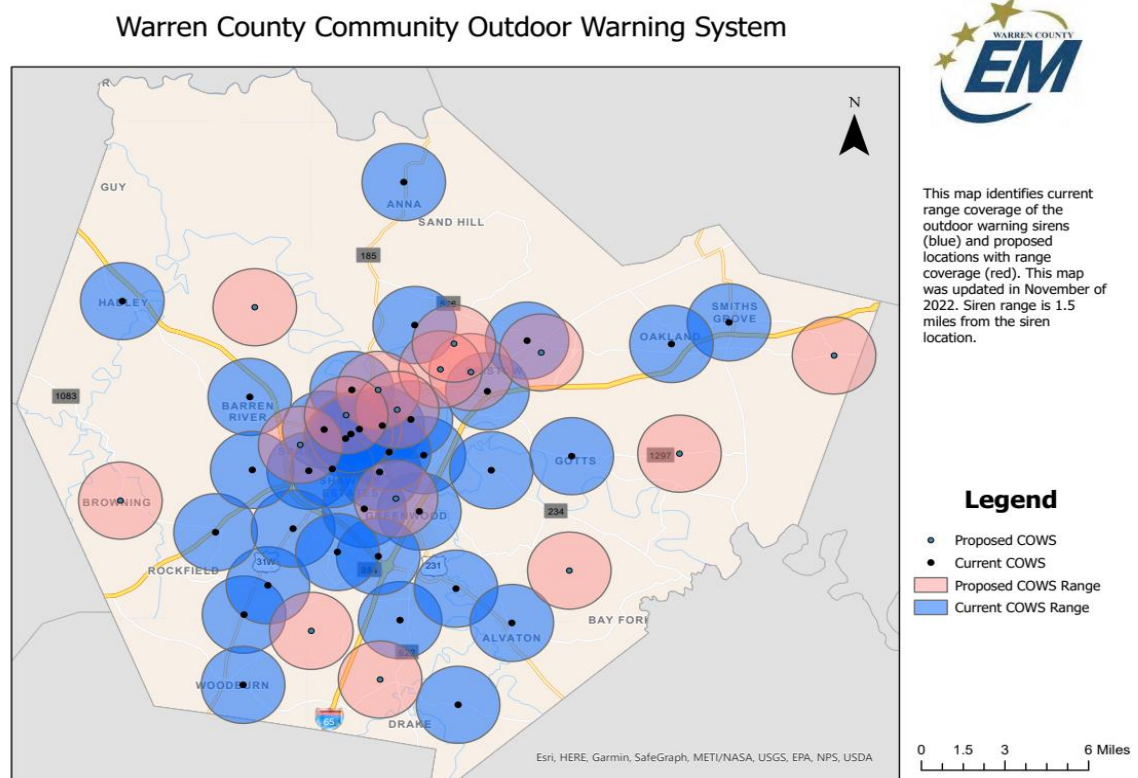
Section 6: Community Outreach

6.1 Community Preparedness and Warning

Community preparedness is an important ongoing task for us at Warren County EM. Through the recent years, we have strengthened our community preparedness through many methods.

Community warnings are implemented through the use of a couple of ways. Warren County government and emergency management has installed and maintained a system of outdoor warning sirens known as the Community Outdoor Warning System, or COWS, and indoor warning systems, the Community Activated Lifesaving Voice Emergency System, or CALVES. The COWS program was initiated in 1997 and the CALVES program followed in 1999.

Currently, Bowling Green and Warren County have 33 sirens. A grant for 11 additional sirens has been applied for and approved. Below is a map of the current siren locations in blue and proposed sites in red.



Warren County also has 250 CALVES. These CALVES units are placed in every school, nursing home, daycare, hospital, church, theater, indoor sporting arena, and emergency responder office across Bowling Green and Warren County. They are also placed in most buildings across the campus of Western Kentucky University.

6.2 Public Information and Education

A goal of Warren County Emergency Management is to be able to consistently inform the public of previous incidents and how to prepare themselves for disaster. During 2020 and 2021, Warren County Emergency Management was unable to provide any public outreach due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the decline of COVID-19 in 2022, we returned to public information outreach. Our intern Casey Archey took on many of these projects.

On June 22nd, Casey spoke at the Kentucky Association for Pupil Transportation conference at South Warren High School. Casey shared the partnership between Warren County Emergency Management and White Squirrel Weather and how they share information to school districts regarding severe weather hazards. We are thankful for our continued partnership with White Squirrel Weather and Warren County Schools.



On September 28th, our intern spoke at Fruit of the Loom Health and Safety Fair for employees. Casey spoke about some of the previous incidents Warren County has experienced like the 2008 Super Tuesday tornado outbreak and the 1974 Super Tornado Outbreak. A NOAA weather radio was raffled at the conclusion of the fair. Thank you to Penny Hughes with Fruit of the Loom for the invitation.



If you would like for our office to speak at your event, call our office at 270-781-8776.

6.3 Accomplishments

Through the year, our office works to obtain grants and funding to support our agency in addition to our fellow public safety agencies and the general public. Below is a view at the accomplishments 1996 to date.

Name of Grant	Grant Information	Grant Amount
1996 Mitigation Grant	10 COWS Units	\$134,000
2000 Mitigation Grant	250 CALVES Units	\$43,000
2000 NOAA/NWS Grant	High Water Yield Signs – 10 Sites	\$1,000
2002 Mitigation Grant	Basil Griffin Lightning Detector	\$11,000
2003 Mitigation Grant	8 COWS Units	\$115,000
2004 Mitigation Grant	10 Tornado Safe Rooms	\$102,000
Tornado-proof Fire Station	Alvaton Fire Station #1	\$25,000
Project Impact	EM Office/Old Jail Renovation	\$125,000
2004 WMD Grant Part 1	Various Public Safety Equipment	\$40,000
2004 WMD Grant Part 2	Various Public Safety Equipment	\$103,000
WMD Team 2003-2006	HAZMAT/WMD Team Equipment	\$1,100,000
2010 Mitigation Grant	Courthouse Generator	\$84,000
2010 Mitigation Grant	2x Tornado Shelters – Basil Griffin Park	\$200,000
2010 Mitigation Grant	Alvaton FD #3 Tornado Safe Room	\$255,000
FEMA Disaster #1818 Flood	FEMA Reimbursement	\$448,000
2012 Mitigation Grant	Fire Dept Generator – 12 Units	\$183,250
2013 Mitigation Grant	Airport Generator Grant	\$83,678
2013 Mitigation Grant	2x Tornado Shelters – Buchanon Park	\$249,000
2013 Mitigation Grant	2x Tornado Shelters – Ephraim White Park	\$249,000
Homeland Security Grant	Technical Rescue Team Equipment	\$35,400
Firehouse Subs Grant	Technical Rescue Team Equipment	\$8,375.40
2018 Mitigation Grant	Tornado Shelter – Phil Moore Park	\$249,000
2018 Mitigation Grant	Tornado Shelter – Ed Spears Park	\$249,000
2018 Homeland Security Grant	BGFD - Equipment	\$50,000
2019 Homeland Security Grant	Plano VFD - Substation	Awarded
2019 Homeland Security Grant	Woodburn VFD - Substation	Pending
2022 Mitigation Grant	Road Drainage project	\$500,000
2022 Mitigation Grant	Road Drainage project	\$3,000,000
2022 Mitigation Grant	11 COWS Units	\$330,000
2022 Mitigation Grant	Safe room EOC	\$3,000,000
2022 Mitigation Grant	Community Generators	\$930,000
2022 Mitigation Grant	Warren Co. Schools - Safe Rooms x4	\$18,000,000
2022 Mitigation Grant	BRADD – Commercial Safe Rooms	\$3,500,000
Total Grant Awards Since 1996: \$4,154,532.82		
Total Pending Grants = \$29,260,000.00		

6.4 EM Staff Time Report

Through the last 3 years, our office has had several larger deployments or responses requiring longer-than-normal hours. Below is the breakdown for our main office staff and their hours dedicated to regular time, overtime, COVID Response time, and Tornado-related hours.

Warren County Emergency Management Time Report

	2020			2021				2022			
Employee	Reg Time	Over Time	Covid Time	Reg Time	Over Time	Covid Time	Torn. Time	Reg Time	Over Time	Covid Time	Torn. Time
Ronnie Pearson	1773	558	1358	1709	528	469	295	1546	454	--	963
Travis Puckett	1951	324	1374	1886	320	907	293	1623	231	--	1022
Casey Archey	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	89		--	--	462
TOTAL		882	2732		848	1376	677		685	--	2447

Time spent by employees on COVID since 2020: 4108 Hours

Time spent by employees on the tornado since December 11, 2021: 3124 Hours

We would like to thank our elected officials, public safety counterparts, and the public for their support through the last couple of years as our office, city, and county experienced numerous changes and challenges as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the December 2021 tornadoes.

We look forward to continuing our mission of providing coordination and management of emergencies across Bowling Green and Warren County through 2022 and beyond.

For inquiries or questions regarding this annual report, please contact our office at 270-781-8776. This report was completed by Casey Archey, Ronnie Pearson, and Travis Puckett.