

WARREN COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Partners,

We would like a few minutes to summarize 2023 from the perspective of Warren County EMA. This year our office has focused on receiving additional training, strengthening our plans, and training with our response partners to further develop our skills in performing vital functions during large-scale emergencies and disasters.

This year has also included the continuing efforts of closing the 2021 tornado disaster by ensuring those affected have places to return to. The FEMA process continued for reimbursement for the county for disaster expenses, as this is a very time-consuming process. The observation that Warren County is resilient is demonstrated daily by the new growth, facilities, and housing through kindness and compassion of the citizens of Warren County.

This growth is a direct result of positive leadership, dedication, planning, and execution by the various city and county departments that strive to make Bowling Green and Warren County an excellent community to grow, live, and work in.

We are encouraged by the progress that has been made internally and externally as we continue to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from past and future disasters. We are grateful to the elected officials of Bowling Green and Warren County, Judge-Executive Doug Gorman, and members of Warren County Fiscal Court for their support and guidance in making our mission to provide the most safe and protected environment and community to raise our families.

We hope that 2024 brings fewer emergency events which will assist in keeping our community resilient, prosperous, and happy.

Respectfully,

Ronnie Pearson

Director, Warren County Emergency Management Agency

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ABOUT EMA

The Warren County EMA is tasked with protecting the citizens and visitors of Warren County from natural, man-made, and technological disasters along with acts of terrorism. Our team at the EMA is comprised of highly trained and experienced professionals committed to providing the highest level of emergency preparedness and response services.

Warren County EMA is governed by a variety of agencies, mandated statutes (KRS 39), and ordinances. Under the direction of the Warren County Judge Executive, Warren County EMA is tasked with providing plans, training, and preparedness tips to the agencies responsible for the safety and well-being of the community, along with ensuring public preparedness. Warren County EMA serves as the primary liaison between local, state, and federal emergency management and response partners for mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Our services:

- A) **Emergency Planning** – We develop, update, and maintain emergency plans tailored to the hazards that Warren County may experience. Our plans cover a wide range of scenarios, from natural disasters to public health emergencies, ensuring that Warren County is prepared for all hazards. The EMA also coordinates with hospitals, schools, and nursing homes to assist with the development of facility-specific emergency plans as well.
- B) **Response Coordination/Resource Allocation** – EMA staff remain on call 24/7/365 to support local response, government, non-profit, and community members during planned and unplanned emergency incidents. WCEMA has access to numerous external contacts and resources to support incident/event needs. During larger incidents, EMA staff assist with coordinating response/recovery efforts, and liaison with state and federal agencies including KYEM, FEMA, and KY Dept. for Public Health to name a few.
- C) **Public Outreach, Warning, and Education** – The staff at WCEMA is committed to keeping the community informed and prepared to respond and recover from disasters. Through public outreach programs, community warning systems (AlertSense, COWS, and CALVES), we ensure the community can take proactive steps to safeguard their families, properties, and community.

MEET THE TEAM

The staff at Warren County EMA have a wide range of backgrounds that ensure we can effectively serve the community. Our office staff is comprised of 3 full-time staff, 4 volunteer deputy directors, and 1 intern. Below is a brief introduction of each member of the team along with their role at the EMA.

Ronnie Pearson – Director

Years of Service - 27

Responsibilities – Coordination of staff, office budget, external agency coordination, leading disaster operations, NIMS officer, and serving on the radio board.

Travis Puckett – Deputy Director

Years of Service - 6

Responsibilities – Search-and-Rescue coordinator, coordinates Technical Rescue Team, maintains outdoor warning sirens, and serves as a drone operator.

Vicki Duckett – Administrative Specialist

Years of Service - 31

Responsibilities – Operations budgeting, scheduling of trainings, support LEPC chairman, webEOC and sharepoint documentation, director's scheduling, and supports other full-time office staff.

Tim Robinson – Volunteer Deputy Director

Years of Service - 13

Responsibilities – Serves as drone operator, serves as communications coordinator, and programs emergency service radios.

Stephen Harmon – Volunteer Deputy Director

Years of Service - 11

Responsibilities – Serves as Warren County Jailer, assists with resources allocation, and assists with grant applications.

Jason Duckett – Volunteer Deputy Director

Years of Service - 5

Responsibilities – Serves as chief of the technical rescue team, chief of Gott Fire Department, and assists with resource allocation.

David Oliver – Volunteer Deputy Director

Years of Service - 5

Responsibilities – Serves as director of safety for WKU and assists with grant applications.

LEPC

The Local Emergency Planning Committee, or LEPC, is a branch within the EMA that is focused on the community preparedness aspect and extremely hazardous substance (EHS) facility planning. The LEPC is established and governed by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), which was passed in 1986.

The committee consists of personnel representing public safety agencies, industry, government, health services, and community groups. The LEPC meets twice a year to discuss facility updates and sometimes training for the representatives. The committee is headed up by a chairman. The Warren County LEPC chairman is Michael Webster.

Michael has served as the chairman since 2022. Michael works for Bowling Green Fire Department, where he serves as a captain and coordinator of the hazardous materials program.

For more information about the LEPC, contact Michael by phone at 270-781-8776 or by emailing him at wclepc@wcem.org.



RESPONSES

Warren County EMA is required to be notified of and respond to a variety of emergency incidents. These range from fuel spills to missing persons to weather related emergencies. Below is a summary of the responses for 2023.

Total Responses/Notifications – 329

Fires	81	Missing Persons	29
Brush/Grass/Trees	3	Amber Alert	0
Commercial Structure	3	Golden Alert	1
Residential Structure	2	Cases Opened	15
State Fire Marshal Assist	1	Cases Closed	13
Vehicles	3		
WKU Fire Alarms	69		
Hazardous Materials	24	Technical Rescue	8
Facility Spills	1	Collapse Rescue	0
Fuel/Flammable Spill	4	Drowning	1
Illicit Discharge	1	Rope Rescue	1
Oil/Combustible Spill	6	Trench Rescue	0
Other/Unknown	4	TRT Standby	1
Underground Storage Leak	8	Water Rescue	5
Miscellaneous	16	Transportation	25
911 Outages	2	Accident with Injury	4
AOA External	2	Accident without Injury	3
Drinking Water Incident	10	Aircraft Incident	0
IMT Activation	0	Major Road Closure	1
KYEM Notification	0	Railroad Incidents	9
Law Enforcement Assist	2	School Bus Accidents	8
Weather	146		
Flooding	2		
Severe Thunderstorm Watches/Warnings	7 / 15		
Tornado Watches/Warnings	4 / 7		
Wind Damage	105		
Winter Weather	1		
Weather, Other	4		

TRAINING AND EXERCISES

For staff to remain fully prepared to respond to disasters, we are required by Kentucky Emergency Management to maintain a certain amount of training. Directors are required to have 32 hours of annual training, deputy directors are required to have 16 hours, and support staff are required to have 12. You will see that many of the staff went above and beyond these requirements to ensure they are properly trained and prepared to serve their communities.

Below is the breakdown of training for this past year.

FY 2023 Training Report

- Ronnie Pearson, Director – 111 Hours
- Travis Puckett, Deputy Director – 97 Hours
- Tim Robinson, Volunteer Deputy Director – 126 Hours
- Stephen Harmon, Volunteer Deputy Director – 16 Hours
- Jason Duckett, Volunteer Deputy Director – 16 Hours
- David Oliver, Volunteer Deputy Director – 80 Hours
- Vicki Duckett, Administrative Specialist – 37 Hours
- Casey Archey, EMA Intern – 91 Hours

We also participate in exercises with local, state, and federal partners to ensure our readiness of the community, and test response policies and procedures. These are critical for finding shortfalls to better our preparation.

FY 2023 Exercise Participation

- Bowling Green Airport Full-Scale (Pearson, Archey, Robinson)
- Active Shooter Functional (Pearson, Oliver, Archey)
- Barren River Lake Exercise (Pearson, Puckett, V. Duckett, Archey)
- Covington Airport Exercise (Archey)
- Hart County COMEX (Pearson, Puckett, Robinson)
- KYTC COMEX (Robinson)
- Long Term Recovery Extreme Weather (Pearson, Puckett, V. Duckett)
- Missing WKU Student Tabletop (Oliver, Archey)
- Pediatric Surge (Pearson, Puckett, V. Duckett)
- Train Derailment (Pearson, Puckett, V. Duckett, Archey, J. Duckett, Oliver, Robinson, Harmon)
- Windstorm Incident (Pearson, Puckett, Archey, V. Duckett)

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Community preparedness is the main goal at Warren County EMA. When not participating in training or responding to disasters, we provide outreach for preparedness and to teach about what we do here at the EMA.

Our intern, Casey Archey, took this project on. Using social media and public talks, we have been fortunate to increase our visibility and provide preparedness tips to the community.

Warren County EMA has two social media accounts:

X (Formerly Twitter) - @WarrenCoEMA

Facebook – Warren County Emergency Management

Casey, along with other EMA staff, has attended numerous outreach events at schools, churches, and other community events. We strive to have a resilient and prepared community, and we hope to only expand our connections and prepare our community.

If you would like to have our agency speak to your group or have a booth, feel free to call the office @ 270-781-8776. Below are just a two of the pictures from this past year.



*Booth @ Fruit of the Loom
Employee Safety Day*



*Booth @ Natcher Elementary
Career Day*

2023 IN PICTURES

Below are just some of the pictures from the activities we participated in.



WCEMA Staff participated in Governor's Parade.



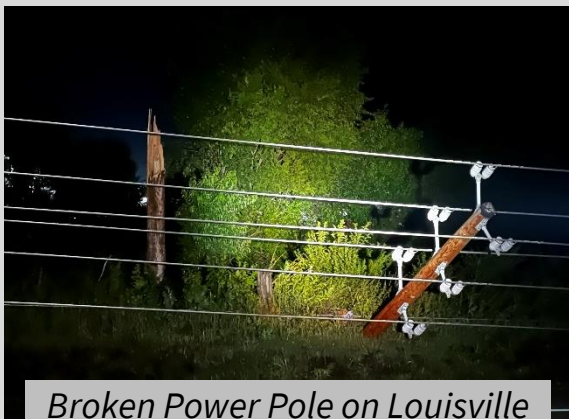
TRT Standby @ Basil Griffin Park.



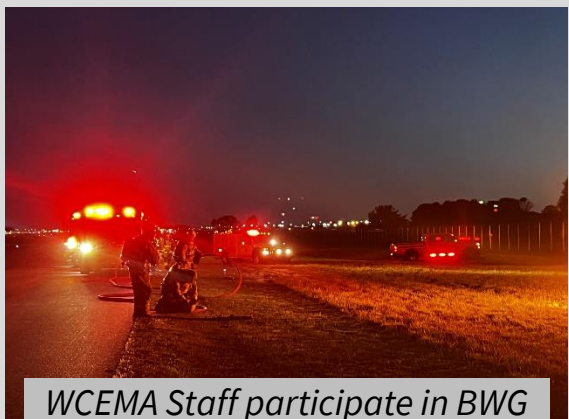
WCEMA Staff hosted the KYEM Area 3 meeting at BRADD.



December Tornado Damage @ Cumberland Trace Super 8.



Broken Power Pole on Louisville Road following July Windstorm.



WCEMA Staff participate in BWG Airport Exercise.

2024 GOALS

For 2024, WCEMA staff have established several goals to better our staff, agency, and community. Through these goals, we hope to become more prepared and resilient to respond to and recover from major disasters.

Our Goals:

Goal #1: Provide meteorological forecasts for all internal (departmental) and external (city/county stakeholders) community events and incidents.

Mission Area: Preparedness, Mitigation, Response

Strategy: Maintain community event schedule and develop forecasts for event leaders; assist with emergency planning; provide/support emergency operations center as needed.

Goal #2: Increase Public Outreach and Social Media Visibility

Mission Area: Preparedness, Response, Recovery

Strategy: Attend at least 10 outreach events; increase social media visibility by at least 25%.

Goal #3: Start Hazard Mitigation Projects

Mission Area: Preparedness, Mitigation

Strategy: Ensure all critical facilities have back-up generators; increase number of tornado safe rooms; increase number of COWS sirens to fill gaps.

Goal #4: Increase Exercise Program with Response Partners

Mission Area: Preparedness, Response

Strategy: Hold quarterly exercises with stakeholders

Agency Mission Statement

The mission of Warren County EMA is to provide comprehensive state and local emergency management for the coordination of people and resources to protect citizens, property, and environment of Bowling Green and Warren County from all hazards through preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery to cultivate a safe, prepared, and resilient community.

Agency Vision

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

The efforts for this report were led by Casey Archey, with support from other EMA staff and the partners we serve with. If questions arise, please contact our office via the methods below.

Warren County Emergency Management Agency

429 ½ East 10th Avenue | Suite B | Bowling Green, KY 42101

270-781-8776 | www.wcem.org

Hours of Operation:

8:30 AM – 4:30 PM Monday-Friday

