



WARREN COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Partners,

Please allow us to take a few minutes of your time to summarize 2024 from the perspective of Warren County EMA. During 2024, our office has focused on multiple projects including conducting and participating in additional training offerings, strengthening our emergency response/operations plan, and engaging with our response partners to further develop our skills in performing vital functions during large-scale emergencies and disasters.

During 2024, we have continued our efforts to close out the 2021 tornado disaster by assisting those affected with housing and other needs. The FEMA process for obtaining reimbursement for county disaster expenses also continues.

This phase of the process will likely continue for some time as it requires extensive documentation by multiple county departments and staff. Warren County's resiliency is demonstrated daily by the new growth, facilities, and housing; much of it is provided through the kindness and compassion of the citizens of Warren County.

The growth within Warren County 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 are an excellent community in which to grow, live, and work.

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 the City of Bowling Green and to Warren County, Judge-Executive Doug Gorman, Deputy Judge Bryan Downing and members of Warren County Fiscal Court for their support and guidance in supporting our mission to provide a safe and protected community environment in which we can raise our families. Our hope is that 2025 will bring fewer emergency events which will enable our community to stay resilient, prosperous, and at peace.

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 of and visitors to 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, Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS 39A-F), and local ordinances. Under the direction of the Warren County Judge Executive, Warren County EMA is tasked with providing plans, training, and prepared assistance 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 Missions:

- A) **Emergency Planning** – Our agency develops, updates, and maintains emergency plans tailored to the hazards for which Warren County are at greater risk. Our plans cover a wide range of scenarios, from natural disasters to public health emergencies, that ensure 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.
- B) **Response Coordination/Resource Allocation** – EMA staff are 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 response needs. During larger incidents, EMA staff assist with coordinating response/recovery efforts and serve as liaisons 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 are committed to educating the community regarding proactive steps they can take 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 2 full-time staff, 2 part-time staff, and 4 volunteer deputy directors. Below is a brief introduction of each member of the team along with their role at the EMA.

Ronnie Pearson – Director (full-time)

Years of Service – 28 Years

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

Charles O’Neal – Deputy Director (part-time)

Years of Service – 49 Years

Responsibilities – Planning and Training, Search-and-Rescue Support, Local EOC Manager, EOP Development, EMS Liaison

Travis Puckett – Deputy Director (full-time)

Years of Service – 6 Years

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

Vicki Duckett – Administrative Specialist (part-time)

Years of Service – 32 Years

Responsibilities – Operations budgeting, submit invoices to be pay, scheduling of trainings, support LEPC chairman WebEOC SharePoint documentation, director’s scheduling, and supports other full-time office staff.

Tim Robinson – Volunteer Deputy Director

Years of Service - 14

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

Stephen Harmon – Volunteer Deputy Director

Years of Service - 12

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

Jason Duckett – Volunteer Deputy Director

Years of Service - 6

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 - 6

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 planning for response to facilities that manufacture, utilize or store extremely hazardous substances (EHS). 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 at least twice a year to discuss facility updates and conduct training, as needed, 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 the 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 2024.

Total Responses/Notifications – 299

Fires	60
Brush/Grass/Trees	3
Commercial Structure	1
Residential Structure	2
State Fire Marshal Assist	1
Vehicles	5
WKU Fire Alarms	48

Missing Persons	13
Amber Alert	0
Golden Alert	1
Cases Opened	12
Cases Closed	12

Hazardous Materials	14
Facility Spills	2
Fuel/Flammable Spill	2
Illicit Discharge	1
Oil/Combustible Spill	1
Other/Unknown	3
Underground Storage Leak	5

Technical Rescue	13
Collapse Rescue	0
Drowning	2
Rope Rescue	1
Trench Rescue	0
TRT Standby	1
Water Rescue	9

Miscellaneous	30
Suspicious Packages	1
Sinkhole Response	2
Drinking Water Incident	13
IMT Activation	0
KYEM Notification	12
Law Enforcement Assist	2

Transportation	23
Accident with Injury	6
Accident without Injury	6
Aircraft Incident	0
Major Road Closure	1
Railroad Incidents	1
School Bus Accidents	9

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 2024 Training Report

- Ronnie Pearson, Director – 90 Hours
- Travis Puckett, Deputy Director – 168 Hours
- Charles Oneal, Deputy Director – 40 hours
- Tim Robinson, Volunteer Deputy Director – 40 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

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 2024 Exercise Participation

- KYEM Infrastructure Status Board (Pearson)
- BG/WC Regional Airport Exercise (Robinson, Pearson)
- HEART Group Radiation Exercise (Pearson, Puckett, Duckett, Robinson O'Neal)
- KYTC COMEX (Robinson, O'Neal)
- Long Term Recovery Tabletop (Pearson, V. Duckett)
- KYEM Earthquake Communications (Robinson, O'Neal)
- Ky Elections Tabletop (Pearson, Duckett, Puckett, O'Neal, Robinson)

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Community preparedness is a primary goal at Warren County EMA. When not participating in training or responding to disasters, we provide outreach for preparedness and to teach the community about our mission at the EMA.

Warren County EMA has two social media accounts:

X (Formerly Twitter) - WarrenCoEMA

Facebook – Warren County Emergency Management

Our agency attends numerous outreach events at schools, churches, and other community events to share our story and to encourage our citizens to engage in self-preparedness measures. We strive to have a resilient and prepared community, and we desire to expand our connections with and to prepare our community for disasters and incidents that may involve Bowling Green and/or Warren County, Kentucky.

If you would like to have our agency speak to your group or staff a booth at your event, feel free to call the office 270-781-8776. Shown below are examples of our engagements from this past year.



*Booth @ Fruit of the Loom
Employee Safety Day*



*Booth @ Natcher Elementary
Career Day*

2024 IN PICTURES

On the following pages you will find
a few pictures from the activities we participated in.



Com-fuel Fire



WC School Bus Accident – No Injuries



Car Removal at Lock #5



1 of 2 Drownings at River Rd.

2025 GOALS

For 2025, WCEMA staff have established several goals to better our staff, agency, and community. Through these goals, we hope to become more prepared and resilient in responding to and recovering from major disasters.

Our Goals:

Goal #1: Complete Hazard Mitigation Projects- Generators, Safe Rooms- \$4,800,000.00

Mission Area: Preparedness, Mitigation

Strategy: Install generators at critical facilities. WC Jail, Smiths Grove City Hall, Plum Springs City Hall, Oakland City Hall, Woodburn Community Center, Ephram White Park, Mike Buchanan Park, Phil Moore Park, Basil Griffin Park, Safe rooms- Richardsville, Browning, and EOC.

Goal #2: Increase Emergency Operations Center Training for Response Agencies

Mission Area: Preparedness, Response, Recovery

Strategy: Provide training events to better prepare local officials and responders at the Emergency Operations Center.

Goal #3: Implement and update a Threat & Hazard Vulnerability Assessment to determine new or reoccurring threats.

Mission Area: Preparedness, Response

Strategy: Utilize WKU interns to develop databases for reviewing events and reviewing new and emerging threats and hazards.

Agency Mission Statement

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

Agency Vision

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

This report was assembled by various members of Warren County Emergency Management with support from the partners, we serve. If questions arise, please contact our office utilizing the contact information shown below

Thank you for taking the time to review our report.

Warren County Emergency Management Agency

429 1/2 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

