

June 29, 2012

Derecho

Arlington County's Response

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Mid Atlantic Disaster Recovery Association

June 6, 2013

Lessons Learned

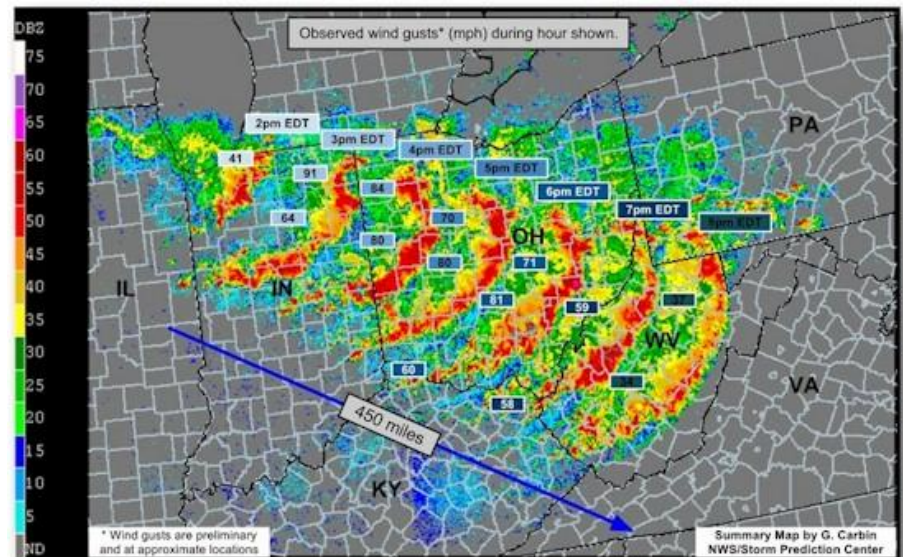
- Situational Awareness
- Communications Infrastructure
- EOC Management
- Power Restoration
- Vulnerable Populations
- Other items discussed
 - Staffing needs
 - Personal preparedness
 - Debris removal (contractor needs)

Common Strengths

- Internal and External Communications
- Community Engagement
- Personal and Organizational Preparedness
- Flexibility

Situational Awareness

- NWS warning not sufficient
- Minimal updates from Verizon



Situational Awareness

- Other tracking difficulties
 - Road closures
 - Dark Intersections
 - Trees down
 - Facility status



Communications Infrastructure

- 2.3 million without reliable 911 service for up to 4 days
- Central phone facilities lost power
 - Tandem generators failed.
 - System adjustments after power was restored.



Communications Infrastructure

- Lessons learned
 - Robust generator maintenance
 - Network system redesigns to improve redundancy



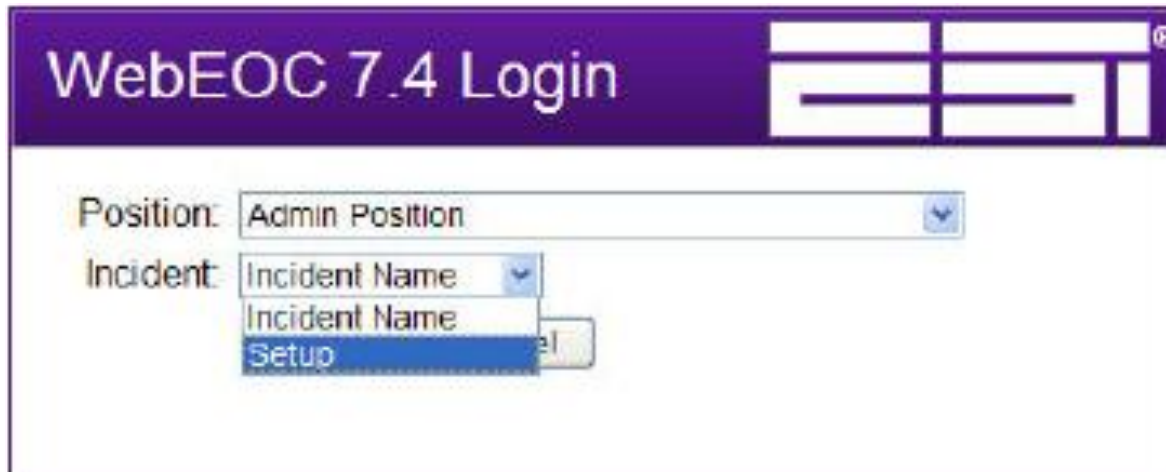
EOC Management

Continue planning, training and exercises



EOC Management

- EOC environment not familiar to all
- Learning curve improving for WebEOC
- Keep planning documents updated to align with EOC functions
- Cross-train staff from non-public safety departments.



The image shows the WebEOC 7.4 Login interface. It features a purple header bar with the text "WebEOC 7.4 Login" and a logo on the right. Below the header, there are two dropdown menus. The first is labeled "Position:" and has "Admin Position" selected. The second is labeled "Incident:" and has a dropdown menu open showing "Incident Name" and "Setup" as options. The "Setup" option is highlighted in blue.

Power Restoration



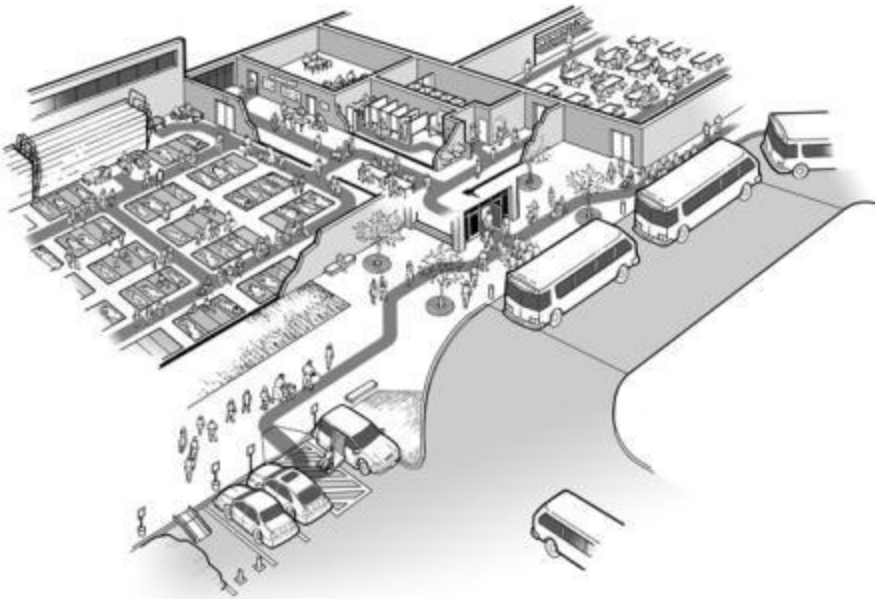
Vulnerable Populations

- Long term care, assisted living, other senior facilities, and facilities addressing functional needs



Vulnerable Populations

- Add to critical facilities
- Facilitate preparedness planning with managers
- Ensure shelters are prepared for these populations.
- ADA compliance may not be enough.



Power Restoration Issues

- Generator maintenance/performance
- Communications with power utilities
 - Excellent at management level
 - Work needed to coordinate in the field



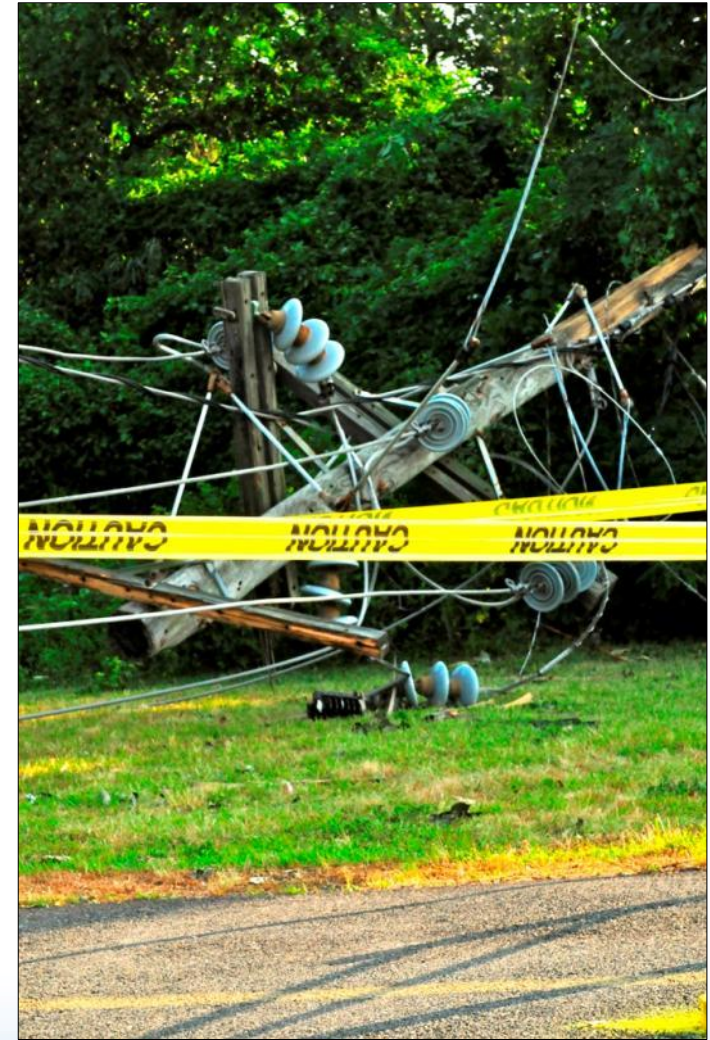
Derecho Impacts on Arlington County

- No storm-related fatalities
- Initial Damage Assessment for Arlington
 - \$1.6 million private property damage
 - \$872,000 public property damage
 - (Compared to \$3 million for Snowmagedon)



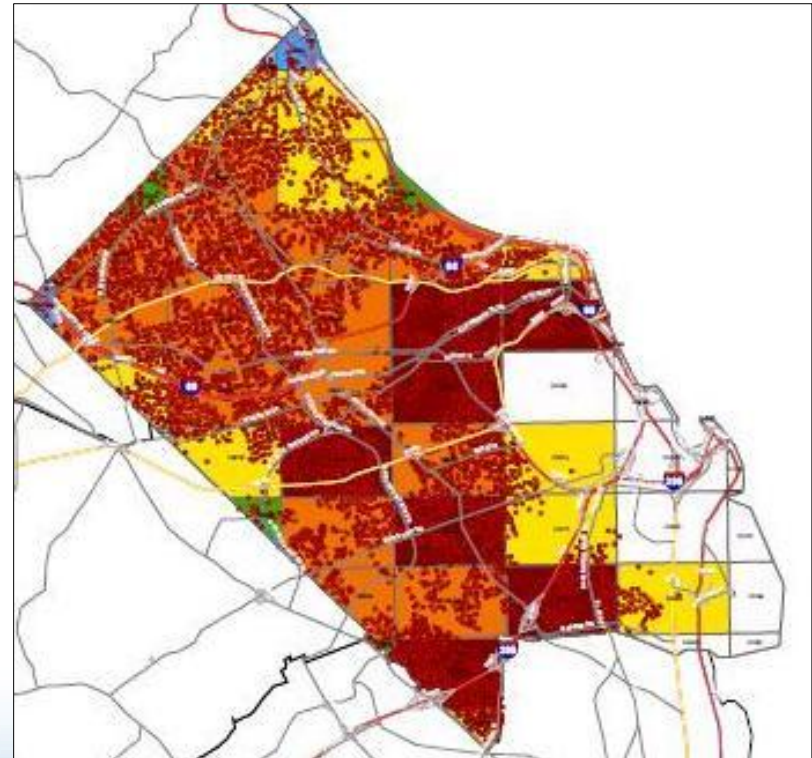
Arlington County - Significant challenges

- Massive power outages
- Devastating phone outages
- High temperatures with heat index 100-105



Arlington County - Major Power Outages

- 68,000+ Arlington households without power Saturday morning, about 60% of County
 - ~1 million+ without power across Virginia
- Excellent, robust Dominion Power response
 - Initial focus on **most vulnerable**:
 - Hospitals, health facilities
 - Nursing homes, senior living
 - Brought in 1,200 workers from 13 states & Canada, in addition to 3,000 employees, contractors & retirees
 - All power restored by noon July 8



Arlington County - Verizon Problems

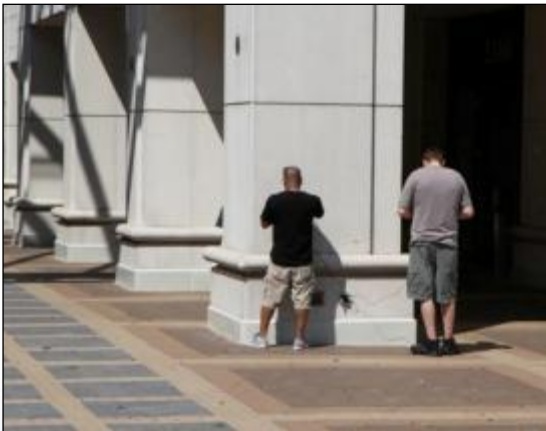
- 9-1-1 service was spotty
 - Required creative problem-solving
 - Low-tech solutions: staffed every fire station with 24/7 personnel to assist residents
 - Included Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers
- Regional 9-1-1 support during incident
 - Misdirected 9-1-1 calls handled with mutual aid & radio channels
 - Began restoring July 1; system stable by July 5
 - No serious impacts reported in Arlington



Arlington County - Heat Index

- Crippling, dangerous heat conditions
- Opened 16 cooling centers
 - All libraries and community centers, including a 24-hour center
 - All public pools were open beginning Sunday
 - Fashion Center at Pentagon City and Ballston Common Mall (Sun.)
- Urged people to check on their neighbors

Photo credit: ARLnow.com



Arlington County - Response

- Activated Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
@ 1am Saturday, June 30
 - Kept it operational 24/7 until Wednesday night, July 4
 - Virtual EOC until Friday night, July 6
- Traffic signals: 82 intersections dark
 - Placed generators & fully mobilized police teams
- County roads blocked: 45 totally and 27 partially
 - 60 Dept. of Parks employees
 - 8 crews from Dept. of Environmental Services
 - Some crews on 13 days straight
 - Collected 768 tons of brush
 - Responded to 315 calls about damaged/downed trees



Arlington County - Public Safety Response

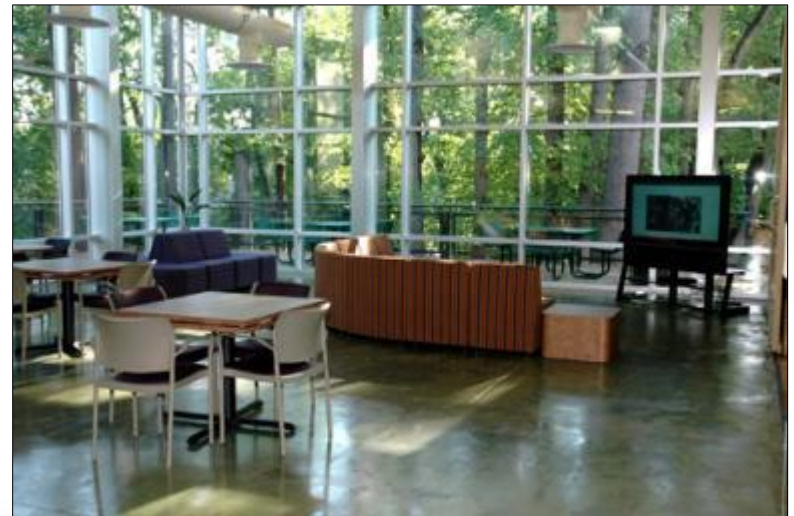
- Dept. of Human Services
 - Staff checked on senior living facilities, including independent living
- ACPD
 - Managed, staffed 82 dark intersections, helped remove fallen trees
 - Placed officers at a number of senior residences & centers
 - Dedicated team of six officers to civil disturbance team
- ACFD
 - Staffed extra units, including medic units; used every available apparatus
 - Staffed units to check power lines; assessed, taped off, reported to Emergency Operations Center

Temporary spray park @Quincy Park



Arlington County - Extra Efforts

- Library's 70+ staff and volunteers kept Libraries open extra 31 hours
 - Including over July 4 holiday
 - Dept. of Parks brought in staff to keep Walter Reed Community Center open as overnight cooling center
- All told, 416 staff worked numerous 24/7 shifts on storm recovery
 - Total: nearly 40,000 hours



Arlington County - Reaching Out

- Leveraged all our tools
 - Homepage: 26,464 individual views
 - Storm Updates: 16,654 views
 - Arlington TV: 927 views of “After the Storm” and “Storm Recovery Update”
 - Most info also in Spanish
- And used low-tech methods
 - Created flyers; CERT volunteers took door-to-door to most vulnerable populations
 - Pushed info to local radio stations
 - Broadcast via 1700AM Arlington
 - Sent special edition, text-only *Derecho Insider* to 8,300+



Arlington County - Attracted New Interest

↑ 580 new Arlington Alert accounts (now 46,517)

↑ 79 new Twitter followers (now 5,543)

↑ 31 new Facebook (now 6,493)

↑ Arlington Prepares mobile app: 436% increase in usage

- Sharing source code with other communities
 - Counties of Montgomery (MD), Prince William (VA), San Diego (CA)
 - City of Worcester, MA
 - U.S. Marine Corps

Sampling of two-way dialogue on Twitter



Arlington County - Lessons Learned

- Incident Command System provided flexibility
 - Enabled successful emergency management through an unforeseen, complex incident
- Some in our community are not prepared
 - E.g., no backup plans for those with life-and-death oxygen needs
- September awareness campaign for entire community
 - Week of Sept. 23-29
 - Encouraging everyone to participate in some aspect of preparedness
 - Community Exercise September 27, 2012

