



THE DEMHS ADVISOR

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Issue 6

Commissioner Notes

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As we enter into this holiday season, we all take time to be with our families.

For most of us, the family is without a doubt the most important aspect to our lives. In this regard we must take the time to create an emergency plan just for our families. This time of year brings with it not only the great family get togethers, but also some extra hazards, and we must take a few minutes to actually sit down and discuss how to deal with an emergency.

Make sure that everyone in the family knows how to evacuate the home in case of an emergency. You should have a least two different ways of vacating the premises, and all agree to meet at a designated location in the immediate area. You should then actually go through the process of a "mock evacuation" of the home and go to the designated location.

You should also make sure that you have working smoke detectors with fresh batteries, as well as carbon monoxide detectors in your home. With the increased use of lighting for the holidays and the need for heat during the coming months it is critical that these two systems be in place in your home.

Most important of all, we at DEMHS hope that you and your families enjoy a very safe and joyous holiday season.

WHAT'S NEW:

**December is
Universal Human
Rights Month**

**"Seasons Greetings"
Christmas
Kwanzaa
Chanukah**

Happy New Year

UPCOMING:

TLO Conference
12/14/05

SAFETY INFORMATION FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

The snow is falling, the carolers are out and the holiday decorations are everywhere. The joy of the season should not be dampened by the risk of fire. In recent years, nearly 600 fires per year have been started by ignition of Christmas trees in the United States, causing an average of 33 deaths, 112 injuries and \$21 million in direct property damage per year, according to the ISU Fire Service Institute.

Christmas Tree Safety

A real tree should not lose green needles when you tap it on the ground.

- Cut 1 inch off the trunk to help absorb water. (Angle cut suggested)
- Leave the tree outside until ready to decorate.
- The stand should hold at least 1 gal. of water.
- A 6' tree will use 1 gallon of water every two days.
- Mix a commercial preservative with the water.
- Check the water level every day.
- Secure the tree with wire to keep it from tipping.
- Keep tree away from floor heaters, fire places, or other heat sources.
- Use only UL-listed lights, and no more than 3 strands linked together.
- Use miniature lights--which have cool-burning bulbs.
- Turn off the Christmas lights when you sleep, or if you leave your home for very long.
- Never use candles, even on artificial trees.
- Clean the tree stand to improve the tree's water intake, use one capful of bleach to a cup of water.
- Dispose of the tree properly.

NEVER BURN A REAL TREE IN THE FIREPLACE.



Home Safety

- Install a smoke detector or new batteries in the one(s) you have and TEST it.
- Use only outdoor lights outside your home.
- Examine light strings each year, discard worn ones.
- Fasten the bulbs securely and point the sockets down to avoid moisture build up.
- Connect no more than three strands together.
- Never use indoor extension cords outside.
- Avoid overloading wall outlets and extension cords.
- Keep outdoor electrical connectors above ground and out of puddles and snow.
- Unplug light string before replacing a bulb. Review the original package to verify proper wattage and voltage.
- When connecting light strands, wrap a plastic bag around connections and tie ends with teflon tape.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree, use colored spot lights.
- Make sure trees hung with X-mas lights are not touching power lines.
- When using candles, place them a safe distance from combustibles.
- Place candles in sturdy containers. Remember, hot wax burns kids.
- Extinguish candles prior to going to bed.
- Dispose of fireplace ashes into a metal container until cold.

Home Safety Con't

- After parties, check around and under sofa and chair cushions for smoldering cigarettes.
- Install at least one carbon monoxide detector in your home.
- Have an operable fire extinguisher readily available.



"Safety" gift ideas

Put together a gift basket containing one or more of the following items:

- Smoke detectors and batteries.
- A quality fire extinguisher.
- A flashlight and batteries or light sticks.
- A first-aid kit.
- A Carbon Monoxide detector.
- A mobile phone.
- A second floor escape ladder.
- "Emergency kit"- energy bars, water, battery radio, flashlight/light sticks and a first-aid kit packed in a small travel bag.

2005 "10 Worst Toys" List

W.A.T.C.H.'s annual "10 Worst Toys" list nominates representative toys with the potential to cause childhood injuries, or even death. W.A.T.C.H.'s annual "Toy Conference" has generated extensive national press and media coverage. Because of these efforts, and the positive response from both the media and the public, there have been many toy and product design changes. Founder Edward M. Swartz and W.A.T.C.H. have fearlessly exposed potentially dangerous toys to the general public. As a result, children's lives have been saved.



[Baby Serena - Baby I'm Yours](#)



[Camouflage Water Bomb Fun Kit](#)



[Splatmatic Pistol Splat Paintball Shooter](#)



[Animal Alley - Ponies](#)



[City Blocks](#)



[The Lord Of The Rings - Return Of The King Uruk-Hai Crossbow Set Including Electronic Light 'n' Sound Sting Sword](#)



[Air Kicks Kickaroos Anti-Gravity Boots](#)



[Fisher Price's Little Mommy Bath Baby Doll](#)



[Fantastic 4 Electronic Thing Hands](#)



[Star Wars - Revenge Of The Sith Energy Beam Blaster](#)

Office of Emergency Management Area 2 Coordinator

Paul S. Pascarelli

Paul was recently appointed the Emergency Management Area Coordinator for the DEMHS Region 2 office headquartered in Middletown. He previously served as an Area Coordinator in Area 5 in Litchfield. The DEMHS Region 2 area covers the 31 towns in the south and south central part of the state.



Paul sees his role as a manager and coordinator between local, state and federal government. Since the merger between Emergency Management and Homeland Security more and more Emergency Managers and Chief Elected Officials have come to rely on the Area Coordinators for information and guidance relating to the multitude of programs since the 911 attacks. These activities range from Homeland Security Grants to managing and equipping local EOC's and helping with emergency plans and exercises.

Paul began his career with the Office of Emergency Management as a planner working out of the State Armory. One of his first projects was reviewing local plans for compliance to FEMA guidelines. He also helped develop the "Local Government Situation Report" form which is still used by local municipalities to report emergency information to the State during disasters and major incidents. He was asked to become an Area Coordinator in 1989 by then Director Frank Mancuso. He has managed dozens of regional disasters including Hurricane Bob and the Blizzards of '93 and '96.

In addition to his Area Coordinator duties Paul has spent a great deal of time working in various capacities with the State's Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program (REP). This involves participation in FEMA evaluated exercises, managing the regional Emergency Operating Center (EOC) and serving as a Controller in local EOC's. He also continues to be available to periodically work as an evaluator and controller for local communities in Massachusetts involved in nuclear power plant training exercises.

Paul is currently working to get every town in Region 2 to prepare a current Emergency Operating Plan (EOP) in the new FEMA recommended format. "There is nothing more important right now than for local government to update and re-work their EOP's to reflect current hazards and priorities. It is absolutely fundamental to the whole emergency management process" says Paul. "It reflects a town's ability to prepare for and respond to any type of disaster".

Before joining state service Paul worked for the City of Hartford as the Director of Registration. He also worked as a Senior Analyst in the City Treasurers Office and as the Mayor's assistant for inter-governmental affairs. From 1990-1991 he worked as a part-time news reporter for the Regional Standard newspapers.

Paul grew up in Hartford and currently resides in East Hampton where he serves as a part-time Marine Patrol Officer. He attended Hartford Community College from 1973-1974 earning a Public Administration Certificate in 1974 He has completed many FEMA/State courses including the professional development series. He is a US Army veteran.

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Driving Tips for Winter Roads:

Driving on Icy or Snowy Roads

- Slow down.
- Accelerate gently and steer smoothly.
- Carefully test your braking and steering at a very slow speed.
- Allow extra space margins.
- Slow down before curves and corners.
- Go down icy hills in a low gear.
- Avoid passing.
- If your wheels lock, ease off the brakes then re-apply them to maintain steering control.

How to Handle a Skid

- You're driving straight and encounter a patch of black ice.
- The rear of your vehicle skids to the right. Ease off the accelerator and look and steer smoothly in the direction you want to go. (In this case, steer to the right.) Don't brake - this will make the situation worse.
- Now the rear of your vehicle skids to the left. Overcorrecting in Step 2 likely causes this. Stay off the accelerator and steer smoothly in the direction you want to go. (In this case, steer to the left.) Repeat Steps 2 and 3, if necessary, until you regain control.
- Once you have regained control, proceed with caution.

Hidden Dangers at Zero Degrees

Hidden dangers include:

- Black ice. Normally, you can't see black ice. However, if the pavement looks shiny and black instead of grey-white, be suspicious.
- Shaded areas.
- Bridges and overpasses. Ice tends to form on them before it does elsewhere.
- Intersections. Car exhaust and packed snow cause intersections to ice up quickly.

Turn Off your Cruise Control

When the road is slippery, turn off your cruise control system. Snow, ice, slush or even rain can cause wheel-spin and loss of control.

The only way to stop this wheel-spin and maintain control is to immediately reduce power. However, an activated cruise control system will continue to apply power, keeping the wheels spinning. By the time you disengage the cruise control, you may have lost control.

When you're Stuck in the Snow

If you have the misfortune of getting stuck in snow, you must first assess the situation. Get out of your vehicle while being very aware of the traffic around you. Determine if you can get your vehicle unstuck on your own or if you will require assistance. If attempting on your own:

- Clean snow away from the drive wheels.
- If possible, enhance the traction to the drive wheels by using traction mats, old carpets, salt, sand or kitty litter spread along in the direction of the drive route you plan to use.
- Make sure the way is clear and accelerate the vehicle gently. (Do not gun the accelerator causing the tires to spin rapidly).
- If this doesn't work, you may want to gently rock the vehicle back and forth by shifting from forward to reverse, gradually increasing the distance traveled with each rock.

Note: Check your owner's manual prior to beginning this procedure. If the instructions are different, follow the steps outlined in your manual.

Upcoming Training Schedule

December 5, 6, 8 -	Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) at Rocky Hill State Veterans Home (evenings)
December 5	NIMS training for DPH
December 9 and 20	IS 100 and IS 200 ICS for DEMHS staff at SEOC (required for NIMS compliance)
December 19 and 21	IS 700 NIMS Intro for DEMHS Staff at SEOC (required for NIMS compliance)

For full course descriptions, prerequisites and times and locations visit our website www.ct.gov/demhs and click on ***Check the Calendar***. For more information or to register contact our State Training Officer, **Paul Benyeda** at 860-256-0849 or email Paul at paul.benyeda@po.state.ct.us.

CONNECTICUT TERRORISM LIAISON OFFICERS CONFERENCE



DECEMBER 14, 2005
MARRIOTT HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER
100 CAPITOL BLVD., ROCKY HILL, CT.

For more information on the Terrorism Liaison Conference and registration forms to attend, please see the November edition of the DEMHS Advisor. Registration closes on December 12th and preference will be given to Law Enforcement personnel.