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By James M. Thomas

As you know, the 2008 Legislative Session has begun, and we are very pleased to see that Governor Rell has proposed a significant number of actions that will have a very positive effect on the public safety community. A more detailed discussion of the bills is included in our newsletter.

Governor Rell is proposing a **statewide emergency notification system** that would allow public safety personnel at the public safety answering points throughout the entire state of Connecticut, the ability to contact residents and businesses within their communities, of any “emergency situation” and advise them to take certain protective actions such as “shelter in place,” “lock your doors,” “leave the area and go to a public shelter” etc. This is a great tool that will be very helpful for many years to come. This system was used recently to warn the residents in California to leave their homes during the “wild fires” that destroyed so many houses. It is stressed that the system is restricted for emergency use only!! There will be additional information forth coming from the Department of Public Safety, the Office of the Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Commission, and the Enhanced 911 Commission as we move forward with this very important tool. Critical to this proposal is that the public safety answering points will be provided with updated information on a regular basis, at no cost, in order to ensure that we can contact our residents in times of emergency.

The second bill which is highlighted in this issue is the bill that would require local and regional boards of education to conduct **crisis response drills** on a regular basis throughout the school system. It is a sign of the times that we do need to be prepared for any type of emergency, even at our schools!! The only way that we can be prepared is to conduct these drills on a regular basis, so that if needed the students, faculty and staff will know exactly what to do under duress.

This past month has been one that is setting records in amounts of snow and rain, and we wish to thank all of the public safety personnel and the other partners, especially the Department of Transportation (DOT), and our local Public Works and Highway Departments, for their outstanding efforts in keeping the roads in the condition that made our travel somewhat better despite the very difficult weather. These men and women who work all hours of the day and night truly deserve our sincere thanks for a job well done!

Enjoy the March issue of the DEMHS Advisor.

Legislative Update

As the 2008 Legislative session begins, there are a number of proposals that have been introduced that affect emergency management and homeland security. Below is a summary of some key proposals.

HB 5039- An Act Concerning An Enhanced 911 Database

Introduced by Governor Rell, this bill would allow the state's municipalities and the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) to access the enhanced 9-1-1 database, free of charge, providing the most up to date information available for use with emergency notification systems.

This use of the current 9-1-1 database will greatly enhance a municipality's ability to protect the safety of its residents by providing vital notifications during an emergency.

Also, in her annual budget address to the legislature, Governor Rell indicated that she has set aside funds in her proposed budget to ensure that each of the 169 municipalities have emergency notification systems in place.

SB 181 -An Act Concerning Crisis Response Drills

Introduced by DEMHS, this bill would require local and regional boards of education to conduct a crisis response drill, in lieu of a fire drill, once every three months.

The Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security believes school security will be greatly enhanced by regularly exercising crisis response plans. These exercises will better prepare schools to handle any emergency situation.





SB 5040 - An Act Establishing a Public Safety Data Sharing Network

Introduced by the Department of Public Safety, this bill would provide the capability for all public safety first responding and first providing agencies to be able to transmit any and all digital information across a fiber optic internet protocol (IP) based platform.

The establishment of this system would greatly improve information sharing among all agencies.

All three of these proposed bills have been the subject of a public hearing before the legislature's Public Safety and Security Committee. They are presently awaiting further committee action.

For the entire text of the above mentioned legislation, please access the Connecticut General Assembly Website at www.cga.ct.gov.

If you have questions regarding legislation, please contact DEMHS Legislative Program Manager Scott DeVico at 860-256-0813 or by email at scott.devico@ct.gov.



New Ridgefield Operations Center Unveiled

Whether it's television news, the Internet or prophetic prognostication, most experts say New England is long overdue for a major storm, the type that leaves devastation and confusion in its wake.

When that storm hits, however, is anyone's guess, but when it does come, Ridgefield emergency officials plan to be ready.

The town took a giant leap in its readiness Jan. 25 when it formally opened its state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center. Located behind the Yanity Gym, the \$130,000 center contains communications gear that would allow town officials to coordinate rescue and recovery efforts with surrounding towns as well as the state, and storage area for emergency supplies such as vaccines.

"This is all part of the National Incident Management System," said Fire Chief Heather Burford, who is also the town's emergency preparedness director. "We will have the opportunity to coordinate our response to any emergency across all departments."

First Selectman Rudy Marconi said while the center is one of the lasting effects of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, it is also a result of lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

"I doubt if we would need to use this because of a man-made event," he said. "What I do think will make it necessary is weather-related events: ice storms, tornadoes or hurricanes. Plus, we can conduct training here, which will make the training that much better."

Video conferencing

The nexus of the center is its communications areas. A conference room complete with video uplink allows town leaders to speak directly with leaders in other communities, as well as the "hub center" in Danbury. When the state completes upgrading all its systems, town leaders will also be able to network via video uplink with regional and state authorities.

Mr. Marconi said an April "micro-burst" storm that caused widespread damage offered the perfect example of how the EOC would operate.

"If this was up and running we could have linked in with Newtown, which also had a lot of damage, and worked together," he said. "We also could have zeroed in with Connecticut Light & Power. This will improve our ability to communicate."



EOC Communications Coordinator Dick Aarons demonstrates the use of a video uplink between Ridgefield and neighboring communities in the town's Emergency Operations Center. —Chipp Reid photo

The uplink system uses VoIP or voice over Internet protocol technology to connect to the 10 towns in the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials region. The system runs on a dedicated phone line, said fire department communications coordinator Dick Aarons. Should weather or a man-made event knock out conventional phone lines, he said Ridgefield ham radio operators could tap into the Internet.

"You wouldn't even know the difference," Mr. Aarons said.

Ham radio operators have their own room from which they can operate. Mr. Aarons said despite the seeming anachronism of the purely analog ham radio operators in the digital center, the old methods are sometimes still the best.

"During the microburst it was the ham radio guys that found all the missing buses," he said. "They can communicate with anyone virtually around the world so they have a vital role to play in all this."

Computing power

In addition to the communications gear, the center features several computer workstations, all with secure links to the Internet. The computers allow emergency officials to download the latest information as well as monitor news and weather agencies.

The center also has an integrated white board computer system. The board looks like the standard writing board, but a software package from Microsoft can digitize anything on the board and send it out real time either via fax or e-mail.

The computers also contain software that allow them to use GPS tracking on town vehicles. This would allow operators to immediately locate any vehicle equipped with the GPS sensor, such as school buses. The police department already uses a similar system.

The town has stocked the center with new radios that would allow all of the departments — fire, police, highway and recreation — to coordinate their rescue and recovery efforts. Chief Burford said the center also gives officials the room they need.

"During the microburst we were all crammed into the police department's conference room," she said. "Now we have our own conference room where the town leaders can meet, another area strictly for communications and a large area for workers."

Thanks to an onsite generator, the center will also house the town's stockpile of vaccines. The Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association currently keeps the vaccines in refrigerators at its office.

"What we're going to be able to do is centralize everything," Chief Burford said.

The town paid for the center with state and federal grants.

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Message from the Department of Public Health:

During the past two years, several Local, Regional and State Agencies have worked to create three new response plans to improve our state's capabilities to respond to medical and public health emergencies. We are delighted to provide you with electronic copies of these draft plans for your review and comment.

Copies of these plans have been posted on the Department of Public Health's web page at www.ct.gov/dph, click Programs and Services at the top of the home page, go to E and click on Emergency Medical Services and you will see the plans linked at the bottom of the page. Only comments that conform to the review templates associated with each plan will be accepted. Please submit written comments via e-mail to the contact person associated with the plans as listed below.

Note: E-mailed comments must be received no later than **April 18, 2008** for consideration. Only comments received by that date will be reviewed and adjudicated by members of the working groups that developed each of these plans.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to review these important planning documents.

<u>Plan Name</u>	<u>Contact for Comments</u>	
Forward Movement of Patients Plan	Dr. John Shaw	jjsmmrs@aol.com
EMS Mobilization Plan	Robert Kenny	robert.kenny@ct.gov
Burn Patient Management Plan	Dr. John Shaw	jjsmmrs@aol.com

There have been requests to re-post the Training Unit contact information. Please see below.

Training and Exercise Unit Phone Numbers & Email:

Main Number: 860-256-0840

Training Unit Fax: 860-706-5539

First Name	Last Name	Office Phone	Region	Email
David	Brown	O - (860) 256-0849	State Training Officer	David.Brown@po.state.ct.us
Robert	Christ	(860) 256-0851	Exercise Officer	Robert.Christ@po.state.ct.us
Ray	Crowley	(860) 256-0845	Region 2	Ray.Crowley@po.state.ct.us
Gordon	Harris	(860) 256-0843	Region 3	Gordon.Harris@po.state.ct.us
Sharon	Mazzochi	(860) 256-0852		Sharon.Mazzochi@po.state.ct.us
Edward	Murray	(860) 256-0842	Region 1	Edward.Murray@po.state.ct.us
Thomas	Romano	(860) 256-0844	Region 5	Thomas.Romano@po.state.ct.us
Gary	Ruggiero	(860) 256-0841	Region 4	Gary.Ruggiero@po.state.ct.us
Robert	Scata	(860) 256-0894		Robert.Scata@po.state.ct.us

FOXWOOD CASINO HOTEL FIRE—JANUARY 2008



Aerial streams extinguishing exterior fire and cooling roof deck

The fire was reported at 1147 hours by a Security Guard, a second alarm was struck immediately by Acting Chief Loretto (Lou) Vara. The fire advanced to 7 alarms with calls for additional manpower. 17 fire companies responded with approximately 105 fire fighters. The fire was declared under control and confined at 1435 hours with intensive overhaul until Command was terminated at 2049 hours.

The fire was between an interior metal ceiling and exterior metal roof deck in a mechanical area. The Ceiling was approximately 20 feet high in an area congested with ductwork, pipes and other mechanical equipment which made for a labor intensive operation. At times approximately 25 fire fighters were operating on the fire floor using hand and power tools to access the burning material and an additional 25 fire fighters staged for relief with another 25 in rehabilitation for evaluation and recovery.

There were no injuries during the fire. Mutual aid companies worked well together with no major issues.

CASINO FIRE

Command Post Operations



Aerial Apparatus positioned to extinguish exterior fire and cool metal roof deck



Crews working inside to gain access to fire between ceiling and roof deck



Upcoming Training & Exercise

Mar 3	ID Fraud—POSTC
Mar 3 & 4	ICS 400—Bridgeport—2 day course
Mar 4 thru 6	Operational WMD Response for Law Enforcement—New Haven
Mar 5	Dam Failure Response & Recovery Tabletop Exercise—SEOC
Mar 10 & 11	ICS 400—Bridgeport—2 day course
Mar 11 thru 13	Public Safety WMD Response—Sampling Tech & Guidelines—Stamford
Mar 11 & 13	Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) - New Haven
Mar 11 thru 13	Critical Incident Management Training—POSTC—see page 12
Mar 12 & 13	ICS 400—Bridgeport—2 day course
Mar 18	Federally Evaluated Millstone Exercise—SEOC
Mar 18 & 19	ICS 400—Bridgeport—2 day course
Mar 27	School Security Conference—TBA
Apr 7 & 9	Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) - Southbury
Apr 9 thru 11	Emergency Response to Domestic Biological Incidents—Brainard
Apr 12 & 19	CERT Train the Trainer—2 day course—Brainard
Apr 15 & 18	Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) - Norwich
Apr 21 thru 23	Public Works: Planning and Responding—Brainard

For training & exercise questions contact the Training Unit at 860-256-0840.
Fax: 860-706-5539.

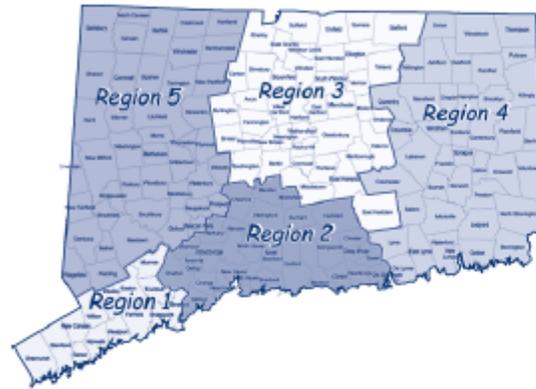
You may register for these courses as listed at: www.ct.gov/demhs
or through POSTC at www.ct.gov/post.



A NO-FEE SYMPOSIUM ON MAY 15

9:00 AM - 4:30 PM • CROWN PLAZA HOTEL, CROMWELL, CONNECTICUT

The 2008 Connecticut Emergency Management Symposium is devoted to strengthening regional collaboration among all local, regional, and state officials.



BE PREPARED — BE INFORMED — BE THERE !

Workshops — Each of the 5 DEMHS regions will host comprehensive workshops throughout the day for their respective local and regional officials. This format is an invaluable opportunity for you to network and interact with officials from all levels of government and all job disciplines within your region.

Sample workshop topics include • **Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP)** • **Homeland Security Chemical Initiative** • **Local and Regional Grant Resources** • **OSHA's HAZWOPER** • **Pandemic Update.**

Exhibition — Leading public and private-sector vendors in emergency management and homeland security will be on hand to assist and discuss your planning and response needs. Exhibits will include • **Communications** • **Data Protection** • **Engineering and Environmental Services** • **Information Technology** • **GIS** • **Protective Equipment** • **Mutual Aid** • and more.

REGISTRATION FORM — SIGN UP NOW

Registration is FREE and REQUIRED for all attendees.

Don't miss this informative day-long event that features a state-of-the-state address by DEMHS, customized regional workshop format, a box lunch, and 50 vendors specializing in emergency management.

YES! I want to register now for the **2008 Emergency Management Symposium and Exhibition on Thursday, May 15, 2008** at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Cromwell, Connecticut.

Name _____ E-mail Address _____
 Position _____ Department _____ Phone _____
 City/Town/Organization _____ Fax _____
 Address _____

5 WAYS TO REGISTER

On-line: www.ccm-ct.org

E-mail: esullivan@ccm-ct.org

Phone: CCM Training Hotline
203-498-3018

Fax: (203) 497-2480
Attn: Beth Sullivan

Mail: CCM — 2008 Emergency Management Symposium,
900 Chapel St., 9th Floor
New Haven, CT 06510-2807

Attendance is limited to the first 400 registrants and registration is mandatory. You will receive a confirmation and other pertinent information prior to May 15th. If you have questions, contact Beth Sullivan of CCM at esullivan@ccm-ct.org or (203) 498-3782.



With special contributions by the State Emergency Response Commission

TOP PRIORITY on MAY 15

"CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TRAINING: COMMAND POST OPERATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE AND COMMAND PERSONNEL" Seminar

Course Announcement

Six years ago the Police Officer Standards and Training Council was pleased to announce the acquisition of a comprehensive Critical Incident Management Program for the state of Connecticut. This program includes several different levels of training and the ownership of complete, transportable "model cities" simulators. We were just the fifth state in the nation that had these training resources available.

Over one thousand Connecticut first line supervisors have successfully completed the Critical Incident Management Initial Response training course. Many positive comments have been made concerning this level of training.

The final segment of this comprehensive project is the sponsorship of a Command Post Operations course for executives and command level personnel. This three day seminar will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2008, through Thursday, March 13, 2008, at Central Connecticut State University's Institute of Technology and Business Development in downtown New Britain. Daily class times will be 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A tentative, topical outline is attached for your review. Directions will be sent to all selected participants.

This program is a combination of classroom instruction and practical hands-on scenarios utilizing simulation exercises which offer the participants the opportunity to manage several types of critical incidents. Attendees will work through a four-phased "Critical Incident, Event Activity Flow" © that tracks event characteristics, agency response, and desired outcomes for any incident.

The course utilizes the nationally recognized "Incident Command System" (ICS) to build an effective Decision Making Team to bring about a successful resolution to the event. Interaction through a Unified Command with fire, emergency medical services, as well as other units of government provides key decision makers with a framework to evaluate their community's readiness for a major incident. Pre-event planning utilizing the ICS model will also be developed and practiced.

Enrollment to the seminar is limited to thirty (30) executive or command level personnel. Please complete an application and return it to Steve Walsh by mail or fax (203-238-6119) no later than February 25, 2008. An additional name may be submitted on the application in the event the workshop limit is not reached. It is not anticipated that this course will be presented again this fiscal year.

This course is a federally sponsored training program funded through the auspices of the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Grant, provided by the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

**"SIMULATION-BASED CRITICAL INCIDENT TRAINING FOR EMERGENCY
RESPONSE DISPATCHERS" Training Seminars**
Course Announcement

The Police Officer Standards and Training Council is pleased to offer two sessions of a training seminar for telecommunicators on how to deal with a critical incident. This training will serve as an integral companion to P.O.S.T.C.'s other Critical Incident Training programs that are offered for supervisors and executives.

The first session of the dispatchers' course will be held on Tuesday, March 25, 2008, and Wednesday, March 26, 2008, and the second one on Thursday, March 27, 2008, and Friday, March 28, 2008. Both sessions have daily class times of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and will be held at the Connecticut Police Academy.

There is no one more crucial to an agency's response during a critical incident than the department's telecommunicators. The "9/11 Commission Report" makes numerous references to telecommunication issues and their positive and negative impact in the saving of lives and property. Communications personnel are a key to insuring a coordinated, unified public safety response and increase the likelihood of a successful conclusion to a critical incident.

This highly interactive course is designed to have a direct impact on public safety personnel in the field through improved service efficiency and increased responder safety. By training and exercising communications personnel in the basic aspects of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS), they will have an increased understanding of the field response and will be better prepared to participate in a unified effort to bring an incident to a successful resolution.

When participants complete this course, they should be able to:

- List the seven Critical Tasks™ to be accomplished during the initial phase of an incident
- Describe in detail how communications personnel can assist in accomplishing those tasks
- Assist in performing those tasks in a simulated environment with field personnel
- Describe how NIMS/ICS function during the management of an incident
- Describe the nature of critical incidents and how command shifts take place as the incident progresses
- Observe the impact of obtaining critical information from multiple sources, making timely decisions about that information and relaying it appropriately to the field

The course will be presented by BowMac Educational Services from upstate New York. The specific trainers will include Richard Fairburn and James Stricker. Fairburn has served as a full-time firefighter and also was the Chief of Police in Upton, Wyoming. In 1996 he joined the Illinois State Police as an intelligence analyst and has been assigned to their Academy since 1999, coordinating the statewide Critical Incident Response Training program. Stricker has thirty-one years of law enforcement experience at the local, state, and federal levels. He graduated from the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Academy, was a member of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and spent over twenty years with the Illinois State Police.

Enrollment in each session is limited to twenty-four (24) emergency response dispatchers. Please complete an application and return it to Steve Walsh by mail or fax (203-238-6119) no later than March 4, 2008. An additional name may be submitted on the application in the event the workshop limit is not reached. This course will not be offered again this fiscal year.

The course is a federally sponsored training program funded through the auspices of the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Grant provided by the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. This program was extremely well-received when it was presented for the first time last year.

Sworn personnel who complete this training will receive a total of twelve (12) hours of Review Training Credit: four (4) hours in Curriculum Area III: Practical Skills and eight (8) hours in Curriculum Area VI: Patrol Procedures.