

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE

December 4, 2012 – 5:00 pm – Council Chambers – Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

OPEN FORUM/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

AGENDA ADOPTION:

1. Monthly Emergency Management Report – Bryan Rush
2. Hurricane Sandy After-Action Review
3. Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company Report
4. Draft COOP Presentation
5. Committee Member Comments

ADJOURN:

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

**Submitted by Bryan Rush
November 29, 2012**

PLANNING

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANNING

A draft Continuity of Operations Plan for disaster recovery will be open for review and comment with a final draft presented to the Public Safety Committee at the February meeting. The plan will enable staff to maintain and/or recover services after a disaster.

PET SHELTER

The emergency management entities of the Town of Chincoteague and Accomack County Department of Public Safety had a meeting with the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Agriculture and were able to secure 139 pet shelter kits. The Accomack County School Board has still not approved the Pet Sheltering Plan. The pet shelter would have been an asset during the recent hurricane. The Accomack County Deputy Coordinator of Emergency Management will be going to the board of supervisor's December meeting if the school board has not approved it by then.

AFTER ACTION REPORTING

The Emergency Management Coordinator has submitted AAR data to VDEM for the commonwealth's AAR on Sandy. The submittal included some recommendations on the National Guard as well as best practices with the use of Facebook by the Town during the event.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

The Chincoteague Emergency Operations Plan will undergo a revision beginning in January. The Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia mandates that each locality update its EOP every 4 years. The update will encompass lessons learned from events during the last year as well as input from staff to better protect the citizens of Chincoteague. The plan will go before council in May or June.

TRAINING

WEB EOC

The Emergency Management Coordinator is currently trying to schedule a VDEM Web-EOC class at the Town Office. The class will enable more individuals to log onto the states Web-EOC and log disaster information, creating more continuity in emergency operations. VDEM has approved the travel for the instructor for the class.

OPERATIONS

EMS

The EMS Division implemented the new RSI protocol on October 17, 2012. The new skill allows paramedics to chemically paralyze patients in order to provide advanced airway skills for a more positive patient outcome. The new skill was first used on November 3, 2012, with great success.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

PREPARATION

While Hurricane Sandy brought a surprise, early significant accumulating snowfall to portions of Virginia, meteorological winter doesn't officially begin in the Commonwealth until Saturday. With the upcoming winter season in mind, Governor Bob McDonnell has proclaimed December 2-8 as Winter Preparedness Week in the Commonwealth and is encouraging all Virginians to take this time to prepare to protect themselves and their families in the event of any major winter storms in the months ahead.

Town of Chincoteague
After Action Report
Hurricane Sandy



October 24 – November 3, 2012
Prepared by: Bryan Rush, Emergency Management Coordinator

**After Action Report
Hurricane Sandy
October 24 – November 3**

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DRAFT

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October 24 – November 3**

Event Summary:

- **Wednesday, October 24** Emergency Management was monitoring National Hurricane Center forecasts for Sandy.
- **Thursday, October 25** Emergency Management was continuing to monitor the storm. An e-mail briefing was sent to council and staff.
- **Friday, October 26** A conference call with VDEM and the National Weather Service was held at 1000. The forecast continued with 40-60 mph winds and 6 – 8 inches of rain. The Emergency Management Team had an operational meeting to plan for the event and to verify all Condition 5 objectives were completed. PSA's were issued to the public to make them aware as well as encouraging them to begin preparations for a hurricane. An e-mail briefing was sent to council and staff. A test of the communications systems was performed. Emergency contact lists were verified. EAS was deemed operational. Hurricane Readiness Condition 4 was set. All essential employees were put on 24 hour emergency stand by. Transient occupancy establishments were polled to determine the occupancy load of the island. Hurricane Readiness Condition 3 began at 1800.
- **Saturday, October 27** Hurricane Readiness Condition 2 was set at 1000 hours. A new PSA was issued. A local declaration of emergency was declared at 1000. A conference call with VDEM and the National Weather Service was held at 1000 followed by an Emergency Management Team operational planning meeting. A conference call with Accomack County was held at 1200. An operational period planning briefing of Department Heads, Coast Guard, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Fire Department Chief was completed. A new PSA was issued to the citizens. Public Works set up the EOC per the emergency operations plan. The web page was utilized to post information. Notification was received that the National Guard would be arriving Sunday and be housed at the Chincoteague Community Center. 10 additional state police officers would be arriving for law enforcement support. Law enforcement increased patrols to prevent break-ins and the potential for looting.
- **Sunday, October 28** The EOC was fully staffed at 1400 and staffed with Director of Emergency Management, Town Manager, Emergency Management Coordinator, Police, Public Works, Harbor Master, Volunteer Fire Company, the National Guard, Amateur Radio, and 2 Town Office employees. A situational report was sent to the State EOC. A voluntary evacuation notice was made. Media requests were handled. The National Guard arrived at the Community Center to provide assistance. The second operational period began at 1900.
- **Monday, October 29** At 0000 VDOT was in communication with the EOC and looking at closing the causeway due to flooding at the base of the bridge. Flooding got worse and the causeway was closed. The weather continued to deteriorate. Flooding was occurring around the island at 0700, which began the next operational period. A situation report was sent to the State EOC. Winds were starting to shift from a NE direction to N. Facebook and the web page, were

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being constantly updated. The Reverse 911 was also being used in addition to the media outlets for information dissemination. The National Guard supported by Town Police officers were making some rescues of citizens trapped by flood waters or trees falling on their homes. A curfew was put in place at 1200. One ambulance call was dispatched for a head injury. A local doctor was brought in to mitigate the call. No transport was necessary. A call was received, reporting that a pregnant female was experiencing pains. Plans were made to assist the patient off the island using the family's vehicle assisted by the National Guard and EMS. The evacuation was successful. Numerous reports of flooding and trees down were received. Power outages became more numerous. ANEC was on the island doing repairs throughout the storm. Public Works, the National Guard and the fire company were assisting residents and keeping main roads accessible. At 1845 hours a decision was made to pull all personnel from the roads. At 1900, the next operational period began. A situation report was sent to the State EOC. At 2130 VDOT advised that the causeway was passable, however, remained closed to regular traffic. At 2250 the causeway was reopened, however, the town was still under a curfew because of blocked roads and flooding.

- **Tuesday, October 30** At 0030 the EM Coordinator and EM Director began an island tour for a quick assessment. Most roads were somewhat or completely blocked by debris and downed power lines. The flooding had subsided except for areas near Fowling Gut. At 0700, the next operational period began. A situation report was sent to the State EOC. The curfew remained in place until 1200. PSA's were issued throughout the day asking residents to remain off the roads. Public Works and the National Guard began clearing roads. The volunteer fire company cleared private roads and driveways for emergency access. A CERT volunteer was named the Volunteer Management Coordinator to oversee all the volunteers that were calling to offer their help. The building administrator began a rough damage assessment in the afternoon. All emergency functions were demobilized and the EOC closed at 1700.
- **Wednesday, October 31** At 0800 EM Coordinator began recovery coordination. The Town had begun the recovery process. The damage assessment teams began a walk-through of the island to gather dollar figures for damages. PSA's were relayed to the public advising of debris removal procedures and trick-or-treating was postponed until Saturday, November 3, at 1:00 pm. A situation report was sent to the State EOC. A briefing was sent to council and staff. Governor McDonnell arrived for a tour of the island and a meet and greet with local officials. The EM Coordinator began capturing information for an after action report (AAR).
- **Thursday, November 1** Recovery operations continued. A recovery briefing was sent to Council, administration, and staff. The EM Coordinator sent the initial damage assessment report to VDEM. The Building and Zoning Administrator completed a secondary assessment and a revised IDA was sent to VDEM.

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- **Friday, November 2** Recovery operations continued, however, all departments were at normal operations or transitioning to normal operations. The final recovery briefing was sent to Council, administration, and staff. Congressman Riggel visited and then the congressman and local officials had a meeting with Louis Hinds, Refuge Manager, concerning beach conditions. A FEMA/VDEM Individual Damage Assistance Team held a meeting with the EM Coordinator and the Building and Zoning Administrator. The administrator took the team on an island tour.
- **Saturday, November 3** A FEMA/VDEM/Army Corps of Engineers Public Damage Assistance Team held a meeting with Public Works Director to capture damage information of public entities. The initial damage assessment dollar figures were increased at this time. A consideration for a disaster declaration for the area would be forth coming. The Town of Chincoteague is now at a normal operations status.

Event Background

Tropical Storm Sandy developed in the south Caribbean Sea on October 22, 2012 at 1100. The storm then became a hurricane on October 24, 2012 at 1100. The track of the storm in seven days moved erratically, putting Chincoteague in its path. Forecasts then showed Sandy would be a category 1 storm when it neared. Sandy made landfall in Cape May County New Jersey Monday, October 29, 2012, at around 1900 as a category 1 hurricane, with winds at 90 mph. Sandy slowly moved to the northwest over Pennsylvania. Heavy rainfall and wind occurred throughout the day Monday in Chincoteague, with the center of Sandy passing just 83 miles to the northeast of the island. The storm lingered with some effects through Tuesday, but the sun did shine on the Wednesday morning October 30th.

Agencies involved

The Town of Chincoteague Emergency Management
The Town of Chincoteague General Government
The Town of Chincoteague Police Department
The Town of Chincoteague Emergency Medical Services
The Town of Chincoteague Public Works
The Town of Chincoteague Harbor Master
The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company
The United States Coast Guard
The United States Fish and Wildlife
The Virginia State Police
The Virginia National Guard

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Recovery Activities

- There were numerous reports of trees down. The Public Works Department maintained open traffic lanes for emergency travel with the assistance of the National Guard until the height of the storm
- The fire department responded to numerous power lines down, along with trees on structures
- Emergency Medical Services were prepared to provide response and deliver healthcare at fire station #3 with the assistance of one local doctor
- Situational reports were sent to VDEM through WEBEOC throughout the event
- VDOT closed the causeway due to flooding, but had the road opened before travel was safe on Chincoteague
- Damage assessment teams began an island wide assessment beginning at 0800 on October 31st.
- General Government staff assisting in tracking costs and taking many phone calls about storm information and debris pick up
- Chincoteague Dispatch receiving many calls about storm information and beach information
- Public Works executed the debris management plan and began basic debris removal. The director is awaiting FEMA approval to enter into a debris contract with a contractor given by VDEM.
- On-going meetings with VDEM, FEMA, and the Army Corps of Engineers to track public damage costs and secure a disaster declaration in order to recoup funds spent in mitigating the storm damage
- On-going communications with the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge Manager on the conditions of the beach

Best Practices

- Daily e-mail briefings of council and staff
- Collaboration with all Town Departments, Coast Guard, Volunteer Fire Company, Accomack County, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Accomack and Northampton Electric Cooperative, and VDOT to maintain cohesion in preparation, PSA's, and response to the situation
- Cooperation among all Town Departments. A true team concept
- Twelve hour operational periods were identified for essential personnel
- Public information using the Town's website, Facebook and Reverse 911 as well as local media
- EOP provided strict guidance and functionality to mitigate the situation

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- The ICS structure was utilized, validating the training that all participants have been required to attain
- Pre-deployment of the National Guard and Virginia State Police assets were key to adding extra patrols to protect evacuated homes and businesses, as well as have emergency evacuation capabilities
- Designating a Volunteer Management Coordinator to handle numerous volunteers.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Other staff needs to be trained in the use of WebEOC, the online reporting platform to the State EOC
- Damage assessment forms need to be developed to better capture damage data post-storm
- Damage assessment teams need to be briefed on the assessment plan, data to be captured, and their assigned areas prior to landfall of the storm
- A medical needs shelter should be implemented by Accomack County
- A pet shelter needs to be implemented by Accomack County
- A clear chain of command needs to be established for tasking the National Guard

General Recommendations

- Identify personnel to attend WebEOC training
- Maintain ICS training for all employees
- Develop a damage assessment post-storm form
- Have the Building and Zoning Administrator meet with damage assessment team members pre-storm to identify expectations
- Assist Accomack County in developing a special needs sheltering plan
- Assist Accomack County in obtaining approval from the school board for a special school use for pet sheltering
- Have a National Guard leader in the EOC to handle direct tasking of missions

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IMPROVEMENT MATRIX

Opportunity for Improvement	Recommendation	Primary Responsible Person	Time Line	Status
Identify individuals for Web EOC Training	Use FEMA Guidelines matrix	Emergency Management Coordinator	February 1	In Progress. Training Scheduled
Maintain ICS Training	Use TOC NIMS Training Plan	Town Manager/EM Coordinator	On-going	In Progress
Damage Assessment Team Update	Brief damage assessment teams yearly. Then again 48 hours prior to tropical storm/nor'easter arrival.	Building and Zoning Official	On-going	
Damage Assessment Form	Develop a damage assessment form mirroring what will be used to send IDA	Emergency Management Coordinator	February 1	
Special Needs Sheltering	Assist Accomack County in developing a plan	Emergency Management Coordinator	May 1, 2013	In discussion with Accomack County Emergency Management