



# READY RACINE

May 2017

Volume 12, Issue 1

Racine County  
Office  
of  
Emergency Management

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### Mission

To assist the community in mitigating known hazards and in preparing for, responding to, surviving and recovering from both natural and man-made disasters.

## Disaster Training: Back to EMI

County Executive Jonathan Delagrave led a delegation of 70 Racine county, municipal and school officials, along with representatives from business and non-profit organizations, to the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, MD for a weeklong Community Specific: Integrated Emergency Management Course (IEMC).

Participants ranged from elected officials to support staff. A Journal Times reporter was invited to attend, as well as the president of the Racine Area Manufacturer's and Commerce (RAMAC). Ascension Healthcare sent three representatives, including an emergency room physician.



Selection for the class is highly competitive and only a handful of municipalities are invited to attend each year. The last time Racine County took this training was in 1998, when County Executive Jean Jacobson led a delegation of 78 officials.

The first day was devoted to classroom training. Subject matter experts, including a former television meteorologist, gave overviews on gaining a whole com-



munity perspective, developing situational awareness and utilizing social media.

On day two, the class took part in a realistic functional exercise, utilizing a mock Emergency Operations Center (EOC) adjacent to the classrooms. As the class waited, breaking news indicated that a line of severe weather was headed towards Racine County. Tornado warnings were issued and shortly after, tornadoes hit different parts of the county.

For the next several hours, "participants" responded as if it were a real event. Telephones were answered, decisions made and press conferences were held. For many in the room, this was their first time participating in an exercise like this. Afterwards, a "hotwash" was held and participants looked at what went well and what needed to be improved upon.



## Anhydrous Ammonia Spill Closes Road

When spring arrives, you may see tractors and trucks pulling “nurse” tanks containing anhydrous ammonia. Anhydrous ammonia is used as a fertilizer and is applied to fields throughout the county. It is used routinely and relatively safe.

However, on the morning of April 26th, a nurse tank, pulled by a pick-up truck, began leaking. About 800 gallons was released from the tank, due to a malfunctioning valve.

The release occurred on County Line Road and the vehicle was on the Kenosha County side. While Kenosha County officials took the lead, the release impacted both counties. Res-

idents near the area of the release were urged to “shelter-in-place.”

When released, anhydrous ammonia expands rapidly, forming a large cloud that acts like a heavier than air gas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Evacuation zones can be over one



mile in some cases but atmospheric conditions were such that the plume was breaking up rather than drifting outwards.

Companies that use, store or produce certain chemicals, like anhydrous ammonia, are required to report that each year to the local fire department, the Local Emergency Planning Committee and the State Emergency Response Commission.

The Local Emergency Planning Committee, under the auspices of the local emergency management office, develops an off-site facility plan to address the consequences of an off-site release.

## Springtime Ushers in Severe Weather Season

By Tim Halbach

As we move into June, we get closer to our peak season for severe weather here in southern Wisconsin. When it comes to severe weather safety, there are three main steps that people should take.

The first is to have a plan for when severe weather hits. Where do you go for shelter? You want to go to the lowest level of your house or building, which is typically a basement. If you do not have a basement, you want to put as many walls between you and the outside as possible. You also want to be away from windows as flying debris can break through them.

The second is to have a supply kit. Things like water, non-perishable food items, keys, cash, flashlights, radio and a first aid kit. When it is time to go to your shelter, also put on hard soled shoes as debris from a tornado could

cut up your feet.

The third thing is to have multiple ways to receive weather warnings. Having a NOAA weather radio and an app on your phone are two great ways to quickly receive warnings.



Know the difference between a watch and a warning. When a Tornado Watch or Severe Thunderstorm Watch is issued, it means that conditions are becoming favorable for tornadoes or severe weather. The storms may not have developed yet, but are expected

to within the next 2 to 6 hours.

When a Tornado Warning or Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued, it means that there is a storm that either already is or will be producing severe weather or a tornado shortly.

A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued when hail to the size of quarters (1” in diameter) or 58mph winds or higher are expected or being reported from a storm. A Tornado Warning is issued when meteorologists see rotation on radar or a tornado has been reported by spotters.

Severe weather occurs in Wisconsin every year. Now is the time to get prepared!

**(Tim Halbach is the Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the National Weather Service Milwaukee)**

## Back to EMI cont.

The next day, EMI staff changed it up and decided to “throw in” an extra functional exercise. This one involved a plane crash. Once again, participants responded as if it were an actual event. However, this time they were more comfortable in their roles and had an opportunity to reinforce new skills learned the previous day.

In addition, a group of “policy” makers took part in a tabletop exercise, looking at recovery issues from the



previous day’s tornado scenario. It was emphasized that after law enforcement and fire leave, public works crews, as well as social service

agencies, will have a much longer presence and that recovery could take months if not years.

Other topics covered during the week included ICS/EOC Interface, COOP/COG Planning, Resource Management, Public Information and Moving forward.

Overall the experience was positive and the consensus was that we must maintain the momentum which was started at EMI!

## You Are The Help Until Help Arrives

*You Are The Help Until Help Arrives* is a program to educate the public to take action in an emergency by providing lifesaving care before professional help arrives.

There are three components, an interactive video, web-based training and instructor-led training.

These tools aim to educate and empower the public to act in an emergency situation before professional help arrives by taking five *You Are*

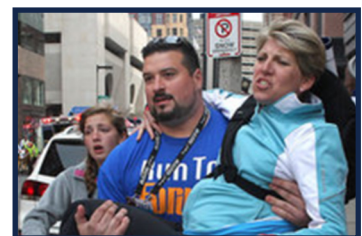
*The Help Until Help Arrives* key actions:

1. Call 911 and provide your specific location.
2. Stay safe by protecting the injured from harm and moving them away from any ongoing danger.
3. Stop the bleeding with firm, direct pressure, or a tourniquet.
4. Position the injured: Let someone who is conscious position themselves; put an unconscious

person into the recovery position.

5. Provide comfort to the injured while keeping them warm and offering encouragement.

For more information, go to [ready.gov/untillhelparrives](http://ready.gov/untillhelparrives).



## WCA’s 5th County Official’s Handbook

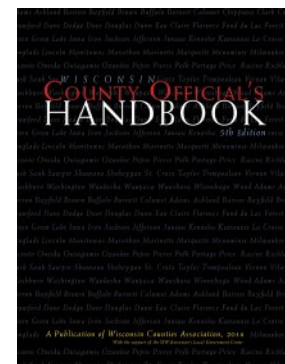
Racine County Emergency Management provided the chapter on Emergency Management for the Wisconsin Counties Association’s 5th County Official’s Handbook.

According to WCA, the handbook is the most comprehensive document on county operations and recently updated, the handbook is comprised of a collection of information covering topics that county officials handle on a regular basis.

From an in-depth review of parliamentary procedures to personnel practices to budgeting, this document brings together all areas of county operations in one centralized place.

The chapter on emergency management outlines local requirements, explores the concept of whole community planning and identifies steps local officials should take. To access,

go to: [www.wicounties.org/uploads/pub/handbook-final.pdf](http://www.wicounties.org/uploads/pub/handbook-final.pdf)



## Racine County Medical Reserve Corps

Spring is already upon us and with summer fast approaching, the Racine County Medical Reserve Corps (RCMRC) is gearing up for its 2017 season of events.

These events are just some of the ways that RCMRC and its members give back to the Racine community and beyond.

Already this year, RCMRC provided first aid at the Racine Rotary Post Prom celebration at Racine's Festival Hall. From the night of Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, into the early morning hours of Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, members assisted nearly a dozen event-goers with various minor injuries.

Later in summer, RCMRC will assist with first aid services at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, a weeklong aviation event that draws more than 500,000 people over a one-week pe-



riod. Members will be in Oshkosh from July 24<sup>th</sup> through the 26<sup>th</sup>.

RCMRC will also be providing first aid for the Union Grove Great Pumpkin Chuckin Fest at the Racine County Fairgrounds this fall on October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The Racine County Medical Reserve Corps is always searching for additional members, and is open to those with both medical and non-medical backgrounds.

The main functions are preparing for

public health emergency response, recovery operations, and the expansion of public health activities into our communities through events such as those above.

Most required trainings are provided by the Unit or the City of Racine Public Health Department at no cost to the members, and membership requires only a small time commitment throughout the year.

For more information about the Racine County Medical Reserve Corps, or if interested in joining and assisting with or participating in these events, visit [www.cityofracine.org/Health/MRC](http://www.cityofracine.org/Health/MRC), email [PublicHealth@CityofRacine.org](mailto:PublicHealth@CityofRacine.org), or call the City of Racine Public Health Department at 262-636-9537.



## STAY INFORMED

There are a number of ways in which you can stay informed and involved with Racine County Emergency Management. In addition to our quarterly Ready Racine newsletters, you can learn more about RCOEM by:

- Visiting our website: <http://readyracineco.com>
- Download the Ready Badger App: <http://appfactoryuwp.com/projects.php>
- Visiting our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/readyracineco](http://www.facebook.com/readyracineco)
- Submitting your questions and concerns to [rcemergencymanagement@racinecounty.com](mailto:rcemergencymanagement@racinecounty.com)
- Volunteering with Racine County Emergency Management

