



READY RACINE



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Racine County
Office
of
Emergency Management

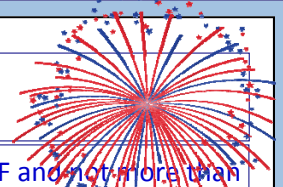
Inside this issue:

- Train derailments 2
- MRC 3
- Hazard mitigation plan 3
- Beach safety 4

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.

Play it safe this July 4th



Independence Day is right around the corner and as we plan our celebrations – parades, a backyard barbecue and maybe even a trip to the beach – let’s make sure that everyone has a fun, safe time!

Plan ahead. Make sure you pack sunscreen. Ultraviolet rays from the sun can cause both premature aging and skin cancer in the long term, and a painful burn the next day.



Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids to avoid heat related illnesses. The risk of heat-related illness is increased when participating in strenuous activities. Those with chronic medical conditions and the elderly are also at an increased risk of heat exhaustion and/or heat stroke.

Alcohol consumption can also promote dehydration. Use alcohol responsibly. Don’t drink and drive. Make sure you have a designated driver. And remember that alcohol and swimming can be as dangerous as drinking and driving.

Don't leave the picnic spread out all day. Allowing food to sit in outdoor temperatures can invite food-borne illness. The U.S. FDA suggests never leaving food out for more than one hour when the tem-

perature is above 90 F and not more than two hours at other times. Adequate hand washing and food preparation can also help prevent food poisoning.

Leave the fireworks to the professionals. Many fireworks are not only illegal to use within Racine County, but also contribute to an increase in reported fires. In fact, there are far more fires reported on Independence Day than on any other day, and fireworks account for two out of five of those fires.

How do you know what’s legal and what’s not? A commonly used rule of thumb is that if the device explodes or leaves the ground, it’s illegal to use without a valid users permit. The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a public fireworks show.

July 4th is a time for celebration but it should also be a time of reflection. We have much to be grateful for, and this July 4th, as we sit down with family and friends, let us not forget the cost of freedom and the price that those who went before us paid. **Happy 4th of July!**



Emergency response to train derailments

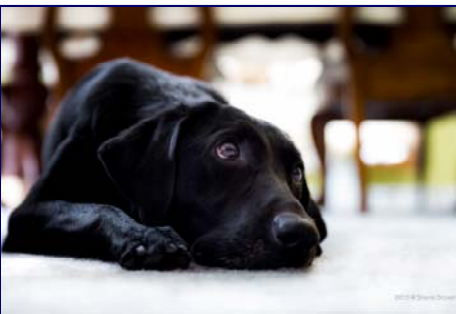
I am often asked what keeps me up at night and a train derailment ranks at the top of my list! The consequences can be catastrophic and in a densely populated area, the impact can be great. From evacuation to business continuity issues, the ramifications are far reaching.

Weyauwega

The 1996 train derailment in Weyauwega was a wake-up call for may in Wisconsin. 2,300 people were evacuated for 16 days, including the entire city of Weyauwega. According to reports at the time, the derailed cars included seven tank cars of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), seven tank cars of propane and two tank cars of sodium hydroxide. Three of the tank cars ruptured, spilling both LPG and propane, which immediately ignited. Officials were concerned about a BLEVE (Boiling Liquid Evaporating Vapor Explosion) situation.

Pets, Pills & Purses

We learned a lot from that incident. Many evacuees left behind pets, pills and purses, resulting in a very dangerous pet rescue ordered by Governor Tommy Thompson. As a result, we train responders to remind evacuees to take their pets, pills and purses and we remind citizens that when they get that knock at the door, to have an evacuation plan in place.



Archilochus, a Greek Soldier, said, "We do not rise to the level of our expectations. We fall to the level of our training." Therefore it's important that we be prepared before disaster strikes. Whether it's Bakken Crude Oil, LPG, Chlorine or some other chemical, accidents happen and advanced planning, training and coordination are essential.



That's why we have consistently planned, trained and drilled for railroad accidents.

Planning

Last year we applied for a Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning grant through Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) to develop a Railroad Emergency Response Plan. The plan consists of emergency contact information and emergency response procedures. There is a tab for each rail line that goes through Racine County and all mile markers are plotted on a map by latitude and longitude. In the event of a train derailment, it should be easier to plot the derailment on a map and quickly identify where the potential problems are.

Training

There are many courses, many of them at no charge, which are available to us. We have taken advantage of several including the Rural Domes-

tic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC) AWR 147 Rail Car Incident Response course. The AWR 147 Rail Car Incident Response is an eight-hour awareness-level course designed to increase the knowledge of first responders in recognizing and characterizing the different types of rail cars, potential leaks, and courses of action to be taken based on initial site assessment.

Drills & Exercises

In Racine County, we have been conducting train derailment exercises over the past ten years and I have found that the Weyauwega scenario works well. With a few modifications, the scenario can be adapted to fit various sized jurisdictions. Although the impact will vary, depending on where the "accident" occurs, the challenges are still significant and participants have a better understanding of what their role will be.

There will continue to be ongoing debates centered around crude oil and how it's transported, railroad safety issues and specifications for tank cars but we need to remember that regardless of what is being said or debated, trains will continue to transport chemicals through our community and that we need to be prepared if there is a derailment.



Racine County Medical Reserve Corps

From May 29-31, several members of the Racine County Medical Reserve Corps (RCMRC) participated in a full-scale exercise held in northern Wisconsin.



Surge X 2015, sponsored by the Wisconsin Disaster Medical Response Team - Medical Reserve Corps (WDMRT-MRC), was held at the Public Safety Center of Excellence in Merrill.

In addition to RCMRC and WDMRT-MRC members, individuals from other WI MRC units as well as members of the Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry (WEAVR) also participated.

The exercise involved the set up of a 40-bed Mobile Medical Care Facility and other assets at the site, followed by the mock treatment of numerous volunteer "patient players" suffering from a variety of ailments.

Surge X 2015 was the largest exercise of its kind to-date in Wisconsin to deal with real "patient players" with special and functional needs. This gave MRC and WEAVR members the experience of what an actual medical disaster response would be like.

RCMRC is open to both medical and



non-medical members. Its main functions are preparing for public health emergency response, recovery operations, and the expansion of public health activities into our communities.



For more information about the Racine County Medical Reserve Corps or if interested in joining, visit www.cityofracine.org/MRC.aspx or call the City of Racine Public Health Department at 262-636-9537.



Racine County updates hazard mitigation plan

Over 50 public and private sector partners, including representatives from non-governmental organizations, participated in Racine County's Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Kick-Off meeting at the IMet Center.

County Executive Jonathan Delagrave pointed out that the Hazard Mitigation Plan is an important plan.

In 2007, a young couple lost their house due to flooding along Willow

Rd. FEMA assistance came nowhere near making them whole.

Because of the Hazard Mitigation Plan we had in place, the Village of Mt. Pleasant was eligible to apply for a Hazard Mitigation grant and the village bought out the property, allowing this couple to start fresh.

A Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies policies and actions that can be implemented over the long term to reduce risk and future losses from

disasters like flooding, as well as maintaining our eligibility to apply for hazard mitigation grants.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission will assist Racine County in updating the plan.



Fun in the sun

The City of Racine boasts 50 acres of sand along 2500 feet of shoreline and on a hot, summer day, the cool waters of Lake Michigan beckon. North Beach is Wisconsin's first Certified Blue Wave clean beach and it's listed as one of USA Today's 51 Great American Beaches.

While many have enjoyed our beaches, there are dangers that you need to be prepared for. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has a useful guide, *Nine Dangers at the Beach*, that every beach goer should review.

While we do not need to be concerned about tsunamis, sharks and jellyfish, we do need to be prepared for rip currents, sunburn and lightning.

According to NOAA, **Rip currents** account for more than 80 percent of rescues performed by beach lifeguards. They are powerful currents of water flowing away from shore that quickly pull swimmers out. The best way to stay safe is to recognize the danger of rip currents. **If caught in one, don't fight it!** Swim parallel to the shore and swim back to land at an angle. And always remember to swim at beaches with lifeguards.

Excessive Heat is the leading weather-related killer in the United States, causing more deaths than floods, lightning, tornados, and hurricanes combined. Heat disorder symptoms include sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. According to NOAA, spending the day at the beach can lead to any of these disorders but the most visible is sunburn,



which can take up to 24 hours before the full damage is visible. The two most common types of burns are first degree and second degree burns resulting in redness and even blisters. When a burn is severe, accompanied by a headache, chills, or a fever, seek medical help right away. Be sure to protect your skin from the sun while it heals.

There is an average of 33 **lightning** deaths each year. Although most lightning occurs in the summer, peo-

ple can be struck any time there is a thunderstorm. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you!

There is no safe place outside when thunderstorms are in the area. **When thunder roars, go indoors!** Move **immediately** to a safe shelter: a substantial building with electricity or plumbing, or an enclosed, metal-topped vehicle with the windows up.

Some tips to follow to protect you and your family from the dangers of severe weather, including lightning, are:

- Plan ahead and know where to go for safety;
- Monitor weather conditions;
- Cancel or postpone activities if thunderstorms are in the forecast;
- Take action early so you have time to get to a safe place; and
- Stay in the safe shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last sound of thunder.

This summer, take advantage of the beautiful beaches along Lake Michigan but remember to **play it safe!**

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://www.readyracineco.com>
- Signing up for email communications by entering your information on our website
- Visiting our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/readyracineco
- Submitting your questions and concerns to rcemergencymanagement@goracine.org
- Volunteering with Racine County Emergency Management

