

York County
Office of
Emergency
Management

Annual Report

2011



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Vision

It is the vision of the York County Office of Emergency Management to be recognized as the most professional, well respected, proactive, community and customer oriented municipal emergency management agency in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Mission

York County Office of Emergency Management is charged with protecting the community by coordinating and integrating all activities necessary to build, sustain and improve the capability to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from threatened or actual natural disasters, acts of terrorism or other man-made disasters.

We undertake this mission with clear customer-focus and recognition that people are the most valuable asset. We value the contributions and dedication of the personnel who staff the emergency response and management systems. We employ and deploy the best available technologies in support of our mission.

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Executive Summary

The County of York experienced historic levels of disasters during 2011. There were four tornados, an earthquake, a hurricane, a tropical storm, an early season snow and a plane crash. These furies of nature and other incidents tested the resolve of our staff and the emergency responders of the county, but we prevailed.

Heavy rain developed along and north of a warm front lifting into Central PA on Saturday morning April 16. The rain quickly amounted to more than an inch over much of Central PA, and a stripe of 3 to 5 inches of rainfall occurred from Gettysburg through Harrisburg and Shamokin. The water was too much for the streams and creeks. Flash flooding created an extremely dangerous situation where up to a dozen water-rescues were made by local rescue personnel. One EF 0 tornado occurred, along with many reports of wind damage during the afternoon and early evening. The one tornado occurred just to the west of the City of York, near the West Manchester Mall. It also caused damage in the Fireside neighborhood of York City. The Yellow Breeches Creek in Fairview Township at the northern border crested at 14.57 feet, the 3rd highest recorded crest.

Unseasonably warm and moist air over the region on Wednesday April 27 fueled severe thunderstorms. The thunderstorms occurred ahead of a cold front which would move through on Thursday morning. This was the same storm system responsible for the deadly outbreak of tornadoes across the Deep South that same evening and overnight. One EF 2 Tornado occurred in the Ski Round Top area of York County. As it travelled through the county, one home had major damage in Fairview Township.

During the afternoon of July 12, two tornadoes touched down in York County. One weak EF 1 touched down in Windsor near State Rd 624 and affected six homes. A second EFO Tornado touched down about ¼ mile east of Springvale Road and several homes were affected.

On August 2 a 5.9 magnitude earthquake occurred in Central Virginia and felt in York County. The 911 Communications Center received numerous calls about this event. York County did not receive any significant damage from this earthquake.

On August 26 the OEM Staff began monitoring Hurricane Irene. The York County EOC was activated on Aug 26 with OEM Staff and ran 24 hour operations until August 28 at 12:00. York County OEM staff began the damage reporting process through the Individual Damage Reporter to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

While still in the recovery phase for Irene we began monitoring Tropical Storm (TS) Lee. This storm is discussed in detail later in this report.

An early season winter storm brought generally 3-8 inches of snow to Southern and Eastern PA on Friday October 29, with official readings of 9 inches for York County. The storm was a classic Nor'easter, deepening rapidly late Friday night and Saturday as it moved up the East Coast, just off shore. The storm produced gusty winds on Saturday in the county, knocking down trees and power lines, interrupting electric service to more than 60,000 customers and businesses across the county. Many trees still had leaves on them, and the heavy, wet snow (snow to liquid ratios were anywhere from 6:1 to 12:1) weighed down the trees and led to widespread damage. It was a week long effort for the utilities companies to restore power. There was a partial activation of the EOC by OEM Staff at 18:00 on October 29 and closing at 00:01 on October 30.

The overall precipitation received by the county for 2011 was over 60", with the normal being 40".

The Department's responsibilities did not end when the immediate threat to human life and property dissipated. We also performed vital emergency preparatory activities on behalf of the people of York County. Each year the Department works with municipalities, schools, daycares, nursing homes and other groups to ensure they have plans in place in preparation of disaster.

Parts of York County are within the ten-mile Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) of two nuclear power plants: Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station and Three Mile Island (TMI) Nuclear Power Plant. The Department works with the two nuclear power plants and municipalities to develop emergency plans in the event of an incident affecting the public. The Department successfully completed its preparedness exercise with TMI in 2011.

The Department oversees the York County Hazardous Materials Response Team. The team operated at several incidents throughout the county during 2011, preventing hazardous materials from spreading and having a greater impact on the community.

On October 27, a Certification Exercise was conducted by the York County EOC. This exercise is required by PEMA as part of the Director's Basic Certification. This exercise was successful and Mike Fetrow is now certified by PEMA. Mike has been with the Department for over eleven years. We would like to thank the Commissioners for attending and assisting with this exercise. Their presence and participation was recorded as proof of support by Elected Official by the exercise team from PEMA and was commended.

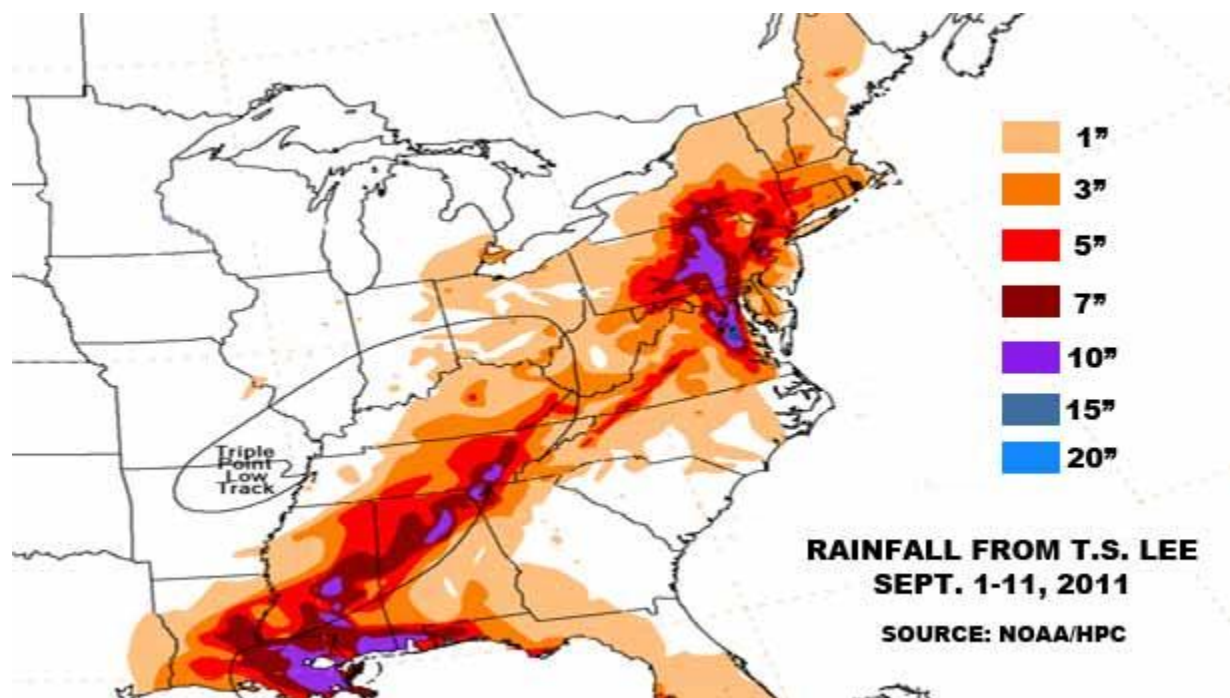
York County OEM would like to thank the dedicated volunteers who supported our EOC operations this year, as well as the phone bank established after TS Lee. The roles and services of voluntary agencies in emergency management will be successful only when agencies are willing and able to collaborate with one another and with other disaster relief organizations to accomplish common goals. Neither voluntary agencies nor the government, working alone, can help the American public mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Collaboration among all sectors of the emergency management community must begin during the mitigation and preparation phases and continue through response and recovery operations.

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Tropical Storm Lee

The impact of Tropical Storm Lee was felt throughout the entire county. The resulting damage was in the scope of a 40 year storm, bringing back memories of Hurricane Agnes.

Tropical Storm Lee developed over the central Gulf of Mexico in early September 2011 as a lopsided area of low pressure with heavy rain on its eastern flank. Lee's remnants helped cause torrential downpours over the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast, which led to widespread record flooding on September 8 and 9. This included the Susquehanna River at Binghamton, N.Y., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. and Meshoppen, Pa. The Swatara Creek in Hershey, Pa. beat the previous record level by 10 feet!



Our office activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on Wednesday September 7, 2011 due to the torrential rainfall. At the same time, the on-call Director responded to an oxygen cylinder leaking in York City. Numerous areas of the county received flooding rains. Several local EOCs were also activated as residents were evacuated. The American Red Cross began preparations to open

shelters. All eyes turned to the river as it was expected to crest over the weekend at levels just below historic Hurricane Agnes.



As the week progressed, the forecasted crest rose. On Friday September 9 the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced that an emergency exists in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and ordered federal aid to supplement commonwealth and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from the Remnants of Tropical Storm Lee beginning on September 3, 2011, and continuing.

The President's action authorizes the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to coordinate all disaster relief efforts which have the purpose of alleviating the hardship and suffering caused by the emergency on the local population, and to provide appropriate assistance for required emergency measures, authorized under Title V of the Stafford Act, to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, and to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe. This allowed individuals to apply for disaster aid through the Small Business Administration and FEMA. Almost 4,000 people applied for aid, receiving over \$5.7 million.



Finally, on Saturday the river crested at lower levels than expected. The county breathed a sigh of relief. However, heavy damage was done throughout the county.

The Office of Emergency Management staff worked through the weekend and into the next week recording damage and providing estimates to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency in anticipation of receiving federal assistance. On October 4 FEMA and PEMA opened a Disaster Recover Center (DRC) in the county to assist residents impacted by the storm. The DRC helped over 770 people. Finally on October 14 York County was declared for Public Assistance, allowing municipalities and other agencies to receive aid. The DRC closed on December 14.

As part of the recovery operation OEM partnered closely with the York County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). This group coordinates with many faith-based and other non-profit organizations to provide assistance above and beyond that provided by the federal government for those in need. As part of their efforts, this group formed a Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) with the mission to work together to provide physical, emotional and spiritual resources to individuals affected by disaster that are not met by other disaster recovery and relief systems.

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2011 Summary

1. Preparedness

1.1. Amateur Radio

The amateur radio people are in the process of upgrading their equipment. They are working on getting two mobile packs. This would allow for both voice and digital communications. With these kits they could respond anywhere and set up communications in the field. They have some equipment now and are waiting for grant money to procure other equipment for these kits. They will be ready early in 2012.

1.2. Hazmat

Hazmat 91, has taken in 5 new members. The team also has several other applications which will be processed through the next several months.

The team continues to train both locally and regionally with the other four regional hazmat teams.

Four members attended the IAFC (International Association of Fire Chiefs-Hazmat conference) in Baltimore. Five members attended the annual 'Pipeline Emergencies' training.

All equipment is calibrated and ready for service, and all trucks are ready for service.

1.3. Emergency Management Coordinators

Local Emergency Management Coordinators attended 4 training sessions this year, in accordance with Part V Emergency Management Service of Title 35 Public Health and Safety. Work continues on updating and reviewing their EOPs. The EOPs for nursing homes, daycares and schools also continue to be updated and reviewed.

1.4 Radiological

The biennial TMI full-scale exercise was held the week of April 11. In preparation, we conducted training sessions for 11 municipal EMAs, 3 school districts, and 2 fire departments, providing instruction to a total of 222 people. The County's TMI RERP plan, as well as, all the radiological response plans at the municipal level were reviewed and updated. It was a successful exercise with a fully activated county EOC, where we responded to unmet municipal needs and fulfilled all FEMA evaluation criteria. We also successfully demonstrated the set-up of mass care centers, and evacuee and emergency worker monitoring/decontamination stations.

We attended tabletop and functional exercises at the Exelon Emergency Operations Facility in Coatesville, PA on March 9. A small portion of York County falls within the 50 mile Ingestion Emergency Planning Zone for the Limerick Generating Station, which covers 14 counties and parts of Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey. We worked with our Ag liaisons from Penn State Extension to identify areas where food, crops, livestock and drinking water could potentially be contaminated from fallout following an accident at the power plant. All evaluation criteria were successfully demonstrated. This was a new exercise experience for those involved since ingestion exercises are only held once every eight years and rotate between the state's five nuclear power plants.

Exelon hosted a Hostile Action Based tabletop and exercise to practice the response and protective actions necessary for a security breach at the Peach Bottom plant. This type of exercise scenario was important to participate in as this will be a part of future federally evaluated RERP exercises.

- Tabletop – May 26
- Exercise – June 21
- First time for this kind of exercise at Peach Bottom

York County participated in two MS-1 (Medical Support) drills in May and July, which allow hospitals and EMS personnel to be trained on and demonstrate the transport and treatment of potentially contaminated

patients following a radiological incident. Hanover Hospital and Dover Ambulance displayed the proper techniques for handling an injured emergency worker from the TMI EPZ. York Hospital and Delta-Cardiff Ambulance completed the same objectives for the Peach Bottom EPZ.

Exelon donated \$54,000 to OEM for all-hazards planning. Director Mike Fetrow and Radiological Planner/Trainer Shen Kreiser accepted the check on our behalf.



1.5 SARA Planner

OEM's SARA (Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act) Planner reviewed 92 plans from SARA facilities. Facility off-site response plans are prepared by the county Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPCs) in accordance with the provisions of SARA Title III, PA Act 165, and guidance from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

2. Response

2.1. Amateur Radio

In times of crisis and natural disasters, amateur radio is often used as a means of emergency communication when wireline, cell phones and other conventional means of communications fail. These “hams” are dedicated volunteers who spend countless hours and much of their own money to make the system work.

As stated in the preparedness section, amateur radio is working hard to perfect Digital Communications. With this digital method, in a disaster situation, they would be able to transmit large amounts of information in a short time span, thus reducing time on air and problems without the usual spelling errors. They demonstrated this form of communication three times this year and each time produced a very reliable, accurate product. The first time was in the TMI drill where they transmitted a large amount of medical information. This could have been a difficult task, especially spelling a long list of drugs which would have taken at least 15-20 minutes. There was also the possibility of multiple spelling errors, causing poor results for the end users. Their transmission took less than 2 minutes without errors.

They also demonstrated this on the HEARS (Hospital Emergency Amateur Radio System) system, for the hospitals in the 8 county regional area. This exercise was initially designed to test communications from one end of the region, Waynesboro/Chambersburg, Franklin County to Ephrata Hospital Lancaster County. Voice communications worked well for long distances and digital was demonstrated to the receiving hospitals with great results. Because of this positive result, HEARS may also start using this method to communicate large volumes of information.

The amateur radio team also participated in our Director’s certification exercise and again demonstrated digital communication by accurately transmitting large amount of information in a short period of time.

2.2. Hazmat

The Hazmat Team had 35 calls for the year. Most of them were standbys and officer calls. Most calls have been transportation-related incidents, usually with fuel spills.

Several of the calls proved to be of an interesting nature; transformer leaking liquid, which turned out to be a PCB, a manure pit giving off gasses, and a cylinder of Sulfur Dioxide which provided to be empty. Again most of these were officer calls and did not require a full team response.

The Team participated in several exercises: four tabletops, a functional exercise, and a full scale regional exercise at Defense Distribution Susquehanna Division.

The Team Participated in two public service events: Sears National Safety Day and Carroll Township's 'Night Out'.

This group of dedicated volunteers trains monthly to stay current in their field.

2.3. Emergency Management Coordinators

Local EMCs had the opportunity to test their EOPs this year thanks to Mother Nature. Many local EOCs were activated in support of disaster operations.

3. Recovery

3.1 Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

York County VOAD was very active this year due to TS Lee. The group coordinated services for 73 residents who either weren't eligible for other assistance or exhausted the assistance they received. VOAD was able to utilize approximately 107 volunteers during the months of September and October in our clean-up efforts. The 107 volunteers worked approximately 2,508 total hours. As a result of the damage inflicted by TS Lee, the VOAD

formed a Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) whose mission is to “work together to provide physical, emotional and spiritual resources to individuals affected by disaster that are not met by other disaster recovery and relief systems.”

The long-term objective of the LTRC is to complete the recovery from TS Lee and stand ready for future disasters.

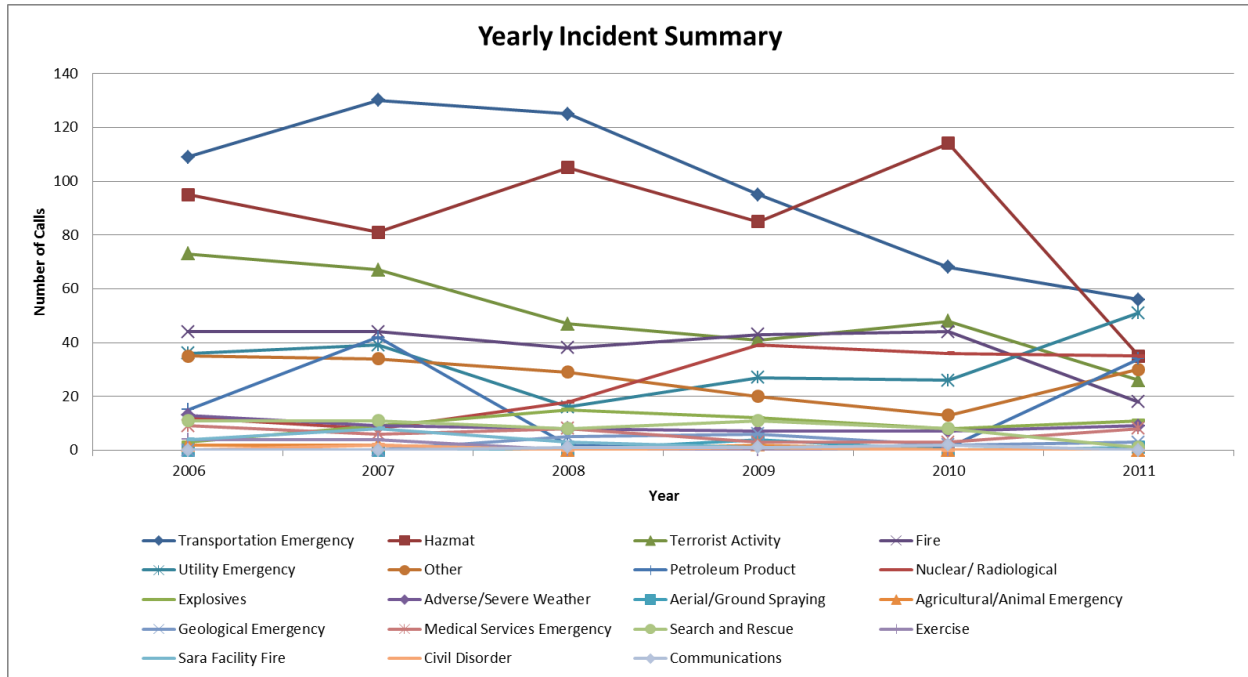
4. Mitigation

In Pennsylvania, the most common hazard is flooding. The most common mitigation project is acquisition and demolition of flood-risk homes or "buyouts." Since 1996, some 1,400 homes and an estimated 3,500 people have been removed from dangerous flood areas through mitigation projects. Acquisition is considered the "best" mitigation because it eliminates the hazard of flooding in a risk area - no homes, no losses.

Two municipalities are beginning work on mitigation plans to purchase properties in flood-prone areas. These townships are Fairview and Paradise.

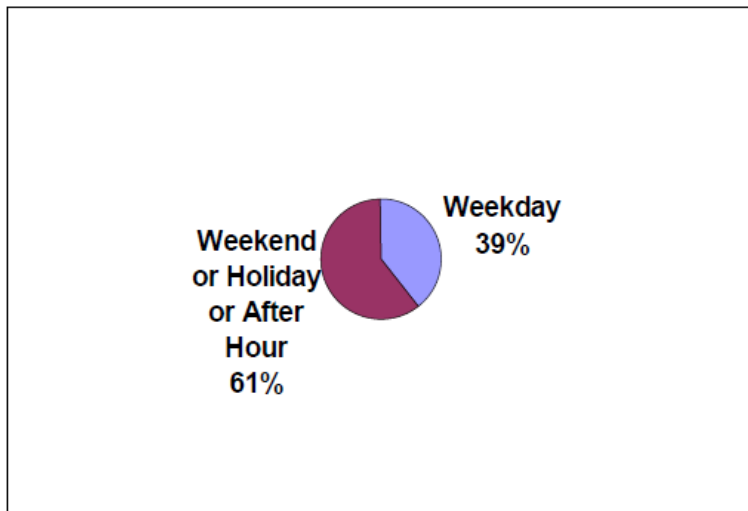
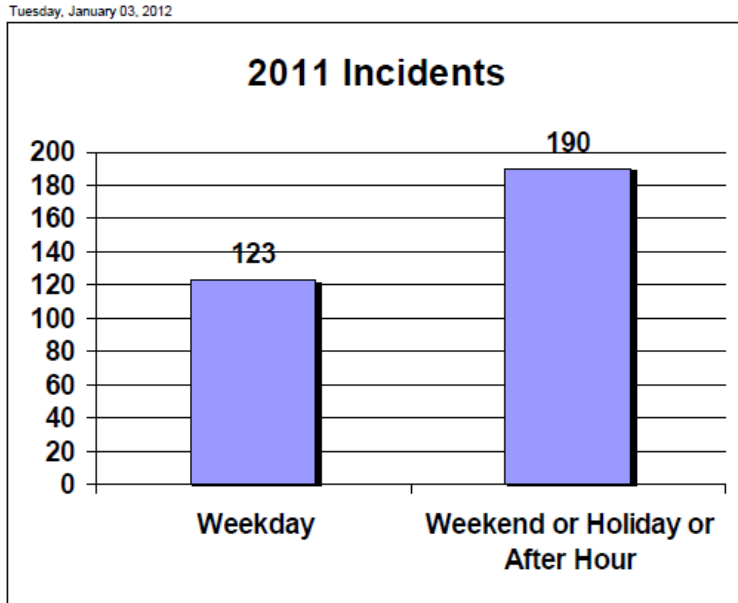
Yearly Incident Summary

The Pennsylvania Emergency Incident Reporting System (PEIRS) establishes standard criteria for reporting incidents to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and the Office of Homeland Security (OHS) that affect the safety, security, health and welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

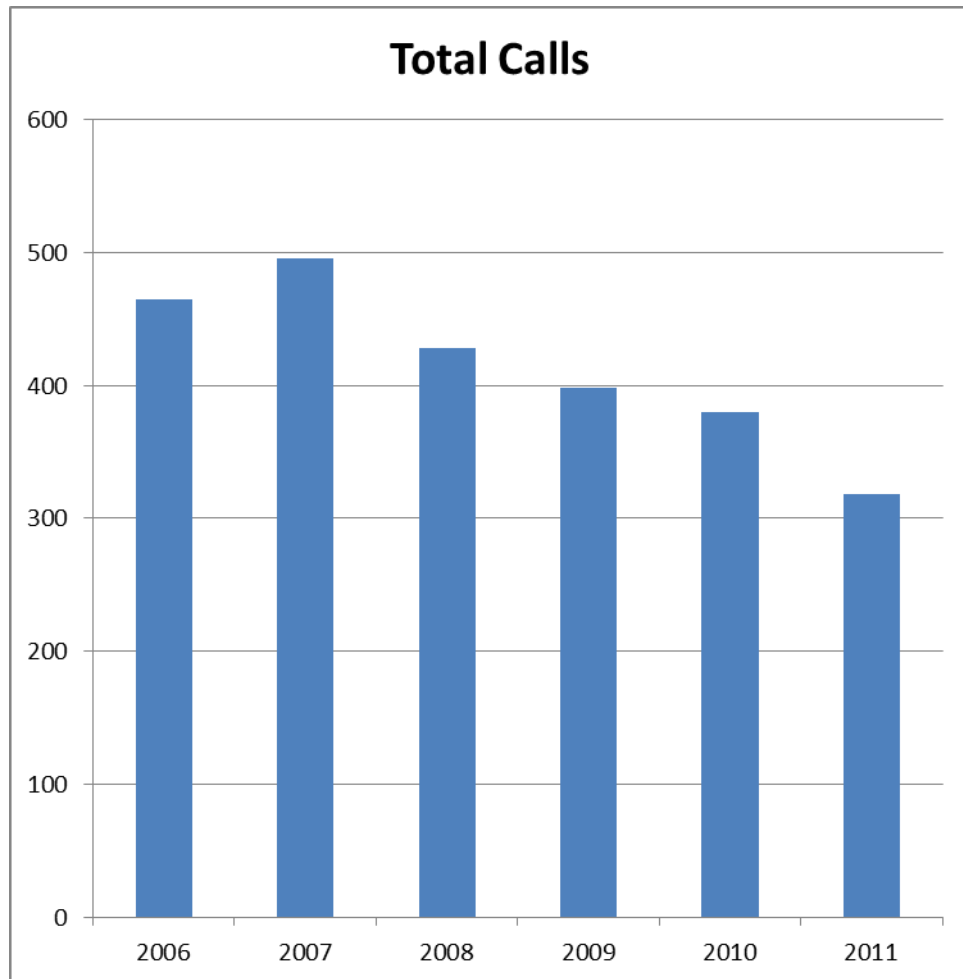


The chart above includes all categories. Generally, the same 7 incidents account for the majority of calls. These include Hazmat, Transportation Emergency, Nuclear/ Radiological Utility Emergency, Terrorist Activity, Fire, and Other. The Hazmat category was examined and it was determined many of the incidents reported as Hazmat should've been reported as Petroleum or Utility Emergencies. When that adjustment was made, it caused the Hazmat category to show a decrease. However, total Hazmat calls did not change. Petroleum and Utility Emergency calls are considered hazardous materials calls and must be treated as such. Hazardous materials calls are included in several of the categories as defined by PEMA.

The following chart shows that almost two-thirds of our incidents occur after hours.

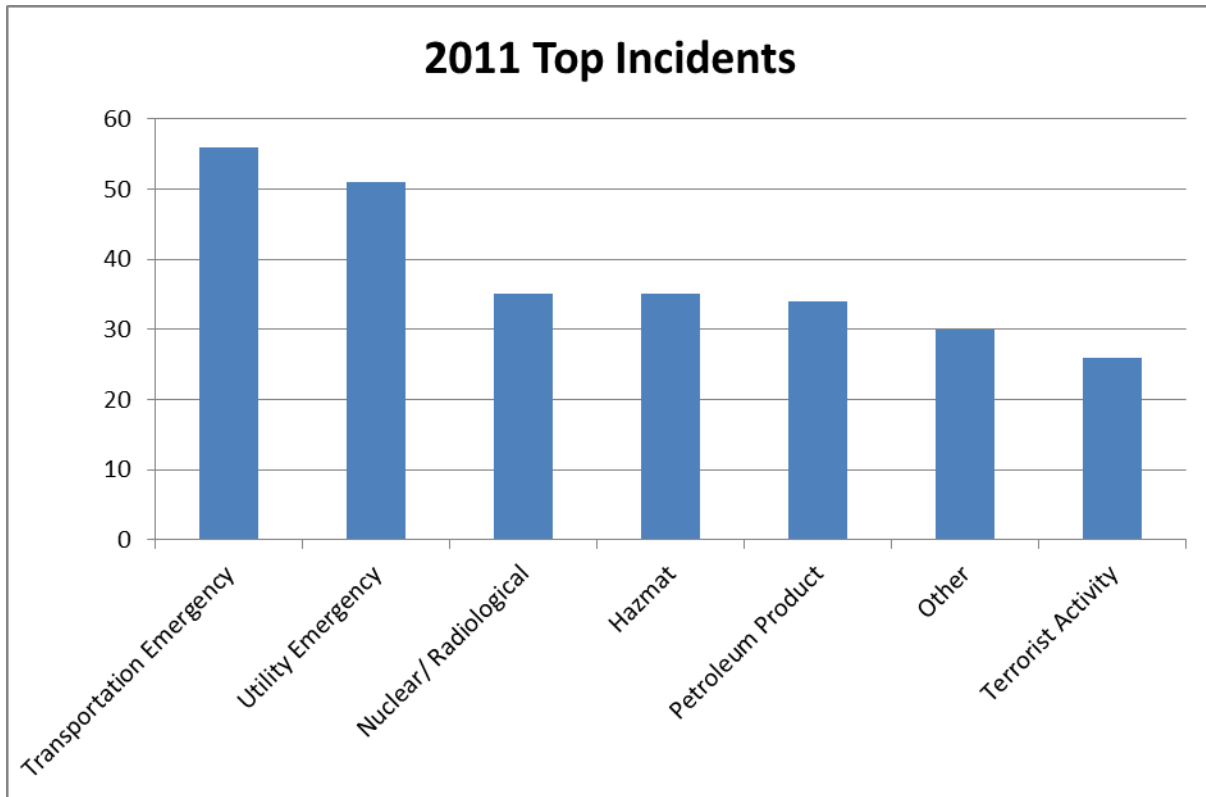


The total call volume has been steadily decreasing since 2007, from 496 calls to 313 in 2011.



2011 Leading Incidents

The categories below include the top incidents impacting the reporting process. Individual incidents are included in this report under 2011 Incident Details. The same categories ranked in the top seven for the past four years.



Transportation Emergency (56): This category continues to generate a large call volume. This is due to the fact that any public transportation accidents (school bus, taxi, mass transit, etc.) must be reported to the state. Also, any road closures on Interstate 83 or other state roads that are evacuation routes for TMI or Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station must be reported. This is to ensure that in the event of an incident at those facilities, pre-planning of alternate evacuation routes can be disseminated through local media. The OEM will also assist with long term closures of I-83 and other major routes to lessen the impact of traffic backlog on local municipalities.

Utility Emergency (51): This category deals with any disruption of electric, phone outages, natural gas disruption and water main breaks, which affect a large population and will be long term.

Nuclear/ Radiological (35): This category includes Events of Potential Public Interest (EPPI), which include ambulance calls to Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station. These are generally non-nuclear related calls, but fall into this category. Other areas that are included are radiological transportation accident, radiological waste spill, receipt of radiological transport notices, theft or loss of any state or federally-licensed radiological source, fire at a nuclear regulatory commission or state licensed radiological materials facility, activation of a nuclear power plant siren system, radiological release and nuclear plant unplanned outage.

Hazardous Materials (35): Natural gas leaks take the lead in this category. Odor investigations of chemicals, sewage spills into waterways, spills of unknown substances, and hazardous materials team dispatches comprise the rest of this category. In 2011, there were a total of 35 calls for the hazmat team (HazMat 91). The team responded to the scene of 11 incidents. Another 24 calls were handled by the duty officer or as a stand-by. This includes phone consultations or actual responses by a hazmat duty officer to provide guidance to emergency responders on how to handle a particular situation. HazMat 91 is comprised of volunteers. The OEM staff, including the duty officer, responds to incidents during weekday hours to fulfill the required number of team members set by state certification requirements.

Petroleum Product (34): This category is comprised mainly of vehicle accidents involving diesel fuel spills, which could impact or contaminate soil or waterways. On a few occasions, spills were discovered in storm drains or in the soil due to illegal dumping of oils, paints, or other substances. This creates environmental issues.

Other (30): This category is comprised of all large-crowd events or incidents that threaten or exceed local security and support capabilities, rallies, protests, and marches where the lives or property of the citizens are endangered, VIP-related events and pre-event planning, Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) sightings, Activation of the county EOC or two or more municipal EOCs in conjunction with a specific event or incident, requests for the implementation/allocation of National Guard Resources, a public safety emergency that captures media attention, and any incident that results in the issuance of a protective action recommendation via the Emergency Alert System (EAS) or other process.

Terrorist Activities (26): This figure includes any bomb threat at a public facility, school, library, mall, nursing facility, etc. Suspicious packages have been on the increase since the events of September 11, 2001 and the growing threats of terrorism in the United States. Unfortunately, school bomb threats are a regular occurrence in the county but are decreasing. Most of the incidents in this category were for found explosives or suspicious packages and activities.

Fire (18): This category reflects any fire in schools, churches or other religious buildings, nursing homes etc. and third-alarm (or greater) fires. In addition, any fire that involves injury or death to a firefighter or emergency responder must be reported.

The other eleven categories made up 33 calls and include Explosives, Adverse/Severe Weather, Petroleum Product, Medical Services Emergency, Geological Emergency, Agricultural/Animal Emergency, Aerial/Ground Spraying, Search and Rescue, Exercise, Sara Facility Fire, Civil Disorder, and Communications.

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