

CHITTENDEN COUNTY, VERMONT
LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE #1
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Meeting notes – October 8, 2019

Present:

Al Barber, Hinesburg Fire Department
Zachary Borst, UVM Emergency Management
Shaun Coleman, Northwest RPC/LECP4/LEPC13
Todd Cosgorve, VT Hazmat Team
Steve Cushing, St. Michaels College
Heather Davis and Liz Rowell, Vermont Department of Health
Kate Hammond, UVM Medical Center
Bob Henneberger, Red Cross and RACES
Max Kennedy, Vermont Emergency Management
Matthew LaRock, Gloval Foundries Emergency Resonse
Peter Rowan, Hazelett Corp.
Samantha Slayton, VOSHA
Andy Squire, Richmond Rescue
Christine Forde, Marshall Distel - CCRPC

Al Barber called the meeting to order at 0900. There were no changes to the agenda, nor public comment on items not on the agenda. Introductions were made. There were no comments on the August minutes.

1. Vt Haz-Mat Team and the Tier II Program -- Presentation/discussion with Todd Cosgrove, Chief, VT Hazardous Materials Response Team and EPCRA (Tier II) Program Manager

The Hazmat Materials Response Team (VHMRT) has one full-time chief -- Todd Cosgrove, 28 part-time employees and 2 vacancies. One vacancy is in the process of being filled.

VHMRT provides refresher training to responders in the areas of hazmat awareness, operations, decontamination and air monitoring. This year to date VHMRT has provided 159 hours of training to 1,924 responders and public individuals.

The team is working on a training curriculum addressing hemp processing to help emergency responders understand the process and what flammable and hazardous chemicals are used. Hemp producers do have to submit Tier II reports. Some believe they are exempt as an agricultural operation, but they do not meet the definition of a farm.

VHMRT has had a busy year with 121 incidents – 55% of which require action by the VHMRT. There have been a lot of motor vehicle and boat spills.

The team has developed an equipment replacement plan to keep the equipment up to date and has purchased several new response assets to aid in hazardous materials response.

Tier II – There are 16 more Tier II sites reporting in 2018 compared to 2017. There are 2,650 total sites in the state. This is estimated to be about 60% of all sites. It is important for sites with hazardous chemicals to report for the safety of first responders and the public.

Notices are mailed to all facilities that have submitted Tier II reports previously, or sites that have been identified as sites that should be submitting reports, to remind them to submit their annual Tier II reports.

An EPA representative will be in Vermont to do classes in January on how to submit the required reports. The training will also talk about new Tier II reporting software that is being tested now.

The LEPC budget is frozen this year and will operate with the same amount as last year -- \$52,000 is available for LEPCs -- \$4,000 per LEPC.

Kate Hammond announced that she will be representing the Vermont Hospital Emergency Preparedness Coalition (VHEPC) on the SERC.

The State Emergency Response Commission has been discussing reorganization of the LEPCs. Proposals will be presented at a joint RPC/LEPC meeting on October 9.

2. Briefing on the exercises that have happened in our area in the past year and the plan for the future -- Max Kennedy, VEM Exercise Planner

Max first provided the following updates:

- VT211 will no longer operate 24-hours per day. The hours will be Monday-Friday 8am to 8pm. They can provide additional staffing for specific events.
- VEM is providing the following training -- G-191: Incident Command System (ICS)/Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Interface Workshop -- on November 2.

Vermont Emergency Management Local Exercise Overview – Max reviewed the exercises that have happened throughout the state. Max explained that his role is to support local exercises, plan reviews and trainings. VEM uses the homeland security exercise evaluation program.

There will be a statewide catastrophic exercise on Oct 24-25 with 19 towns participating.

Max presented a flow chart used for developing exercises. It can take up to 12 months to plan a full-scale exercise and 1-2 months for a table-top exercise. In order to do an exercise VEM requires communities to have a current plan so they can exercise those plans.

VEM also assists communities with walk-throughs and round tables where communities can talk through their emergency response processes.

Themes – there have been no major themes for the exercises. The themes vary by location. Many communities have focused on EOC issues such as staffing, physical location, and information tracking. Exercises relating to unified command with first responders and stakeholders have been conducted.

Looking forward to after the CAT 4 exercise VEM is looking to diversify exercise support and engage new partners. VEM will help people who regularly receive VEM support to conduct and maintain their own exercise programs.

VEM will also be conducting a gap analysis to prioritize and target specific capabilities for future exercises. In the spring there will be a Training & Exercise Needs Assessment Survey to identify what trainings and exercises are needed. The survey will be sent to LEPCs, RPCs, and will be advertised in VEMs newsletter.

New for this year -- operational exercises must be part of a multi-year training and exercise plan (template available). This is to ensure the exercise is part of a building block approach and not just a one-time thing.

VEM has regional coordinators to assist communities and a new school safety grants program manager. There is also a state exercise administrator for statewide exercises.

Assets – signs, vests, dummies, “NIMS City” for tabletop exercises (maps, buildings, vehicles to visualize a scenario and plan out response), evaluators/controllers and planning team support.

Trainings available online – IS-120 Introduction to Exercises, IS-130 – How to be an Exercise Evaluator. In person training – Homeland Security Exercise & Evaluation Program (HSEEP) – 2-day training, next one in March.

3. Update on TIER II Lists and Maps to be sent to first responders in each town for review

CCRPC sent Tier II lists and maps to all LEPC#1 communities. There is also an online map that CCRPC is working on. We have not yet received comments from any community. Shaun Coleman noted that the Tier II reports can be downloaded to Google Earth and Franklin and Grand Isle counties did that. It can also be coordinated with all hazard mapping to be more useful to community.

There was discussion on potentially sensitive data requests. Todd Cosgrove recommended that if we have suspicious requests, we should ask for a freedom of information act request.

The group discussed the usefulness of CAMEO – EPA’s Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations. It was discussed to consider hosting a training in the future.

LEPC Reorganization -- Christine passed out the minutes from the last SERC meeting and a letter written by VAPDA to the SERC regarding reorganization LEPCs. Todd provided an

overview of the current issues with the LEPCs. Within the state at least two LEPCs have closed down and a third is on the fence. RPCs don't get enough money to cover the staff time to administrate the LEPC. Also, there are not as many volunteers to participate in the LEPCs. Would it be better to have fewer LEPCs in the state? Would there be more money available for each LEPC? These items will be discussed at a meeting on October 9 between the LEPC Chairs, RPCs and SERC.

Shaun Coleman stated that the Grand Isle LEPC wants to remain a stand-alone entity.

It was stated that the SERC won't force LEPCs to merge.

The group discussed the requirements to prepare a response plan and LEPCs are not response agencies. Could there be one or two plans for the state? The federal law is designed to make sure people know the hazards in the community. The EPA does call it a response plan. Most state plans are really a gathering of information.

VEM is working on template for all LEPC to use. A draft has been completed.

4. Project updates

Kate – UVM Medical Center – New RACES laptop is partially online for digital communications. Planning a trauma exercise on Nov 21st. The exercise will be a dirty bomb incident and will focus on protecting health care workers.

UVM did a recent exercise with state and local partners on active shooters. The biggest issue was communications – both radio and IT. UVM is hosting the training MGT404 Sports and Special Events Incident Management on March 2 and 3. This is a two-day course geared towards schools. 25 participants must sign up to host course. The maximum number is about 60.

VTEMA is hosting a training by Harvard School of Public Health on worker safety training on emerging infectious diseases. For information contact Doug Babcock – VTEMA.

Department of Health is working on school water testing for lead. The results are being posted on the department of health website.

St. Mikes – A full-scale active shooter exercise was held and also an influenza tabletop. The main issue in both exercises was communication. A tabletop exercise is coming up in November with the emergency management team, and a tabletop exercised is being planned with the Early Learning Center. The Founders hall abatement is almost done and demolition will start soon.

VOSHA – There was an employee complaint from a hemp facility recently.

Andy – Richmond Rescue & Fire and Williston and Hinesburg had exercise and training sessions with UVM's helicopter. Communication went well.

Bob will make a presentation on Red Cross at next month's LEPC meeting. Fire season is starting so they expect to be busy soon. RACES will participate in CAT 4.

Todd – Communication came up in this month's THIRA (Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment) assessment. VEM will likely be working on this over the next year.

Al Barber adjourned the meeting at 10:40.

The next LEPC meeting will be held on November 12th at the CCPRC offices in Winooski.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Forde

Please note: LEPC meeting agendas, minutes, and other information may also be found at

<http://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/local-emergency-planning-committee/>