



# MEMA REPORTS

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MEMA REPORTS is a monthly newsletter produced by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to help keep the Public Safety Community of Massachusetts better informed about the day's Emergency Management issues. MEMA REPORTS also appears on the MEMA website: [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

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## **MEMA LAUNCHED ITS NEW WEBSITE**

On Wednesday, January 13, 2016 MEMA launched a new newly organized website. This project was done with the goal of improving the usability of the agency's website so we can easily deliver important information to the public and to our stakeholders. This means that all of our URLs have changed, with the exception of our landing page ([www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema)). If you have bookmarked any MEMA pages you will need to update your bookmarks. Additionally, if you have links on your websites that connect to ours, you may need to update the link(s). The website is organized by six broad categories: **About MEMA** (includes general info, directions, and job opportunities), **Be Prepared** (includes Ready Massachusetts materials focused on build a kit, make a plan, be informed, get involved, info & tips for access and functional needs and pets), **Emergencies & Disasters** (includes hazard specific information and preparedness and safety tips), **After a Disaster** (includes information on Individual Assistance and other recovery programs, tips on how to donate and/or volunteer post disaster, and how to protect yourself and property during the recovery effort), **News, Reports & Publications** (includes press releases and MEMA reports), and **Resources for Public Officials** (contains all of the relevant information for our stakeholders including information on training programs, grants, Public Assistance, SEOC and resource requests, field support, mitigation, state plans, maps, local templates and best practice guides, WebEOC, Training Registration System, Resource Management and the HHAN, and the SERC and LEPC/REPCs).

## **WINTER IS HERE**

Massachusetts had to wait until December 29 to receive its first real blast of winter weather. Although it produced minimal impacts, aside from slowing commuters, it was a reminder of the types of wind, snow and icy conditions we can expect over the next few months. As with most potential severe weather events: preparedness, monitoring the media for information and utilizing common sense are key to minimizing the dangers to you and your family. MEMA will continue to promote the cornerstone of our preparedness message by reminding residents of the Commonwealth to 'Build an Emergency Kit', 'Make an Emergency Plan' and 'Stay Informed' to protect themselves, their families and their property during the winter months. Additional tips on how to best protect yourself, family, pets and property this winter season can be found on the MEMA website at <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/emergencies/winter-storms/>

## **PUT A FREEZE ON WINTER FIRES**

To help better educate the public about winter fire hazards and ways to prevent them, the [National Fire Protection Association](http://www.nfpa.org) (NFPA) and the [United States Fire Administration](http://www.usfa.fema.gov) (USFA) are teaming up to promote "[Put a Freeze on Winter Fires](http://www.nfpa.org)". This annual campaign, now in its fifth year, highlights the leading factors that collectively contribute to a higher risk of home fires and related hazards during

the winter months, which include increased use of heating and candles, electrical issues, and carbon monoxide poisoning... With a little added awareness and by following some basic safety precautions, people can greatly reduce the likelihood of winter home fires and ensure a warm, fire-safe season. For more information, go to <http://www.nfpa.org/press-room/news-releases/2015/nfpa-and-usfa-launch-put-a-freeze-on-winter-fires-campaign>.

### **HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (HMGP) APPLICATIONS**

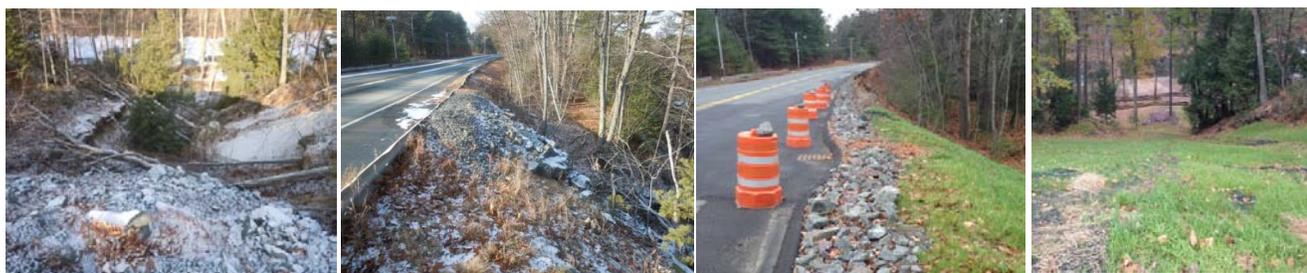
MEMA and the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) have received 39 applications, totaling \$34.9 million (\$22 million federal share) for the post-disaster funding as a result of the January 2015 Blizzard. Projects under consideration range in type and include generators, Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning, localized and non-localized flood risk reduction, infrastructure retrofits, and structural elevations. Based on FEMA's 6-month HMGP estimated ceiling for HMGP-4214, the state is expecting to have about \$18.4 million federal share available to make grant awards. Over the next few months an Interagency Review Panel will review these applications for completeness, feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and then formally review and rank the applications. The committee will make recommendations to the MEMA Director and the DCR Commissioner and then the final list of recommended applications will be sent to FEMA for their review and approval in April.

### **MITIGATION PROJECTS ROUND-UP**

The 2015 construction season was busy for communities around the Commonwealth working on Hazard Mitigation Grant funded projects. One example, depicted below, is the Sykes Brook in Huntington at Goss Hill Road, which has repeatedly surcharged and washed out the roadway during storm events. This often resulted in the complete closure of the road, with no access to the homes at the end of the residential dirt road. The town installed a multifaceted drainage solution to dissipate the velocity of flood water as well as enlarge the culverts. This upgrade will protect the roadway from heavy flows of floodwater surcharging down Sykes Brook. The total costs for the project were \$126,000.



A second project, depicted below, was completed this winter in the Town of Montague. After heavy rains, a slope failure had occurred threatening the collapse of Millers Falls Road. Drainage pipes to carry storm water away from the steep slope and geo-textile stabilization techniques were used to protect this area from damage in the future. The total cost for this project was \$350,000.



## FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE TOTALS TO ADVANCE

The Disaster Assistance and Snow Assistance process for local communities, state agencies and eligible private-non-profits for the January 26-28 Blizzard continues to advance. As of the end of December, 1,264 projected Project Worksheets (PWs) were being processed from 645 eligible applicants. The total project costs reflected in these PWs may reach over to \$145M. To date, FEMA has obligated over \$30M in federal assistance to local communities, state agencies and private non-profits. FEMA and MEMA project that 90% of the federal disaster assistance will be obligated by the end of March, 2016. Details regarding the Disaster Declaration and reimbursement process for communities, state agencies and eligible private non-profits are available at [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

## FIELD DEPLOYMENT HIGHLIGHTS

During the month of December, MEMA utilized its Mobile Emergency Operations Centers (MEOCs), Mobile Communications Support Trailer (MCST), Mobile Field Tent (MFT), caches of radios and personnel to support multiple events across the Commonwealth:

December 5-6: MEMA supported the Lighting of the Green in Taunton. The MEOC was utilized by the Unified Command as a Tactical Command Post supporting Law Enforcement operations. MEMA also provided 24 cache radios and radio interoperability for Law Enforcement operations.

December 6-8: MEMA supported MA Department of Conservation & Recreation's (DCR) controlled deer hunt at Blue Hills. The MEOC was utilized by the Unified Command, which included several state agencies and partners managing the hunt. Over 100 trails and several miles of roadway were monitored by the Unified Command Center (UCC).

December 31: MEMA supported First Night in Northampton. The MEOC was utilized by the Unified Command and as a police dispatching location for the event

## TRAINING UPDATE

During the month of December, MEMA's Training and Exercise Unit hosted 122 students in 6 different classes: ICS-400, Pediatric Disaster Response & Emergency Preparedness, Emergency Operations Center Management & Operations, and Basic Public Information Officer Training. So far this year, 2,759 individuals have received training through MEMA programs. For additional information about MEMA Training opportunities go to: [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema).

## MEMA STAFF UPDATE

Jonathan Ruda has joined the MEMA staff as our Communications and Field Support Manager. Jon is responsible for managing our 24/7 Communications Center and our Field Support Unit.

## UPDATE TO THE NATIONAL TERRORISM ADVISORY SYSTEM

On December 16, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) updated the National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS), adding a new form of advisory, the NTAS "Bulletin" With the rise in use of the Internet by terrorist groups to inspire and recruit, there is a concern regarding the "self-radicalized" actor(s) who could strike with little or no notice. Recent attacks and attempted attacks internationally and in the homeland warrant increased security, as well as increased public vigilance and awareness. Previously, there were two levels of 'Alert' – *Elevated Alert*, which warns of a credible terrorism threat against the U.S. and *Imminent Alert*, which warns of a credible, specific and impending terrorism threat against the U.S. The newly introduced *Bulletin* describes current developments or general trends regarding threats of terrorism. For additional information about the DHS Alerting System, go to [http://www.dhs.gov/ntas/advisory/ntas\\_15\\_1216\\_0001](http://www.dhs.gov/ntas/advisory/ntas_15_1216_0001).

## FEMA OFFERS FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT COURSE

Local officials responsible for administering their floodplain management ordinance will have the opportunity to participate in a flood-damage reduction course, 'Managing Floodplain Development through the National Flood Insurance Program', at FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) on March 7-10, as well as June 27 and September 12, 2016. The course focuses on the National

Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), concepts of floodplain management, maps and studies, ordinance administration, and the relationship between floodplain management and flood insurance. Participants will learn basic floodplain management practices necessary to begin their career and to manage a locally based floodplain management program. The practices will include providing outreach to citizens and officials in helping them make decisions about flood hazards. Prerequisites include Elevation Certificate for Surveyors, an interactive web-based course, and two online tutorials: Flood Insurance Rate Map and Federal Insurance Studies. Floodplain management administrators, building inspectors, code enforcement/zoning officers, planners, city/county managers, attorneys, engineers, and public works officials with limited floodplain management experience are encouraged to apply no later than January 22, 2016. State, territory, and local applicants must send their applications through their State Training Officer. Mail applications to NETC Admissions Office (Room I-216), National Emergency Training Center, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8998, or fax to (301) 447-1658. More information regarding the course is available at <https://training.fema.gov/emicourses/crsdetail.aspx?cid=e273&ctype=r>. Send specific questions about the course to Robert Perry at [Robert.perry@fema.dha.gov](mailto:Robert.perry@fema.dha.gov).

### MEMA'S MISSION STATEMENT

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA is committed to an all hazards approach to emergency management. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, and with the private sector - - individuals, families, non-profits, and businesses - - MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, coordinating response operations, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover.

### FOLLOW MEMA AND GET IMPORTANT EMERGENCY INFORMATION:

TWITTER - [www.twitter.com/MassEMA](http://www.twitter.com/MassEMA), FACEBOOK - [www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA](http://www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA), YouTube - [www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA](http://www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA), the MEMA WEBSITE - [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema), READY MASSACHUSETTS - [www.mass.gov/mema/ready](http://www.mass.gov/mema/ready). And do not forget to download Massachusetts Alerts app - [www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp](http://www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp).

