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Newsletter of the Township Emergency Management Association

July 2021

Latest News

PUC: Utilities Encouraged to Use Cybersecurity Best Practices Following Colonial Pipeline Ransomware Cyber Attack

The Pa. Public Utility Commission (PUC) issued a cybersecurity advisory to public utilities across Pennsylvania highlighting cybersecurity best practices following a recent cyberattack on the Colonial Pipeline Company, which disrupted fuel supplies along the East Coast.

The advisory encouraged all utilities to maintain good cyber hygiene, remain vigilant, and report attempted or successful intrusions to the appropriate authorities. This most recent advisory from the PUC follows an alert issued in March 2021 that highlighted specific cyber threats to water utilities.

Over the last several years, ransomware has become the No. 1 threat to both public- and private-sector organizations and has grown in both scale and sophistication, and ransomware attacks continue to strike businesses, government agencies, and individuals daily. In addition to these ransomware mitigation measures, the PUC strongly recommends that regulated utilities conduct physical and cybersecurity risk assessments on their critical infrastructure.

FEMA Recently Updated Position Qualifications

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently updated a number of fact sheets on the type of experience and training that members of your local emergency management team should have. Click [HERE](#) for the full list of qualifications.

Following are the updated position qualifications for some of the more common team members to help ensure that the people assigned to these roles have the necessary skills, qualifications, and training needed to fulfill their important responsibilities. This may also help identify where additional training may be needed.

- [Incident Commander \(IC\)](#) — The incident commander has overall management responsibility for an incident.
- [Public Information Officer \(PIO\)](#) — The public information officer is the single point of contact to share accurate and trusted information with the public.

- **Safety Officer** — The safety officer assesses safety hazards and works to ensure personnel safety during incident operations.
- **Liaison Officer** — The liaison officer is the single point of contact for those outside the township's emergency management team who are assisting with the incident, such as volunteers from another township.

Training Opportunities

TEMA Fall 2021 Emergency Exercise Forums

These full-day classes are designed to be attended in-person by everyone responsible for your municipality's emergency management program, such as elected officials, municipal managers, front office staff, road crew/public works personnel, and most important, local emergency management coordinators (EMCs).

Click on the appropriate link below to register for the **TEMA Fall 2021 Emergency Exercise Forum** of your choice:

- [October 28 - Central \(Enola\)](#)
- [November 4 - West \(Canonsburg\)](#)
- [November 9 - East \(Conshohocken\)](#)
- [November 18 - Central \(State College\)](#)

EMCs and other members of the township's emergency management team are reminded to get early approval to attend these important — and now in-person — emergency preparedness sessions. Each day starts at 9 a.m. and concludes by 3 p.m. Lunch and handouts are included.

AGENDA (subject to change):

9:00	Welcome / Introductions / Game Plan / TTX Basics
9:15	TTX #1 & AAR
11:30	Lunch
12:30	TTX #2 & AAR
3:00	Adjourn

Spring 2022 Training: Mark Your Calendar!

Yes, it is never too early to plan! Save the date for the Spring 2022 Emergency Management Forum, which will be held in-person April 21, 2022, concurrent with the 2022 PSATS Annual Conference in Hershey. Registration for this event will begin in early December.

TEMA Q&A

Q: What additional efforts can our township take to enhance our cyber protection?

A: The PUC's Office of Cybersecurity Compliance and Oversight recently provided public utilities with the following links to practical information and actionable resources developed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) which might also be appropriate for township computer systems:

- **[CISA Alert AA21-131A: DarkSide Ransomware – Best Practices for Preventing Business Disruption from Ransomware Attacks](#)** — This advisory urges critical infrastructure (CI) owners and operators to adopt a heightened state of awareness and implement the recommendations listed in the mitigations section of the advisory. These mitigations will help CI owners and operators improve their entity's functional resilience by reducing their vulnerability to ransomware and the risk of severe business degradation if impacted by ransomware.

- [Ransomware Guide](#) — This guide, developed by CISA and the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC), is a one-stop resource with best practices and ways to prevent, protect, and/or respond to a ransomware attack. CISA and MS-ISAC are distributing this guide to inform and enhance network defense and reduce exposure to a ransomware attack.
- [Reporting cyberattacks](#) — Another way to support utility cybersecurity defenses is to ensure that incidents are reported in a timely fashion through the appropriate channels. Utilities and others can report attempted or successful intrusions through CISA's website. Utilities or businesses that are victims of cybercrimes should notify the appropriate regional FBI office. The Bureau has Pennsylvania field offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The FBI may be able to assist critical infrastructure owner/operators when there is a cyberattack or suspected cyber incident.

Legal Update

Commonwealth Court Issues Significant Decision on Municipal Regulation of Shooting Ranges

In *Barris v. Stroud Twp.*, ___ A.3d ___, 2021 WL 2177376 (Pa.Cmwth. May 28, 2021), the Commonwealth Court ruled that a township ordinance regulating shooting ranges violated the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution but provided valuable guidance regarding what steps a municipality might permissibly take without violating its residents' constitutional rights. To read more, click [HERE](#).

Legislative Report

5G Bill Signed into Law

On June 30, Gov. Wolf signed Act 50 of 2021 (*formerly HB 1621*) into law. This new act:

- provides for the regulation of small wireless facilities in municipal rights of way;
- authorizes municipalities to charge an annual fee for the use of the right of way, not to exceed \$270 per small wireless facility or \$270 per new utility pole with a small wireless facility;
- sets the maximum permitted height of the pole and small cell facility at 50 feet;
- requires small cells to comply with restrictions in place in underground utility districts; and
- allows municipalities to develop reasonable design guidelines to minimize aesthetic impact.

Municipalities have 60 days to review applications for collocation on preexisting structures and 90 days for the installation of a new structure with attached small wireless facilities. Act 50 will take effect August 29, 2021.

Township officials should keep in mind that Act 50 of 2021 only applies to small cell wireless facilities and poles within the right of way; zoning and other local ordinances are preserved. Additionally, Act 50 provides municipalities with the maximum allowable authority and control within the confines of the FCC order.

Special Permit Bill Signed into Law

On June 30, Gov. Wolf signed Act 36 of 2021 (*formerly HB 765*), which prohibits PennDOT from requiring municipal indemnification for special events taking place on state roads when the event host or permit holder has already provided indemnification to PennDOT. Act 36 took effect immediately upon being signed into law.

Floodplain Management Administration

As part of the recently enacted 2021-2022 state budget, the Floodplain Management Act was

amended to move the administration of the act from the state Department of Community and Economic Development to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

Comments and suggestions about this monthly newsletter for members of the Township Emergency Management Association can be emailed to James Wheeler at jwheeler@psats.org.



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