

Click [here](#) to view this email in your browser.



Newsletter of the Township Emergency Management Association

November 2021

Latest News

Winter is Coming!

In preparation for the upcoming winter season, the National Weather Service (NWS) recently provided information on the dangers of snow squalls, how alerts and warnings are issued, and how people can stay safe during these dangerous winter weather hazards.

PEMA Director Randy Padfield noted that state agencies have been preparing for winter weather for several weeks with coordination calls and exercises, and encouraged all municipalities to also conduct such reviews with their road crews and public safety officers, as well as neighboring municipalities.

According to the National Weather Service, a snow squall is a brief but intense period of heavy snow (up to 2 inches in 30 minutes), strong winds (more than 30 mph), and whiteout conditions (visibility less than ¼ mile). Snow squalls often occur on days with otherwise partly cloudy skies.

“One of the things that makes snow squalls so dangerous is their tendency to produce icy roadways, or what we call a flash freeze,” NWS Meteorologist John Banghoff said. “Because they come on so suddenly, snow squalls can catch drivers off guard and lead to major transportation incidents, including deadly multi-vehicle accidents.”

The National Weather Service, along with PEMA, the Pa. State Police, PennDOT, and the Pa. Turnpike Commission, have created a number of [tools to help educate motorists](#) about the dangers of snow squalls, including dramatic videos that show the impact of these hazards on roads. Your township might want to also share these with your residents.

“The National Weather Service issues Snow Squall Warnings to alert for the sudden onset of life-threatening conditions encountered by highway travelers during snow

squalls,” NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist Jonathan Guseman said. “If you are driving on an interstate when a snow squall warning is issued, the best thing to do is to exit the roadway at the next opportunity.”

“Snow squalls can produce whiteout conditions that are difficult for everyone on the road to see other vehicles and even the lanes of travel. These conditions have led to major pileup crashes with multiple injuries and even deaths,” said Maj. Robert Krol, director of the Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Patrol. “Drivers are encouraged to use extreme caution while traveling during the winter months. Turn your headlights on, slow down, wear your seatbelt, and limit distractions in the vehicle.”

While PennDOT recommends not traveling during winter storms, motorists can check conditions on more than 40,000 state road miles, including color-coded winter conditions on 2,900 miles, by visiting www.511PA.com. 511PA, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information, and access to more than 1,000 traffic cameras.

511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by following regional Twitter alerts accessible on the 511PA website.

More information on how to prepare for any type of emergency, including [free downloadable checklists](#) of items to keep in your home, car, and at work, and specific information for people with pets or access and functional needs, is available on the [Ready PA webpage](#).

Legislative Report

Following is a summary of public safety-related legislation that is under consideration by the General Assembly. Please note that the status of these bills may have changed since this newsletter was finalized.

Regulation of firearms and ammunition

SB 448/PN 1164

Major provisions:

- Would further clarify the existing prohibition on municipal regulation of firearms and ammunition.
- Would allow people and organizations adversely affected by a municipal ordinance adopted in violation of existing law to seek damages attributable to the violation in an appropriate court, including the awarding of reasonable expenses if the judgment is against the municipality.

Status: Has passed the Senate and is before the House Judiciary Committee.

Public safety authorities

SB 698/PN 782

Major provisions:

- Would authorize counties to create public safety authorities and set fees for the administration of fire and EMS services.

- Would allow a municipality to contract with a public safety authority for EMS and fire service or support.
- Would authorize the public safety authority to levy fees for fire and EMS services or support for these services if the host municipality has entered into a contract for services.
- Would prohibit the creation of new multi-municipal public safety authorities unless they receive county approval and are comprised of at least 51% of a county's population or 40% of the total number of municipalities in a county.
- Would grandfather into the law all pre-existing multi-municipal EMS authorities.

Status: Before the Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee.

Regulation of fireworks

SB 894/PN 1135

Major provisions:

- Would prohibit the use of consumer fireworks between the hours of 11 p.m. and 10 a.m. except for July 2, 3, and 4 and December 31, when consumer fireworks could be used until 1 a.m. the following day.
- Would increase fines for fireworks used in violation of state law from \$100 to up to \$1,000 for a first offense, up to \$2,500 for a second offense, and up to \$5,000 for a third or subsequent offense.

Status: Before the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

Upcoming PSATS Educational Opportunities

Calling All Subject Matter Experts

PSATS continues to host numerous in-person and virtual educational events targeted to municipal officials, employees, and other professional and volunteer stakeholders. If you are interested in teaching a class on any subject, please contact Education Director Scott Coburn at scoburn@psats.org.

Mark Your Calendar: TEMA Spring 2022 Training

It is never too early to plan for the 2022 Spring Emergency Management Forum, which will be held in-person April 24, 2022, in conjunction with the 2022 PSATS Annual Conference in Hershey. Registration for this event will begin in early December.

[Webinar – Everything You Wanted To Know About Your VFD, But Were Afraid To Ask – 1/5/22](#)

If you're not focused on volunteer recruitment and retention for your volunteer fire departments, what are you focused on? This session will outline some of the forces converging on today's volunteers and focus on offering solutions for the community and its first responders to move together toward adequate and affordable public safety services.

[Webinar – Stormwater Management: An Annoying Requirement, Simplified – 1/26/22](#)

This webinar will give participants an overview of the challenges and best practices associated with managing a township's many stormwater-related responsibilities in

a user-friendly and easy-to-understand way.

[Webinar - Intergenerational Community Engagement And Planning: Values And Practices - 2/9/22](#)

As individuals grow apart in today's society, communities are more important than ever. They not only provide a geographic location where people live but also offer social interaction and common ties that connect people. Ideally, these opportunities should be available to everyone, from young children to senior citizens. Many communities would like to engage citizens in an age-inclusive planning process, but do not have the knowledge, staffing, or expertise to do so. In this webinar, representatives of Penn State Extension will lead a discussion of challenges participants have faced and provide strategies for addressing them in their communities.

[Webinar – What Your Public Works Director Wants You To Know – 3/23/22](#)

Your township's public works staff have unique perspective, knowledge, history, and information that can greatly benefit elected officials and senior employees. Confronted daily with the challenge of solving problems with finite resources, they are your front line for issues that matter to your constituents. In this webinar, Carol Schuehler, a professional engineer and municipal consultant, and Tom Manning, the roadmaster for Lower Frederick Township in Montgomery County, will help you understand township public works infrastructure, operations, and management so that you can better respond to residents and lead your community.

TEMA Q&A

Q: At the township's upcoming organization meeting, may the supervisors approve a training line item for the emergency management coordinator (EMC), including expenses for TEMA membership and attending relevant training opportunities?

A: Yes. Each EMC is encouraged to request such a line item to help keep the township in compliance with the required training needs of their EMC.

Q: What are the training requirements for new EMCs?

A: The Pa. Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) [Directive D2017-2](#) outlines the training required for township EMCs. PEMA has also created checklists for the various levels of government and certification to help EMCs document their required training and experience. Click [HERE](#) for the checklist for basic training for EMCs (required by the end of the EMC's first year in the position). Click [HERE](#) for the checklist for advanced training for EMCs (required by the end of the EMC's third year in the position).

This monthly newsletter for members of the Township Emergency Management Association focuses on news and matters of interest to emergency management personnel and provides details on upcoming training opportunities. You can access past newsletters under the “Newsroom” tab when you are signed in at psats.org. Email comments and suggestions to TEMA Coordinator James Wheeler at jwheeler@psats.org.



Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors

David M. Sanko, Executive Director

4855 Woodland Drive
Enola, PA 17025