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## Newsletter of the Township Emergency Management Association

January 2022

### Latest News

#### Group Reviews Status of SR6 Activity

PSATS hosted a meeting with a broad array of emergency management officials and organizations in early December to discuss the status of the state's activities to support recruitment and retention efforts by volunteer fire and ambulance companies. The SR6 report, adopted in 2017, was designed to help develop legislation to provide direct and indirect assistance for improving the delivery of emergency services in the commonwealth.

Moderated by Jerry Ozog, executive director of the Pa. Fire and Emergency Services Institute, the meeting reviewed the extensive legislative accomplishments made since adoption of the Senate's report, especially the noteworthy hiring of a Recruitment & Retention Coordinator for the Office of State Fire Commissioner.

Additional focus was given to deciding the necessary next steps to continue the legislative momentum that had built before the pandemic diverted everyone's attention. Still, the pandemic highlighted the need for more resilient emergency services arrangements, which is exactly what the continuing interest in improving local recruitment and retention efforts is intended to address. If you have suggestions for improving local recruitment and retention efforts, please email [TEMA@PSATS.org](mailto:TEMA@PSATS.org).

#### **ALERT! Application Period Extended for FY 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program**

FEMA has been working with the U.S. General Services Administration to resolve interface issues related to SAM.gov that affected some applicants' ability to input their federal fiscal year 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program applications into the FEMA GO System. **As this issue is ongoing, the FY 2021 AFG Program application period will remain open until 5 p.m. January 21, 2022.** All applicants will automatically be granted this extension. This ensures that applicants affected by the UEI/EFT issue will have sufficient time to complete the online application.

The extension will not affect the award timeline. Meanwhile, FEMA continues to strongly encourage applicants to review the FY 2021 AFG Program Notice of Funding Opportunity and the associated tools posted on the FEMA website at [FY 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant \(AFG\) Application Guidance Materials | FEMA.gov](#). In preparation for application submission, applicants

may also draft their narratives separately and cut and paste them into the appropriate areas of FEMA GO once the SAM.gov interface issue is resolved. The questions that are asked in the narrative section may be found in the [FY 2021 AFG Program Narrative Get Ready Guide](#).

### **Reminder: 2022 Spring Emergency Management Forum**

PSATS will once again hold its annual Spring Emergency Management Forum on Sunday, April 24, at the Hershey Lodge. To register for this event, click [HERE](#).

### **A Note from James Wheeler**

Just a small reminder to keep up the good work. I saw a T-shirt the other day that I thought would be appropriate for this group during this period of confusion and disruption: "Keep Calm and Call the Emergency Manager." What you do matters, make no mistake. While we can't count the lives saved or the amount of destruction that was prevented due to our collective actions in service to a safer community, know that these actions do save lives and avert a worse disaster. As you gather with loved ones and friends this holiday season, you will be looking at the faces of those who depend on us getting our emergency preparedness right. Enjoy their company, for they are why we do what we do. Happy New Year to all!

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## **Legislative Report**

Following is an updated 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.

### **Require Senate confirmation of PEMA director**

[SB 461/PN 469](#)

#### **Major provision:**

- Would require that all future directors of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency be approved by a majority of the members elected to the Senate.

**Status:** Passed the Senate and is before the House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee.

### **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:** Passed the Senate and is before the House Judiciary Committee.

### **Increase Medicaid reimbursement rate**

[SB 526/PN 600](#)

#### **Major provision:**

- Would require that the state Department of Human Services submit a request to the federal government for approval of necessary amendments to the Title XIX State Plan for the purpose of increasing the rate of Medicaid reimbursement to emergency medical services agencies in the transportation of Medicaid recipients.

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

### **Public safety authorities**

[SB 698/PN 782](#)

#### **Major provisions:**

- Would authorize counties to create a public safety authority and set fees for the administration of fire and emergency medical services.
- Would allow a municipality to contract with a public safety authority for EMS and fire service or support.
- Would authorize the county 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.

### **Tuition assistance for active volunteers** [HB 612/PN 574](#)

#### **Major provision:**

- Would establish the Active Volunteer Tuition Assistance Program in PEMA to provide tuition assistance to active volunteers with volunteer organizations who are students at approved institutions of higher learning.

**Status:** Before the House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee.

### **Property tax relief for volunteer firefighters**

[HB 1990/PN 2294](#)

#### **Major provision:**

- Would provide property tax relief payment to a local school district, municipality, county or other tax jurisdiction towards the property tax bill of a of volunteer firefighter.

**Status:** Before the House Finance 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 as detailed below. If you are interested in sharing your expertise for an in-person or virtual presentation on any topic of interest to our audience, please contact Education Director Scott Coburn at [scoburn@psats.org](mailto:scoburn@psats.org).

### **PowerPass-Eligible Webinars**

#### **[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. This webinar will help you understand township public works infrastructure, operations, and management so that you can better respond to residents and lead your community.

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## TEMA Q&A

**Q: Is there anything new from the federal government about how we can use or report our ARP funds?**

**A:** A little.... The U.S. Treasury just released information about its New Portal and User's Guide for ARP reports. Township officials should look for an email from the U.S. Treasury that describes how to access the Treasury Portal through [Login.gov](#), which townships with populations of less than 50,000, known as non-entitlement units (NEUs), will use to file required reports for the American Rescue Plan funds. The first report is due April 30, 2022. However, nothing new has been released regarding allowable use of such funds or compliance reporting. A summary of the current status of using funds can be found [HERE](#).

**Q: May EMCs use the PSATS Webinar PowerPass to view webinars?**

**A:** Yes, EMCs may use the PSATS Webinar PowerPass for all webinars if their township purchased the PowerPass. This exclusive service will give township supervisors or employees access to all available webinars in 2022 for a one-time fee. To purchase a PowerPass, click [HERE](#).

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This monthly newsletter for members of the Township Emergency Management Association focuses on news and matters of interest to municipal emergency management personnel and provides details on upcoming training opportunities. To access previous editions, log onto [www.psats.org](#) and look under the "Newsroom" tab. Email comments and suggestions to TEMA Coordinator James Wheeler at [jwheeler@psats.org](mailto:jwheeler@psats.org).



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