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## Newsletter of the Township Emergency Management Association

March 2022

### Latest News

#### **Reminder: Register for the PSATS 2022 Conference**

All TEMA members and other EMCs should have received registration materials for the upcoming PSATS 2022 Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show, April 24-27, 2022, in Hershey. For all the details about the conference and to register, click [HERE](#).

#### **'Get Ready' at the 2022 Spring Emergency Management Forum**

Newly elected supervisors who are responsible for their township's emergency management program and newly appointed emergency management coordinators (EMCs) are encouraged to attend the upcoming PSATS Spring Emergency Management Forum on Sunday, April 24, at the Hershey Lodge.

Click [HERE](#) to register for this event and join other EMCs from around the state as you hear from PEMA Director Randy Padfield and other leading voices in the local emergency management field about how to continually prepare your township for future emergencies.

#### **DCNR Accepting Applications for Grants to Fight Wildfires**

The state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is accepting applications to help rural communities increase protection from wildfires. Funded through federal grants, this money helps fire companies in rural areas or communities with fewer than 10,000 residents with training and equipment purchases directly related to fighting forest and brush fires. Grant applications must be submitted electronically by **May 12**.

Priority will be placed on projects that include wildfire suppression equipment and protective clothing. Grants may also be used for purchasing mobile or portable radios, installing dry hydrants, wildfire prevention and mitigation work, training wildfire fighters, or converting and maintaining federal excess vehicles. Grants are on a cost-share basis and cannot exceed 50% of actual expenditures. The maximum grant is \$12,500. Click [here](#) for more information.

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### Legislative Report

#### **New Funding for EMS Act Signed**

Gov. Tom Wolf recently signed [SB 739 / PN 1378](#) into law as Act 10 of 2022 which:

- redefines “fire company” for the purposes of being eligible for the state’s Fire and Emergency Medical Services Loan Program by deleting the reference to it solely being “a volunteer fire company” and replacing it with “a volunteer nonprofit chartered fire company or municipal-owned fire company or department” and
- establishes the Emergency Medical Services COVID-19 Recovery Grant Program, which would be administered by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner in consultation with the state Department of Health. The program would provide grants to EMS companies to provide services in response to the pandemic. Twenty-five million dollars in federal COVID-19 funds would be appropriated to fund the program. The program would expire June 30, 2022.

**Status:** Signed by the Governor as Act 10 of 2022.

### **Fire Department Reimbursements**

[SB 1044 / PN 1382](#) would require that any person involved in an emergency that necessitates an official dispatch of a fire company shall be liable for the actual and reasonable response costs incurred by the fire company for services by requiring that the insurer shall be responsible for reimbursing a fire company for actual and reasonable response costs.

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

### **Clarifying Remote Meeting Exception Applies to Boards and Commissions**

[HB 79 / PN 54](#) would amend Title 35, Chapter 7501(d) to extend the exception to have a quorum physically present at any one location to conduct business if a quorum is otherwise established by the participating members through an authorized telecommunications device to any board or commission of a political subdivision such as may be needed to declare a local emergency.

**Status:** Before the House Local Government Committee.

### **Medals of Commendation for Law Enforcement, Fire, and EMS**

[SB 160 / PN 2138](#) would amend Title 53 (*Municipalities Generally*) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to provide medals honoring emergency medical services personnel.

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

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## **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).

#### **Virtual Classes**

##### [Demystifying Grant Seeking: Tools & Tips for Success - Virtual Class - 3/10/22](#)

Join Chad Barger, CFRE, for a session focused on seeking grant support for township projects and programs. The session begins with an overview of the role of grant funding in an organization and the prerequisites for seeking grant support. Chad will then provide insight on how to identify grant opportunities, tips for writing a successful grant application and tools for managing the grant seeking process.

##### [Newsletter Best Practices: Keeping Residents Updated Via Email & Postal Mail - Virtual Class - 4/7/22](#)

Join Chad Barger, CFRE, for a workshop focused on reporting township news and community information to residents and other stakeholder groups. The session will examine how print/mailed communications work in tandem with email to ensure that residents and others remain informed and engaged. It will also look at systems to simplify the development of these vital communication tools.

[Overcoming The Barriers To Volunteer Fire Company Fundraising Success - Virtual Class - 5/17/22](#)

Join fundraising master trainer, Chad Barger, CFRE, for a workshop focused on actionable solutions to common fundraising problems. Chad will reveal the most common barriers to effective fundraising at community-based volunteer fire departments and provide tips for overcoming them. Attendees will also be given free access to document samples and templates that will help to fast-track the implementation of these solutions. Ample time will be reserved for questions so that attendees can also pick Chad's brain for solutions to their "not-so-common" fundraising challenges.

**PowerPass-Eligible Webinars**

[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: We have several retired residents who will be receiving Individual Assistance (IA) payments from FEMA as a result of damage from a recent storm. Will accepting IA payments affect their Social Security payments?**

**A.** No, accepting a FEMA grant will not affect their Social Security benefits, Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or other federal welfare, social safety nets, and entitlement programs. These federal disaster grants help pay for temporary housing, essential home repairs, personal property replacement, and other serious disaster-related needs not covered by insurance or other sources. FEMA disaster assistance is not taxable income.

**Q: Can FEMA audit anyone who receives Individual Assistance (IA) payments?**

**A.** Yes. FEMA may audit those who receive IA payments to confirm that such grants were properly spent for basic home repairs, replacing essential household items or paying for somewhere to stay if they cannot return home. FEMA sends letters that detail approved uses for grants, including:

- repairs to make a home safe, sanitary, and livable;
- rental assistance to temporarily pay for a place to stay;
- repair or replacement of a disaster-damaged essential vehicle;
- medical care for an injury caused by the disaster; and
- replacing clothing, occupational tools, and educational materials
- moving and storage expenses related to the disaster.

Disaster grants should not be used for travel, entertainment, regular living expenses, or any discretionary expenses not related to the disaster. Survivors should keep receipts for three years to show how they spent FEMA grants and document how disaster funds were used.

Further, federal law prohibits duplicating assistance from other sources, such as insurance. If

grant money is not used as described above, the recipients may have to repay FEMA and they could lose eligibility for further federal assistance that could become available.

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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](http://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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**Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors**

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