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## Newsletter of the Township Emergency Management Association

July 2022

### Latest News

#### **Are You Ready for Summer Blackouts and Other Emergencies?**

Register your emergency management team so that together you can attend the upcoming **TEMA Fall Tabletop Exercise (TTX) Forum** nearest you. Click on the appropriate link below to register and have your team join us for dynamic and interactive discussions designed to help improve your emergency preparedness capabilities.

- [Sept. 15: TEMA TTX West - Westmoreland County](#)
- [Sept. 29: TEMA TTX Central - Cumberland County](#)
- [Oct. 13: TEMA TTX East - Montgomery County](#)

These upcoming TEMA TTXs will cover a wide range of "What would/should you do?" scenarios that will help you assess your organization's and residents' level of preparedness. The activities are intended to be low-stress conversation starters to prompt discussions at your meeting table. Disasters and incidents are always around the corner. Having your emergency management team attend a TEMA TTX will help you better prepare for the next disaster that comes your way.

#### **Census Bureau Shows Increases in Township Population**

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released the 2021 estimates of the total population at the municipal level. Population estimates are calculated using administrative records to estimate total population as of July 1, 2021. Urban centers like New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia are losing population dramatically as people resettle in more affordable and safer communities. [Click here](#) to see the map.

A total of 702 municipalities in Pennsylvania saw an increase in population between 2020 and July 1, 2021. One hundred eleven municipalities did not see a population change while 1,759 municipalities declined in population. East Whiteland Township in Chester County had the greatest numeric increase at 866 people, and Philadelphia had the greatest population decrease at 27,546. Township emergency management coordinators should evaluate potential changes to your emergency preparedness plans in light of any increase in your township's population.

#### **Reminder: Federal Flood Mitigation Funding Available**

Pennsylvania will receive \$5 million through the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to support implementation of mitigation actions that will protect against future damage from natural disasters. Properties covered by a National Flood Insurance Program policy that have sustained

repetitive losses due to flooding are eligible for the new Swift Current initiative. For more information, [click here](#).

Applications must be submitted by noon, October 3, 2022, using the [Mitigation eGrants Management System](#). Interested applicants are encouraged to contact Tom Hughes, the state hazard mitigation officer, at (717) 651-2726 or [thughes@pa.gov](mailto:thughes@pa.gov).

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## Legislative Report

*The following is a summary of legislation affecting townships that has recently been considered by the General Assembly.*

*The following bills have passed the General Assembly and will now go to the governor:*

[SB 861](#) would **authorize Pennsylvania to join the EMS Compact** and make it easier for EMS personnel to move across state boundaries in performing their duties.

[HB 1598](#) would amend the **Flood Plain Management Act to transfer administration and oversight of the program** from the state Department of Community and Economic Development to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. This includes review and approval of municipal flood plain management ordinances. This bill would complete the transfer of responsibilities to PEMA that was incorporated into the Administrative Code in 2021. HB 1598 now goes to the governor.

[HB 2097](#) would set the minimum staffing for a Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance in a county of county of the fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth class as an **emergency medical service (EMS) vehicle operator and an EMS operator** that is an emergency medical technician (EMT) or above.

[HB 2157](#) would reform the Fireworks Law to **allow municipalities to enact conditions and limitations on the use and sale of consumer fireworks** that do not conflict with state law. Specifically, municipalities could require permits for the use of consumer fireworks, except for certain holidays, and prohibit the use of consumer fireworks within a community if it is not possible to use these devices without being within 150 feet of a building or vehicle. The bill would address PSATS resolutions.

*The following bills recently saw action in the General Assembly:*

[SB 1265](#) would require the State Fire Commissioner to **facilitate online access to all available fire and emergency services training courses**. The bill would require the State Fire Commissioner to ensure that the online training allow for completion transcripts and printable certificates for online courses and restrict fees to no more than \$1 per course, to be used for administrative purposes. This bill is before the Senate Appropriations Committee.

[HB 2268](#) would **allow a 17-year-old to train using an interior firefighting module with live burns** if they have permission from a fire chief and a parent or guardian. The minor would be required to be under the supervision of a credentialed Pennsylvania State Fire Academy Instructor. HB 2268 passed the House and is before the Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

The following package of bills is supported by PSATS to help townships and other municipalities better address recurring and emergency flooding situations. All these bills have passed the House and are before the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. We encourage townships to contact their state senators to keep them moving toward final passage:

[HB 2404](#) would allow municipalities to apply for continuous maintenance permits for streams in their jurisdiction for at least 10 years.

[HB 2405](#) would create county programs to remove obstructions and address flood-related hazards in streams through emergency maintenance permits in consultation with their county conservation district.

[HB 2406](#) would create a small stream maintenance project permit for the mitigation of flood-related hazards of less than 250 linear feet or an area of less than one acre in size, reviewed and issued by county conservation districts.

[HB 2407](#) would clarify that the Pa. Fish and Boat Commission has no authority for permitting or enforcement related to stream clearing or maintenance activities.

[HB 2408](#) would eliminate the requirement for a permit when conducting maintenance activities on a culvert.

[HB 2409](#) would eliminate the requirement for a permit to remove flood-related hazards from streams that are deemed to be an emergency by a state or county.

[HB 2410](#) would clarify that permits are not required for stream maintenance activities conducted within 50 feet upstream or downstream of a bridge or culvert.

[HB 2411](#) would require the state Department of Environmental Protection to provide an annual report on flooding and stream maintenance restoration in Pennsylvania.

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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).

### In-person Classes

#### NEW! Stormwater 101 Classes Announced

This half-day, in-person, introductory class will educate newly elected or appointed supervisors or employees on the basics of municipal stormwater management, including the effects of stormwater runoff, the impacts of new development and redevelopment on stormwater, and best practices for managing stormwater efficiently without breaking the budget. This course is intended as a primer for elected officials, managers, secretaries, and others looking to gain a fundamental understanding of stormwater management. To register, click on the link to your preferred date below:

- [July 21 @ Cumberland County \(9-11:30 a.m.\)](#)
- [July 29 @ Crawford County \(9-11:30 a.m.\)](#)
- [August 4 @ Montgomery County \(1-3:30 p.m.\)](#)
- [August 12 @ Clearfield County \(9-11:30 a.m.\)](#)
- [August 19 @ Lackawanna County \(9-11:30 a.m.\)](#)

#### Flagger Training

PSATS is offering in-person, instructor-led flagger training for individuals who have flagging responsibilities on public roads. Others who would benefit from this course include (*especially*

*during an emergency*) township road crews and public works departments, utility companies working on low-volume roads, local law enforcement personnel, tow-truck drivers, and township managers and elected officials (*to understand the importance, and for budgeting purposes*). This course meets the PennDOT Publication 408 flagger training requirements. Click on “Flagger Training” above to see the current list of classes.

## **PSATS PowerPass-Eligible Webinars**

### **[Webinar - Backyard Stream Repair - 7/28/22](#)**

This webinar will describe how townships and residents can use native vegetation to protect and restore streambanks that suffer from mild to moderate bank erosion. Topics will include how streambank erosion starts, how to identify suitable restoration sites, and how to select, install, and maintain vegetation.

### **[Webinar - FEMA Grant Funding Opportunities - 8/3/22](#)**

Tom Hughes, PEMA's State Hazard Mitigation Officer, will discuss numerous funding opportunities through FEMA, including the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, which helps with hazard mitigation projects. He will also address grants available through the Flood Mitigation Assistance program, which can be used for projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program.

### **[Webinar - Making Intermunicipal Stormwater Management Work For You - 8/25/22](#)**

Municipal stormwater regulations can put pressure on limited administrative and financial resources. This webinar will provide an overview of intermunicipal collaborative arrangements that have been used in Pennsylvania and have yielded efficiencies and cost savings. Pros and cons of each will be discussed in terms of initial investment, cost of compliance, co-benefits, and suitability for different situations.

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## **TEMA Q&A**

**Q: I heard that PEMA is beginning to update the state's Hazard Mitigation Plan. What is this plan for, and how can we submit suggestions?**

**A:** The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is updating its [2018 State Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), which is required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be done every five years. Each state is required to have a hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for certain types of federal mitigation funding.

The State Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed to:

- Identify hazards present in the commonwealth.
- Determine the areas impacted by identified hazards that affect the lives and property of Pennsylvania citizens.
- Assess what has been and should be done to reduce or eliminate the impact of identified hazards on Pennsylvania citizens.
- Develop and implement a hazard mitigation action plan to make Pennsylvania citizens safer in the future.
- Qualify for pre- and post-disaster grant funding.
- Comply with state and federal legislative requirements related to state hazard mitigation planning.
- Demonstrate a firm commitment to hazard mitigation principles and building capacity to improve and complete more mitigation projects.
- Foster collaboration and cooperation through a robust and ongoing planning process.
- Improve community resiliency following a disaster event.

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) has been legislatively charged with coordinating updates to the State Hazard Mitigation Plan. PEMA's Hazard Mitigation State Planning Team, which includes state and local government leaders and other organizations, is in the process of updating the plan, and wants to hear from you. If you are interested in providing comments and suggestions for this plan, please complete a short survey [HERE](#). If you have other specific questions or comments about this process, please email [PAHMP2023@mbakerintl.com](mailto:PAHMP2023@mbakerintl.com).

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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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