

**Windham Region Emergency Management Committee**  
**Informational Session Agenda**  
**February 20<sup>th</sup> at 6pm via Zoom**

**Guest Speakers:**

- Julie Benedict, State Exercise Administrator, Vermont Emergency Management

Attendees: Paul Fraser - Jamaica; Greg Lakis – Jamaica EMD; Eric Stevens – Grafton Dep. EMD; Sherwood Lake – Townshend EMD; Gig Zboray – Whitingham EMD; Pam Corbett – VDH; Steve Lembke – WRC EM Committee Chair; Taiga Christie – VEM Southern Reg Coordinator; Alyssa Sabetto, WRC Senior Planner and REMC Staff

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and group introductions
2. Call for any business items to add to the agenda
3. **After-Action with Julie Benedict** regarding the July/August 2023 Severe Weather Incident.  
Review of town feedback from the survey about the SEOC.

Areas of improvement that the SEOC received local feedback on:

1. Some communications from the State were slow-example debris
2. Towns were not aware that some resources were billable.
3. Better use of mutual aid groups formed in towns across Vermont
4. Seems to be a disconnect between EMDs and their local schools in some areas
5. Coordination between USACE to support EMDs with response-especially for dam safety-Ball dam for example
6. Some jurisdictions reported calling the SEOC asking for support but did not hear back
7. Recovery Transition - towns and cities needed the SEOC to transition to recovery much earlier than it did
8. SEOC should have a VTAC/UTAC Channel that is constantly monitored that towns can use to communicate with the state if their communications go down
9. A ticket was closed out, but no action was taken. Town didn't hear back and when they called back weeks later, they were told the ticket was closed
10. Concern about miscommunication about fixing roads - town was told to only rough in road, they did that, and then were told they could have made full repairs instead
11. Concerns about having so many different FEMA people involved in the town for different specialized areas. Town noted they met with a bunch of different people, none of them seemed to be talking, so they had the same meeting over and over
12. Local resident suggestion to have alarms associated with river levels
13. We need to find a source for generator grants (purchasing, installing, and/or elevating) and all band radios for communities. Suggestion that we lobby the legislature to find these funds.
14. Suggestion that satellite phones be strategically placed throughout the state in locations that are typically "islands" during disasters.
15. Would prefer 2-1-1 data nightly to be used effectively used

Going forward, the state is requesting towns report local road closures on Waze. The SEOC is not collecting local road closures as they can't keep the data updated quickly enough. This is the link to the municipal Waze account where locals can update local road closures:

<https://www.waze.com/partnerhub/user-lobby/lobby?redirect=%252Fpartnerhub%252F>

#### 4. Total Eclipse Discussion

April 8<sup>th</sup> will be a total eclipse in the northern part of the state. While we are not in the path of totality, you should be aware of the event and consider any preparations for your town. Vermont League of Cities and Towns is hosting discussions every two weeks from now until April 4<sup>th</sup> so that towns can learn and share about community-level plans as well as what the state has planned. You do have to register to attend the bi-weekly events.

Information and FAQ is here: <https://www.vlct.org/resource/eclipse-planning-check-recordings-and-resources>

#### 5. Updates

- Taiga
  - Update from Vermont Emergency Management
    1. The next VEM conference will be Sept 10-11 at Lake Morrey Resort.
    2. LEMPs will be reviewed as quickly as possible.
  - Review of the new comprehensive large event planning LEMP annex resource: <https://vem.vermont.gov/document/large-event-planning-annex>  
This is meant to help towns and event organizers to consider preparations and pre-planning for emergency response needs of the event.
- Alyssa
  - Vulnerable Population Phone Tree tool removed in favor of CARE promotion. Email sent about that.
  - LEMP update season approaching
    1. 2 virtual LEMP/WebEOC info sessions scheduled:
      - a. March 21<sup>st</sup> at 2:30-3:30
      - b. April 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:30-12:30
  - Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan proposal discussed. Group consensus was that it makes sense and should be pursued.

#### 6. Reminders and other items:

- The latest Vermont Emergency Management newsletter: <https://vem.vermont.gov/contact-us/newsletter>

7. Our next REMC informational session will be a tour of the Ball Mountain and Townshend Dams on May 8<sup>th</sup>. Registration is required as space is limited.

8. Thank you for attending!