



2023

YEAR IN REVIEW



POLK COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

55 Clines Ingram Jackson Road
Cedartown, GA. 30125
(770) 748-3439
ema@polkga.org

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Message from the Director

I am pleased to share with you our year-end summary of the accomplishments and activities of the Polk County Emergency Management Agency. As with any Emergency Management Agency an emergency operations center is critical for a coordinated response during times of large emergencies or disasters. Our Emergency Operations Center received a much need renovation. As you know, the Emergency Operations Center is the hub for multi-jurisdiction and multi-agency response coordination. This much needed update will allow us to more effectively respond to large emergencies and or disasters which will benefit the citizens of Polk County.

We have enjoyed many successes due to strong partnerships and active collaboration with our local, state, federal and volunteer partners. It is indeed my pleasure and honor to serve as the Director of the Polk County Emergency Management Agency. The successes in this report are due to the commitment of the entire team of dedicated, highly professional public safety responders within Polk County.

Bobby Dockery
EMA Director

Statistics and Highlights

Training and Exercises

Each employee of Polk County Emergency Management is required to obtain a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education annually in order to maintain certification as an Emergency Manager with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency. This year personnel of Polk County Emergency Management received a combined 317 hours of continuing education. This includes topics of terrorism, hazardous materials, emergency planning, incident management, response to various emergencies, etc.

Each fiscal year Polk County EMA is required to participate in three exercises annually in order to maintain compliance with State Law, and the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Polk County Emergency Management participated in four exercises this year.

1. Full Scale Active Shooter Exercise

Two armed assailants open fire at Cedartown High School during class change. Polk County EMA simulated a activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) following established guidelines and the Cedartown High School Safety Plan.

2. GEO Chemicals Table Top Exercise - Cedartown Fire

This exercise was developed to test various capabilities and knowledge of Cedartown Fire personnel regarding the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) for GEO Specialty Chemicals. The Scenario was Polk County 911 receives call regarding a HazMat event that occurred at GEO Specialty Chemicals. The cause of the leak was an intermodal tank falling off the trailer. The material that is leaking is UN Number 2304 (Naphthalene, molten). In the scenario one injury was caused due to the event.

3. Polk School District Intruder Drill

Polk County EMA participated in the state mandated intruder drill for Polk School District by simulating the activation of the Emergency Operations Center.

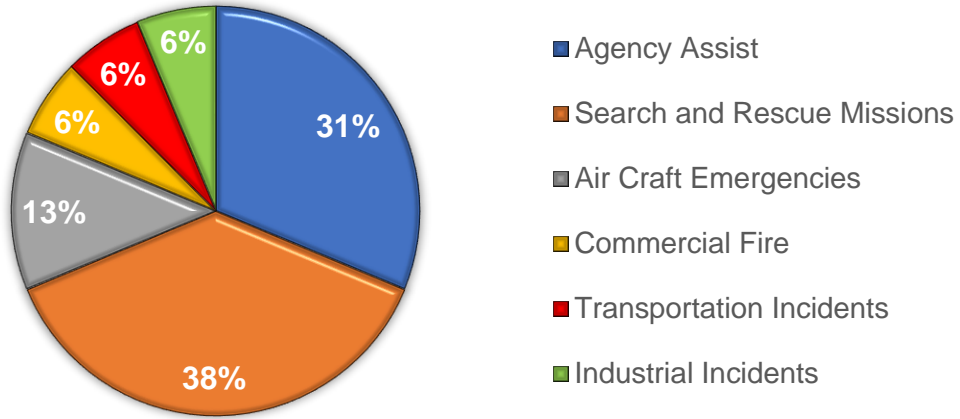
4. October 2023 LEPC Table Top Exercise

This exercise was a table top exercise designed to test operational coordination, communications, fire management and suppression, and environmental response/health and safety capabilities. This table top was designed to work our way up to a full scale exercise that will be held in the Spring of 2024.

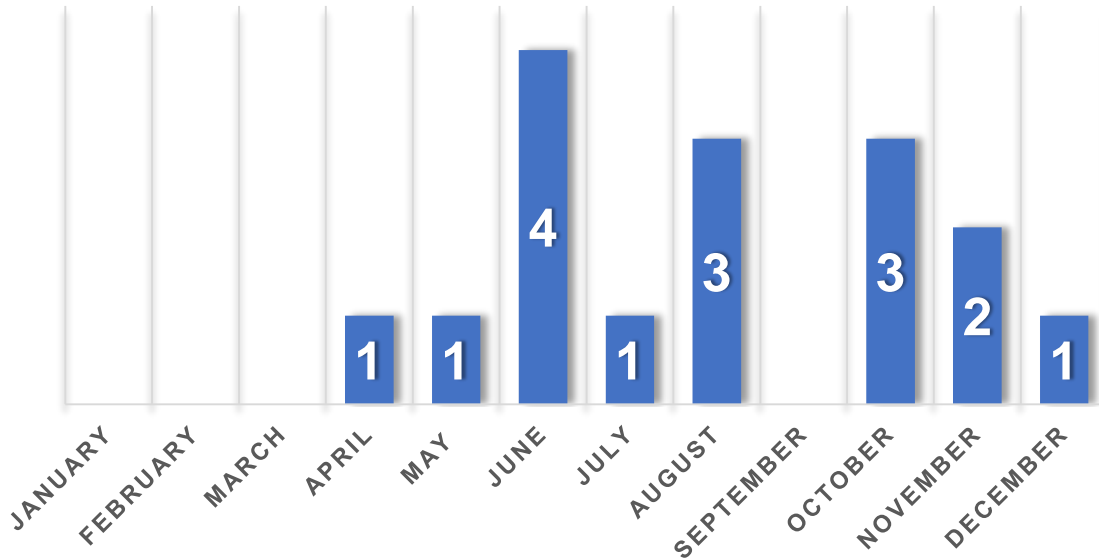
Incident Response

In 2023, Polk County Emergency Management responded to 16 incidents including agency assist, search and rescue missions, reported aircraft emergencies, industrial incidents, reported aircraft emergencies, industrial incidents.

INCIDENT RESPONSE BY TYPE



INCIDENT RESPONSES BY MONTH



Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Activations

The Emergency Operations Center was activated three times throughout the year in 2023. All activations were a Level 2 (Partial Activation) in support of Severe Weather Operations.

Polk County Board of Commissioners (BOC) Safety Program

EMA is also tasked with the Polk County Safety Program. The Director serves as the point of contact for ACCG. We are proud to report that training and inspections are on track, and we had a successful audit by ACCG in the fall of 2023. Additionally, EMA staff created a webpage for the County Safety Program. This site provides employees with training, videos and PowerPoints to use for training. Also located on the site are the inspections forms, training forms and the County Safety Plan.

At the request of the County Manager, EMA staff in coordination with Human Resources have presented an addendum draft called the Safety Review Board for approval. It is proposed that the Safety Review Board will provide an opinion as to the preventability or non-preventability of all losses involving County vehicles, equipment, property or injuries to employees, and/or the public and then make recommendations to the County Manager.

Polk County P25 Radio System

Since tasked as the P25 System Administrator in October of 2022 both employees of EMA have taken the required training to qualify to program radios through Motorola. We developed an online work order system for all customers. This includes everything from repair to ordering new equipment.

We personally spot check each tower site quarterly for any issues. Two issues were reported this year, the first was a propane leak on the tank at Esom Hill Site. This leak was repaired and paid for by Motorola. The second issue was at the Taylorsville Site. At this site a large 2' by 4' bee hive was found. The hive had been built around the wiring leading to the antenna. Public Works sent staff and removed the hive. Landscaping inside the fence is now on the rotation for Public Works. They maintain inside the fence by applying a herbicide so no vegetative growth inside the fence at all tower sites.

We processed over 200 trouble tickets from Motorola regarding Tower Site issues. Received and responded to 63 work orders placed in the online work order system.

For the calendar year 2023 the Board approved the purchase of Radio Management. Radio Management is required by Motorola so that programming and updating of firmware can be done locally. Radio Management was installed by Motorola the first week of September 2023. EMA began the process of distributing the purchased county laptops for programming to larger departments, and provided training on how to conduct the process. For smaller departments EMA took on the responsibility of radio maintenance. Those departments are Public Works, Animal Control, Code Enforcement, and County Admin. EMA supports all Polk County P25 Radio users as requested. Currently the Polk County Fleet is estimated at 800 plus radios.

We meet every two weeks via conference call with Cobb Radio/Motorola to discuss any ongoing issues.

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

The Local Emergency Planning Committee met four times this year to discuss planning for responses to facilities required to report Hazardous Materials under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). Topics went over at the meetings included a review of a response to over turned tractor trailer that was a potential Hazardous Materials Incident due to a liquid dye leaking out, a table top exercise, and presentations by the Georgia Department of Natural Resource – Environmental Protection Division (DNR-EPD).

2023 Legislative Updates

This year the General Assembly of Georgia passed new laws concerning Emergency Management. These laws include the Safe Schools Act and House Bill 311 a law that allows local governments to provide temporary property tax relief in federally declared disaster areas.

House Bill 147 – Georgia Safe Schools Act

The Safe Schools Act, also known as HB 147, was signed into law in the state of Georgia. The act mandates emergency response training, including mandatory active shooter drills. This law also mandated that each school write and submit for approval a school safety plan. The local emergency management director, and the Georgia Emergency Management Agency is required to review and approve these plans. In addition, input from local response agencies must be given.

House Bill 311

This bill enables local governments to grant optional temporary property tax relief in federal disaster areas. Local emergency management personnel and county tax commissioners work to provide necessary information to the local governing authorities. This tax relief is only available to property destroyed or significantly damaged in a federally declared disaster area. This law gives the power to the local emergency management director to establish rules within their jurisdiction. Though it is law, the local governing authorities are not required to adopt a resolution to provide this temporary tax relief.

Community Outreach

A part of the disaster match program that Polk County EMA is a part of is community awareness and outreach. Polk County EMA publishes preparedness information regarding winter weather, severe weather awareness week, volunteer opportunities, holiday safety, etc.

In the year 2023, a total of 35,173 people were reached on Facebook, and a total of 4,413 people visited the Polk County EMA Facebook page.

Accomplishments

Fleet Upgrade

Polk County EMA was approved by the Board of Commissioners to purchase a new truck for response to incidents. A new Ford F150 was purchased. This truck came equipped with a 7,000 lbs. towing package, four wheel drive, a bed cover, etc.

This vehicle will be used for response to emergency scenes when they occur.



Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Upgrades

This year the Board of Commissioners approved up to \$60,000 in renovations to the Polk County Emergency Operations Center. The following was a part of the renovation:

1. New Paint and Carpet
2. Replaced ceiling tiles
3. Audio Visual System Upgrades
4. Six Conference Table
5. 54 Chairs
6. Four Work Stations
7. Command Station
8. Dry Erase Boards
9. Two 65" Flat Screen Smart TVs
10. 3 new Phones



Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

In 2023, the Board of Commissioners gave the blessing to Polk County EMA to form a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) which will augment emergency responder resources during time of disasters.



This program will be funded using various grants and donations. Four CERT Bags were donated by the Region C Healthcare Coalition with the Georgia Department of Public Health. Additionally, the CERT program received an impact grant totaling \$5,344.44 from Carroll EMC. These funds will be used to purchase various equipment needed for the members and the program.

The program is led by EMA Coordinator Landon Hendrix. Four members were selected after applications and interviews were completed. These members will begin training in early 2024. Members will be required to complete a 18 hour basic course required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as well as complete additional Incident Management Training.

Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD)

The Polk County COAD is a collaborative partnership between community stakeholders such as, voluntary, private, non-profit or faith-based organizations that assists in organizing community efforts to provide needed services to community members that arise as the result of a large emergency or disaster that may occur in Polk County. The goal of the Polk County COAD is to organize and deploy community resources already being offered in an efficient and timely manner during each phase of a large emergency or disaster. While assistance is often provided by our state and federal partners immediate assistance is best served by our own community. Many organizations that assist locally in Polk County during large emergencies and or disasters in coordination with the Polk County COAD and the Polk County Emergency Management Agency can get much needed services to the victims in a more timely and efficient manner based on the need.