



2021



ANNUAL REPORT

Hamilton County
Emergency Management
& Homeland Security Agency



OUR MISSION

PROVIDE EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION TO CREATE A CULTURE OF PREPAREDNESS THAT BUILDS AND SUSTAINS A DISASTER RESILIENT COMMUNITY IN HAMILTON COUNTY

OUR VISION

A SAFER FUTURE THROUGH EFFECTIVE WHOLE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EMERGENCY SERVICES, PRIVATE SECTOR, VOLUNTEER AGENCIES AND THE RESIDENTS OF HAMILTON COUNTY TO SAVE LIVES, PROTECT PROPERTY, AND REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF DISASTERS

OUR VALUES



COMMUNITY



LEADERSHIP



COLLABORATION



INTEGRITY



PROFESSIONALISM



EQUITY



INNOVATION

Table of Contents

Note from the Director	4
COVID-19	5
PPE by the Numbers	6
EMAP Accreditation	7
Duty Officers	8
Operations	9
Emergency Public Notification	9
Community Outreach	11
Training & Exercise.....	12
Planning.....	13
LEPC.....	14
Budgets and Grants	15
Staff	16
Executive Committee.....	17

Note from the Director

On behalf of Chairwoman Stephanie Summerow Dumas and myself, I am pleased to present the 2021 annual report from Hamilton County's Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency. This report is one of many efforts the agency is engaging in to ensure the residents of the county can know and understand the efforts the agency and Hamilton County are making to be prepared for disasters and large-scale emergencies that may impact the county.

Last year, 2021, was incredibly challenging for the county. The Covid-19 pandemic created, but did not stop, the agency's efforts to engage in comprehensive preparedness activities. The following report will outline many of our efforts and successes to address the pandemic and to ensure we continue to be prepared regardless of the challenges we face as an agency and community.

One of the greatest achievements the county attained was accreditation from the Emergency Management Accreditation Program. The standard is a voluntary, external assessment of a program's (the county) efforts to meet over 16 standards and 66 sub-standards to ensure a strong emergency management program. This accreditation will be active for five years and we anticipate reaccreditation in 2027. The year also held many other challenges and successes for our staff and community. Since April of 2020, the agency has distributed over 16 million pieces of Personal Protective Equipment to our communities and response partners. We responded to various threats from the weather to coordinate community preparedness and worked with our partners to ensure we were prepared to respond during our many community events held throughout the year.

Internally, we continued to bring on quality staff to support our mission and worked to ensure a strong Emergency Operations Center team to support community disaster response and recovery. Our planning section updated our Emergency Operations Plan, enhanced our Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government program, and has finalized a county coordinated plan to handle large scale debris issues that may happen after a large flood or wind event such as the tornado that impacted our fellow citizens in Kentucky this past December. Other highlights include our robust partner training program. The challenges of Covid-19 meant a hybrid of online and in person classes, however we trained over 1,000 partners through our emergency management and local emergency planning committee (LEPC). Finally, we worked aggressively to expand participation in the county's emergency notification program, Alert Hamilton County. These alerts are partnered with Smart911 and our outdoor warning sirens to create a comprehensive system to ensure our residents are prepared and warned should a natural or human caused event to threaten the county.

Our staff continues to work diligently to ensure that Hamilton County has a strong and robust emergency management system in 2022 and beyond. Our goal is to create a *Disaster Resilient and Resistant Community*. I hope that when you review this report, you take pride and can be assured that our agency and Hamilton County have been and will continue to work to ensure that the county is prepared and can respond effectively to minimize our hazards and support our quick and resilient recovery from the hazards and threats that face the county every day.

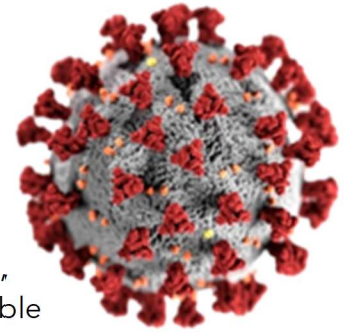
Respectfully,



Nick Crossley, CEM
Director



COVID-19



This past year the COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges, testing the preparedness efforts and response capabilities of this Agency and the County as a whole. Though certain regular day-to-day functions of the Agency were interrupted, including in-person trainings and community outreach events, staff remained adaptable taking on new duties to help support Hamilton County's COVID-19 response.

In the beginning of the pandemic the County, like the rest of the country, experienced a shortage of personal protective equipment (**PPE**). At the request of Hamilton County Public Health and in conjunction with the County Administration, the Agency began the management, acquisition, and distribution of PPE supplies. The warehouse continues to be operational and maintained by Agency staff, serving over 544 organizations in the County. When the COVID-19 vaccine became available early in the year, the County purchased two ultra-cold freezers and three walk in freezer/refrigerators to store vaccine in the warehouse. The Agency also coordinated Covid-19 response resource requests between our hospitals and 49 local jurisdictions and the State.

One of the major challenges this past year was maintaining situational awareness of quickly evolving COVID-19 information including prevention recommendations, case numbers, hospitalizations, and vaccine and testing distribution. The Agency participated in weekly meetings with Public Health and the County Commissioners to discuss the status of COVID-19 and coordinate County actions. Staff maintained situational awareness and published biweekly Situation Reports to keep partners apprised of COVID-19 developments at the local, state, and federal level. In total, 138 situation reports were sent out to representatives from Police, Fire, Chief Elected Officials, County Administrators, School Superintendents, Healthcare Partners, and state partners. In addition, agency staff assisted planning for an Alternate Care Site at the Duke Energy Center, mass casualty planning with local response organizations and mass fatality planning with the state of Ohio, SW Ohio Coroners and the Ohio Funeral Directors association.

Communicating with the public and helping to spread reliable and accurate COVID-19 messaging was one of the Agency's top priorities during the pandemic. The Agency utilized public notification system, Alert Hamilton County (AlertHC) throughout the year to send out 14 COVID-19 related alerts. These alerts included information for state-wide mitigation requirements, vaccine eligibility, and relief resources. Staff also attended weekly Communications meetings to coordinate unified public information via social media and Nextdoor.



! EMERGENCY ALERTS

Public Safety Alert

The CDC has declared Hamilton County an area of high spread of COVID-19. For information on testing, vaccines, rental, utility or small business assistance, visit <https://513relief.org> or call 2-1-1.

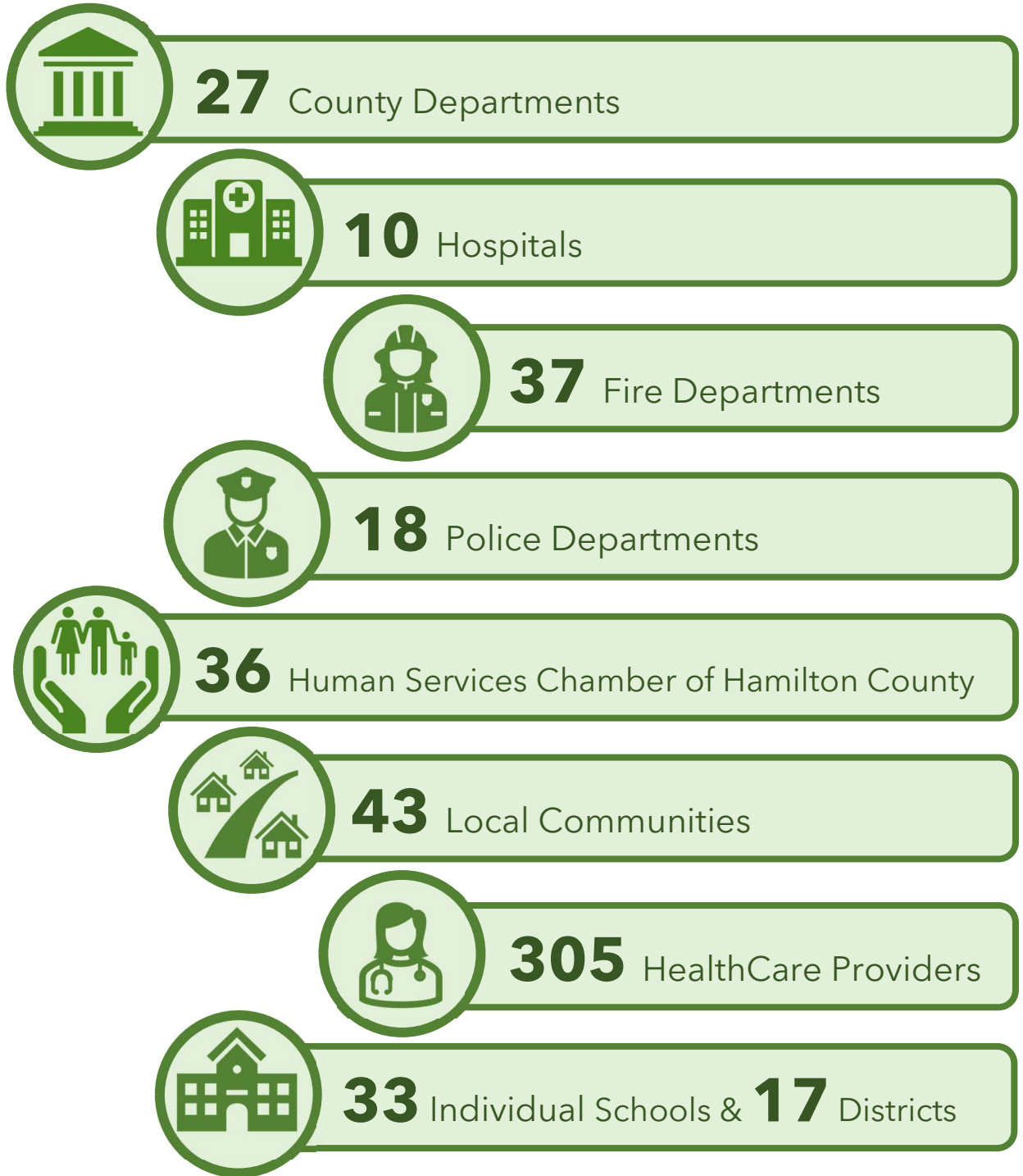
! ALERTAS DE EMERGENCIA

Alerta de seguridad pública

Los CDC han declarado el condado de Hamilton como una zona de mucho contagio de COVID-19. Para obtener detalles sobre testeos o vacunas, o sobre la ayuda para microempresas, alquileres o servicios del Estado, visite el siguiente enlace: <https://513relief.org> o llame al 2-1-1.

PPE BY THE NUMBERS

Since the start of COVID-19, the Agency provided PPE to:



PPE Distributed to Date:

18,788,832

Total Organizations Served:

544

EMAP Accreditation

In July, Hamilton County was awarded full accreditation by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). EMAP is the voluntary standards, assessment, and accreditation process for disaster preparedness programs throughout the country; it fosters excellence and accountability in emergency management and homeland security programs.

The accreditation process evaluates emergency management programs on compliance with requirements in sixteen areas including: hazard identification, mitigation, operational planning, resource management, communications & warning, training & exercises, emergency public information, and education.

EMAP accreditation was identified as one of the Agency's main goals in the 2016 - 2020 Strategic Plan and the road to accreditation has been over 5 years in the making.

Following a rigorous multi-week review where emergency management subject matter experts from across the country reviewed documentation and conducted interviews, Hamilton County was found to be 100% compliant with each of EMAP's 16 standards and 66 sub-standards.

Hamilton County is currently one of two counties in the state of Ohio and one of only 30 counties in the nation to receive EMAP accreditation.

"Accreditation is a significant achievement for Hamilton County, and it reflects the incredible support of the Board of County Commissioners, county administration and combined efforts of multiple partners who have supported this County's program in creating a prepared and disaster-resilient community," said Nick Crossley, Director.

The agency is expected to maintain compliance with the standards and keep proof of compliance up to date through submission of an annual report with the EMAP Commission. Accreditation is valid for five years, after which Hamilton County will be reassessed to maintain accredited status.



Duty Officers

Disasters can strike at any time of the year, day or night, with limited to no warning. To ensure Hamilton County EMHSA is always at the ready, the Agency maintains a continuous Duty Officer system, ensuring at least two Agency staff are on call 24/7/365. Duty Officers stay aware of inclement weather, large scale events, and any other situation or threat that could require assistance or coordination from the Agency.

Incidents of note in 2021....



Photo Credit: J. Scott Applewhite

February
Winter Storms



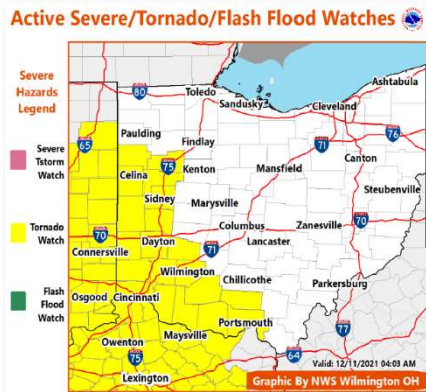
Photo Credit: J. Miles Wolf

September 2
Riverfest



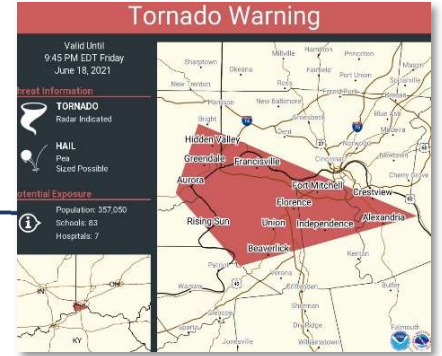
Photo Credit: Shae Combs

October 31
Flying Pig
Marathon



December 11
Severe Weather
Warning Room
Activation

August 2
Severe Weather
(Siren Activation)



September 16
Oktoberfest



Photo Credit: Oktoberfest Zinzinnati Facebook Page

November 12
USMNT vs.
Mexico World
Cup Qualifier

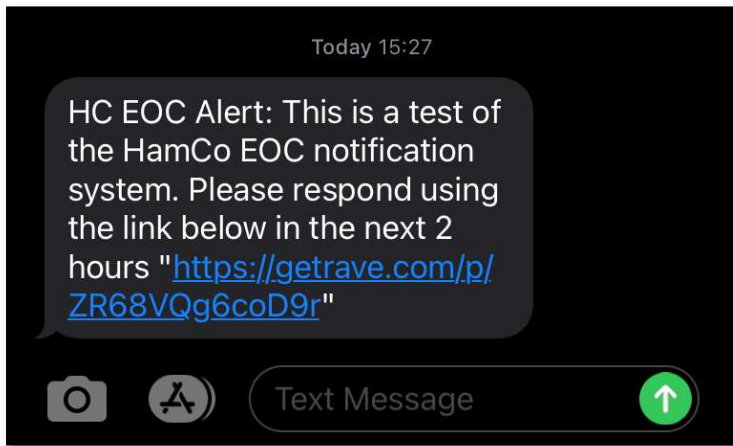


Photo Credit: Sam Greene

Operations

EOC Team

This year, the Agency focused on strengthening the Emergency Operations Center through procedural updates and consistent engagement with the EOC Team. 71 representatives from County and City departments, local jurisdictions, and external organizations were identified as part of the EOC Team and drilled monthly in 2021 to ensure all representatives would be prepared in the event they were asked to staff the EOC for a major disaster.



Alternate EOC

To increase resiliency the Agency enhanced the operational capabilities of the alternate EOC. In the event the EOC becomes inoperable, the alternate EOC has been designated to serve and function as the EOC. The Alternate EOC procedures were developed, and the site was routinely maintained and tested by staff throughout the year.



Emergency Public Notification

In 2021, the Agency helped coordinate the Public Information Officer Workgroup. The group, comprised of 37 Public Information Officers throughout the County, met quarterly this past year. Much of the focus of the group in 2021 was spent coordinating unified public COVID-19 messaging and developing strategies for battling COVID-19 messaging fatigue.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION & WARNING BY THE NUMBERS

30,220 Residents registered for Alert Hamilton County

43 Different Opt-In Alerts

268 Alerts Sent

190 Outdoor Warning Sirens



Alert Hamilton County

One of the **EASIEST** ways individuals can be better prepared for disasters is to have MULTIPLE ways to receive weather and emergency alerts. Alert Hamilton County (Alert HC) is a mass notification system designed to notify residents, visitors, and those who work in Hamilton County of emergency situations and other important information. The system is completely customizable, and users are able to choose what alerts they would like to receive and how they will receive them. Alert Hamilton County (Alert HC) can notify users via text message, and email, with phone call notification. In 2021, the Agency utilized AlertHC to send important COVID-19 info to the public.

Sign up for alerts at www.ALERTHC.org!

Alert Hamilton County is also paired with a system called "**Smart911**," which enables your important information to be shared with first responders during an emergency! With Smart911, both dispatchers and first responders can know exactly what you want them to know during any kind of emergency. You can add vital information, such as: information about members of your household, medical details, disabilities and equipment, address, and property details, as well as emergency contact information and communication preferences.



Smart911[™]

Community Outreach

National Preparedness Month & AlerthC Gift Card Give Away

National Preparedness Month is an observance each September to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies. This year for National Preparedness Month, our Agency developed a robust social media toolkit that was shared with our partners and promoted throughout the County. We also held a weekly Gift Card Giveaway to encourage residents to sign up for our emergency notification system. That month alone we had over **750** new residents register for AlerthC!



Community Outreach Specialist, Becca Doris presenting an Amazon gift card to the final winner of the AlerthC Giveaway.



Operations Manager, Morgan Peterson, conducting an interview with WLWT for Severe Weather Awareness Week.

Severe Weather Awareness Week

The statewide Severe Weather Awareness Week, a week dedicated to educating the public on how to prepare and respond to severe weather, was held March 21-27, 2021. Operations Manager, Morgan Peterson, did a special Severe Weather segment with WLWT discussing how to be better prepared for severe weather in high-rise buildings.

Public Engagement

Engaging with the public by educating residents on personal preparedness and registering them for Alert Hamilton County is one of the Agency's top priorities. Throughout the year, Hamilton County EMHSA went out into the community and attended various community outreach events including Touch-a-Truck events, National Night Out, and Safety Days, providing a great opportunity to support our jurisdictions and help build a more disaster-resilient community.



Commissioner Driehaus, Commissioner Reece, Director Crossley & Commissioner Summerow Dumas declare Severe Weather Awareness Week.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS

205,904 Residents on Nextdoor App

1,133,015 Nextdoor Impressions

6,940 Twitter Followers

934,455 Tweet Impressions

6,301 Facebook Followers

292,124 Facebook Reach

Training & Exercise

Exercise Highlight: EOC Functional Exercise

In September, EMHSA held a FEMA- evaluated functional exercise of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

43 representatives from **35** county and city departments, local jurisdictions, and external organizations participated in the 8 hour-long functional exercise, simulating a response to a series of tornados. The exercise was a great opportunity to improve partnerships and test the County's disaster communication and coordination procedures.



Training

EMHSA facilitates trainings from the Ohio EMA, the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC), as well as EMHSA-developed trainings for stakeholders of Hamilton County. Training provided by these entities are developed and taught by experts representing various disciplines and geographical areas across the country.

New trainings that began development in 2021 include:

- EOC 101- Introductory course on EOC operations
- EOC 201- Intermediate-level course focused on operation tailored to County EOC personnel
- EOC 301- Advanced-level course focused on Operations at County Command and General Staff level.



TRAININGS BY THE NUMBERS

12 Agency-facilitated courses

222 Students trained, with personnel from **19** states, **2** Tribal Nations, **1** US Territory, and **2** Foreign Nations.

809 Subscribers to Southwest Ohio Weekly Training Bulletin

58 Staff drills conducted

Planning

Local Emergency Operations (EOP) Planning

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is the principal guide for responding and recovering from emergencies and disasters. It is intended to facilitate multi-agency and jurisdictional coordination. To increase emergency preparedness in our County, a Local EOP Plan Template was developed to assist jurisdictions in writing their own EOP. Several jurisdictions have begun to use the template and been provided technical assistance and feedback by EMHSA staff.

Continuity of Operations (COOP) Planning

Continuity of Operations (COOP) is an effort within an organization to ensure that its essential functions continue to be performed during a wide range of emergencies until normal operations can be resumed. To support this important effort, Hamilton County EMHSA developed a COOP Template which will assist jurisdictions, departments, organizations, and business within the County in becoming more resilient and capable of sustaining essential services in an emergency.

Debris Management Plan

In 2021, the Agency began updating the Debris Management Plan. This plan will provide guidance on clearing and removing large amounts debris and coordinating the efforts of multiple County departments. Efficient debris management works to restore a sense of normalcy to a community that has experienced a disruption to their daily lives. By updating this plan, the County is better prepared to rapidly restore critical public transportation routes and services, thus ensuring the public's health and safety in the aftermath of a disaster.



Planning Highlight: Partners in Preparedness Meeting & Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP)

In September, EMHSA hosted its annual Partners in Preparedness meeting. **96 individuals** from **43 county departments, local jurisdictions, and external organizations** met to discuss the County's level of preparedness for disasters and large-scale emergencies and to foster positive working relationships. Participants were given both a Winter Storm and Human Violent Extremist (HVE) scenario to assist in evaluating their current capabilities, plans, resource gaps and future training & exercise needs. The discussions and findings from this meeting will be used in the development of the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP), a new and innovative living document that will capture the County's prioritized training and preparedness activities.

LEPC

The **Local Emergency Planning Committee** (LEPC) is the coordinated planning group comprised of individuals who have a knowledge and awareness of hazardous materials incident planning and response. The Hamilton County LEPC is funded by the State of Ohio LEPC Grant Program and has 55 members that met quarterly in 2021.

The LEPC's responsibilities include, supporting first responders with hazardous materials information and training, overseeing annual chemical reporting for regulated facilities, and maintaining records for all spills and releases of hazardous chemicals in Hamilton County.

Dearborn-Hamilton County HazMat Exercise

In October of 2021, the LEPC, in partnership with Harrison Fire Department, Dearborn County Emergency Management, Greater Cincinnati Hazardous Materials Unit, and Siemer Milling, conducted a functional hazardous materials exercise. This exercise simulated a large Chlorine leak at Siemer Milling and tested the skills of first responders and capabilities of the County to respond to a large hazardous materials incident.



Samuel Adams Brewery Company Exercise

In December 2021, the LEPC in partnership with Cincinnati Fire Department and Samuel Adams Brewery Company conducted a full-scale hazardous materials exercise, simulating a large anhydrous ammonia leak.



Commodity Flow Study

This past year, the LEPC conducted a **Commodity Flow Study**. This study, last done in 2013, examines the types and amounts of hazardous materials transported into, out of, within, and through Hamilton County. The study period was held from June 1, 2021 through November 30, 2021 and 80% of the cost was funded by the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant.



LEPC BY THE NUMBERS

646 Facilities submitted hazard chemical inventory reports

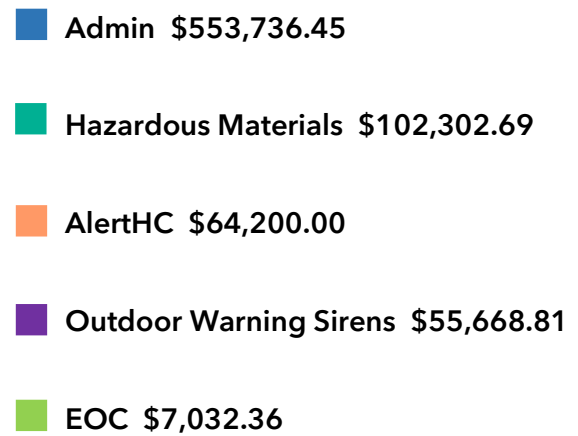
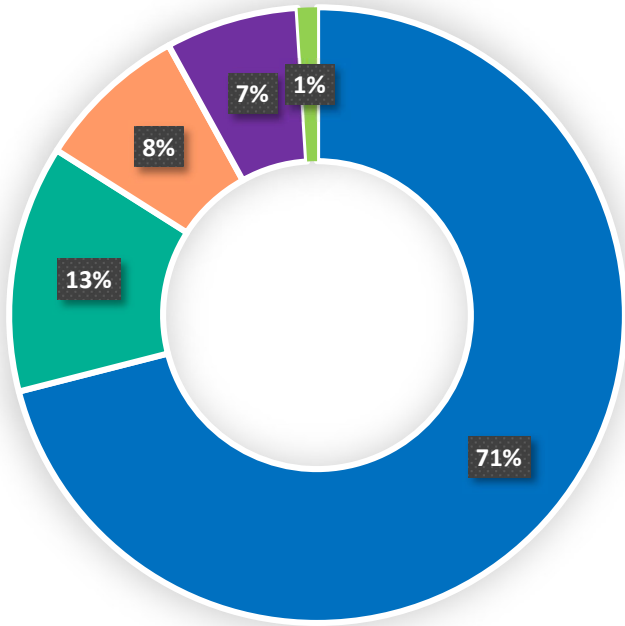
18 LEPC-sponsored training courses

359 Students trained

5 Exercises conducted

Budgets and Grants

2021 Budget Report

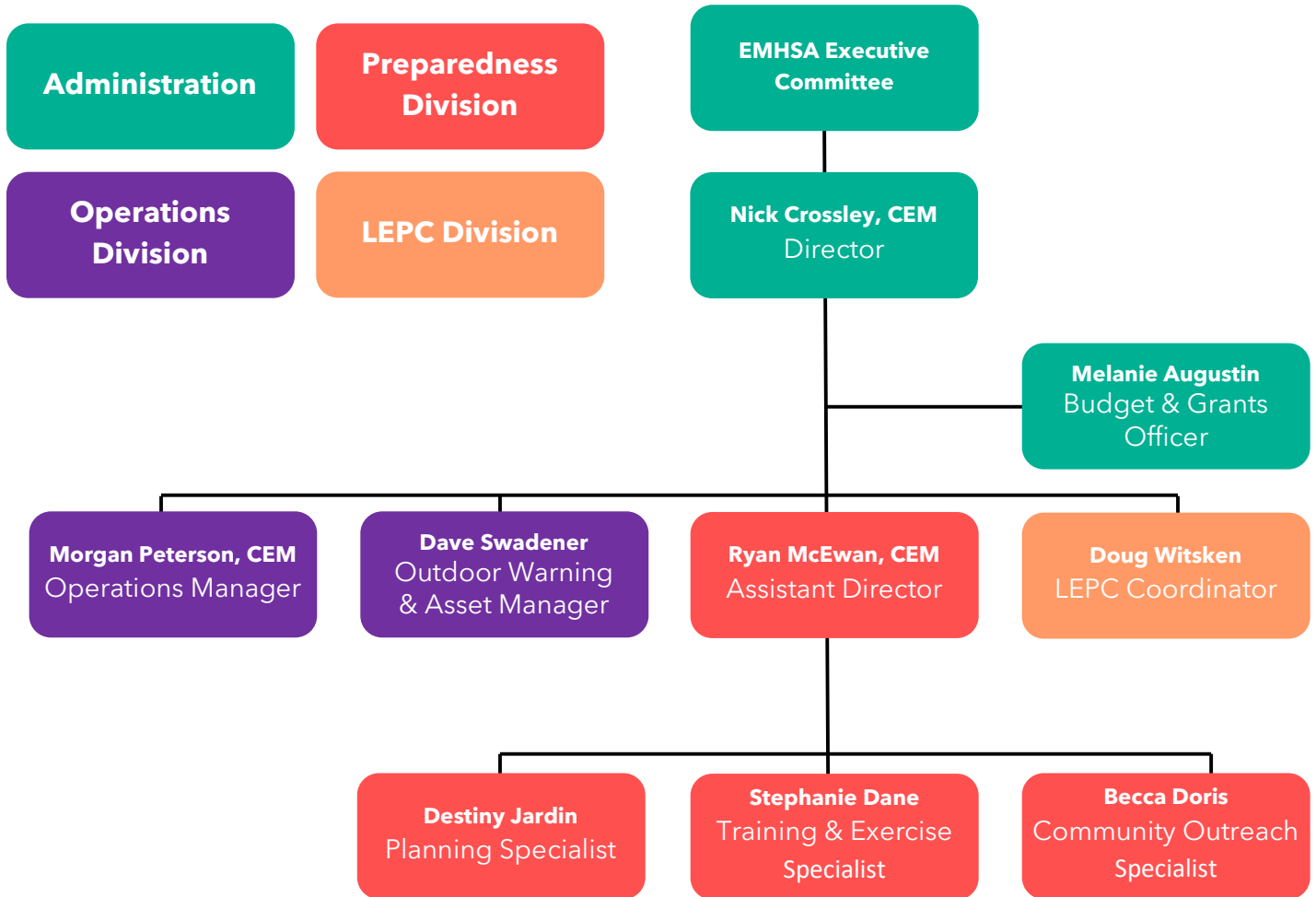


\$4,106,943 of active or open State Homeland Security Program grants.

Grants Managed by EMHSA:

- 2020 Emergency Management Performance Grant
- 2018 State Homeland Security Grant
- 2019 State Homeland Security Grant
- 2020 State Homeland Security Grant
- State Emergency Response Grant (LEPC)

Staff



New Staff Highlight – Stephanie Dane

In 2021, the Agency welcomed new Training & Exercise Specialist Stephanie Dane. Stephanie moved to Hamilton County from Atlanta, Georgia in October and immediately jumped right in, helping with exercises and planning for next year. Stephanie comes from a healthcare background and holds a Master's in Emergency Management and Homeland Security from Arizona State University.

Executive Committee

Hamilton County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency is governed by the Ohio Revised Code 5502 which outlines state and county responsibilities for emergency management.

Hamilton County EMA is set up under an executive committee (ORC 5502.26) consisting of Hamilton County Commissioners, elected and appointed officials from Hamilton County jurisdictions, a representative from the Hamilton County Police Association, a representative from the Hamilton County Fire Chief's Association, and a nonelected representative.

Meet the Members

Honorable Stephanie Summerow Dumas, Chair	Hamilton County
Honorable Alicia Reece, Vice Chair	Hamilton County
Honorable Denise Driehaus	Hamilton County
Honorable Triffon Callos	Green Township
Mike Donohue	Citizen At Large
Honorable Ryan Grubbs	City of Harrison
Honorable Craig Margolis	City of Montgomery
Chief Dennis Meador II	Deer Park Silverton Joint Fire Department
Honorable Cheryl Sieve	Delhi Township
Chief Sherman Smith	City of Cincinnati
Chief Aaron L. Tillman III	Woodlawn Police Division
Honorable Thomas Weidman	Sycamore Township

Follow Us!



@HAMILTON.COUNTYEMA



@HCEMA



Hamilton County Emergency Management



2000 Radcliff Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45204

(513) 263-8200

www.hcready.org

www.alerthc.org