

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 VALUES

.

Community | Leadership Integrity | Equity | Collaboration Professionalism | Innovation



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



We will strive to understand all communities and cultures within Hamilton County. We will engage and empower our residents and partners through inclusive practices that cultivate trust and continued engagement

Leadership



We will be forerunners in the industry of emergency management and take an active role in leading the profession. We will influence and guide all entities of Hamilton County during each disaster phase.

Integrity



We will be transparent in our workings with all partners and community members. We will hold ourselves accountable to the highest standard of ethical behavior and organizational excellence and be responsible fiscal stewards with all available resources.

Equity



We will work diligently to understand the interrelated elements that systematically affect our communities during all phases of a disaster. We will be impartial and fair in the services we offer and strive for equitable outcomes for all.

Collaboration



We will always appear, speak, and interact with others in a professional manner. We will invest in a skilled workforce through constant training and professional development.

Professionalism



We will be proactive in seeking opportunities to move the field of emergency management forward. We will always look for new and better ways to improve upon the services we offer to Hamilton County ensuring that we are providing the highest quality products.

Innovation



We will embrace the Whole Community approach, involving all levels of government and working with stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. We will work cohesively and utilize the talents, knowledge, and ingenuity of all our partners.











Sign Up For Alert Hamilton County! Get important weather alerts straight to your phone!







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A Message from the Director

On behalf of our Executive Committee and myself, I am pleased to present the 2022 Annual Report for the Hamilton County Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency. This report is one of many tools the Agency uses to engage our partners and ensure our residents understand the efforts Hamilton County and our communities are undertaking to prepare for disasters and large-scale emergencies that may impact us.

2022 was a challenging year for the county as our communities and residents continue to address and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to supporting COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, our Agency's focus on our overarching mission never waivered as we continued to enhance the county's preparedness efforts centered around the concept of Comprehensive Emergency Management. We focus on planning for all identified hazards, training ourselves and our community partners on response and recovery, and exercising those plans to ensure our partners work well together when responding to a stressful disaster or emergency.

One of the most impactful accomplishments of this year was the development of our Agency's 2022-2026 <u>Strategic Plan</u>, which defined the goals, objectives, and tasks we set for ourselves for the next five years. The Strategic Plan outlines what we hope to accomplish and how we intend to get there. In addition, the plan documented the efforts our Agency has undertaken to focus more on diversity and creating more equitable outcomes for our residents impacted by disasters. To this end, the Agency has hired a Mass Care Coordinator to work with community partners, local governments, and county agencies and departments to strengthen this important facet of response and recovery.

If the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan is the roadmap for how our Agency plans to accomplish our mission and vision, the 2022 Annual Report is an opportunity to reflect on the first year of our journey and ensure we are still on the correct path. This document highlights the Agency's accomplishments for the last year. It reviews the many tasks we have undertaken with our partners and describes how those tasks align with the priorities, goals and objectives that were established in Agency's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

This year's annual report will highlight many of the efforts we undertook as a team. Internally, we are focused on ensuring our staff and community partners are well-trained and have opportunities to exercise response and recovery plans at the county level while still supporting current efforts:

- Hamilton County has taken significant steps towards developing a new 911/EMA facility in Springdale which will enhance the county's operational coordination and effectiveness.
- The Agency continued our PPE warehouse and COVID-19 operations including providing supplies for local first responders and offering critical storage for public safety assets such as the Hamilton County Urban Search and Rescue and Hamilton County Dive Teams.
- Significant planning efforts were undertaken from starting updates to our multi-hazard mitigation plan, to updating important Continuity of Operations plans for county departments, to working with over 200 schools to update their local emergency response plans.
- A regional Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise was held with local Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), just one of the many exercises we were able to support this year.
- The Local Emergency Planning Committee conducted a new Commodity Flow Study to better identify the hazardous material hazards the county faces from truck, rail, barge, or pipeline, which will be used to better prepare our communities and first responders.

In closing, I want to assure our partners and residents that our staff continues to work diligently to ensure that Hamilton County has a strong and robust emergency management system in 2023 and beyond. Our mission continues

to be to provide effective coordination and collaboration to create a culture of preparedness that builds and sustains a disaster resistant and resilient community in Hamilton County. I hope that when you review this report, you take pride that Hamilton County will continue to work to ensure that the county is prepared, can respond effectively to minimize our hazards, and is ready to support our quick and resilient recovery from the hazards and threats we face every day.

Respectfully,

Mich Louly Nick Crossley, CEM

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.

Our 2022 Executive Committee

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 Montogomery

Chief Dennis Meador II Deer Park-Silverton Joint Fire District

Honorable Cheryl Sieve Delhi Township

Chief Mark Sanders City of Cincinnati

Chief Aaron L. Tillman III Woodlawn Police Division

Honorable Thomas Weidman Sycamore Township



Commissioner Summerow Duma, Director Crossley, Commisioner Driehaus & Commisioner Reeces declare Severe Weather Awareness Week in March 2022.

Duty Officer

One of the Agency's most important functions is the ability to routinely monitor the county for threats and hazards that could impact residents and properties. Goal #7 of the Strategic Plan discusses having the ability to support multi-faceted response thorough enhanced facilities, technology, and well-documented procedures. This year, the Agency had many opportunities to put this goal to the test as we prepared to face a variety of potential hazards ranging from natural to man-made, from pre-planned to no warning events. Doing this also allowed the Agency to practice and refine our procedures, which addresses Objectives 5.2 and 7.4.



Duty Officer

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.



Partners In Preparedness

In 2022, our Agency held the 6th Annual Partners in Preparedness Meeting with our greatest attendance to date of 111 people! Those in attendance included our emergency management partners, stakeholders and leadership from all over Hamilton County.

Focusing on the theme "All Disasters Begin and End Locally" we were able to hear from a panel of leaders from Southwest Ohio with firsthand disaster experience who shared the challenges and lessons learned from their own incidents. All speakers emphasized the importance of planning, training, and exercising before an emergency. EMHSA also brought in FEMA Region V Administrator Thomas Sivak and Ohio EMA Director Sima Merick as guest speakers to discuss the coordination between the local, state and federal level when disaster strikes.

in our Strategic Plan, we state that preparedness is shared responsibility and requires the involvement of everyone at every level and every type of organization—public, private, non-profit, and faith-based. We look forward to Partners in Preparedness each year as a time to strengthen relationships, have a face-to-face check in with all of our community partners, and to bring awareness to the tools and resources our Agency provides. Bolstering these community partnerships prior to an emergency is vital to efficient coordination and communication during a disaster and allows us to understand each other's capabilities. Disasters begin and end locally and only by working together as a whole-community can the County address the multitude of needs that are likely to arise during times of disaster.

Strategic Plan Objective 1.2

Bolster partnerships with public, private, non-profit, and faith based organizations.











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 (AlertHC) 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 (AlertHC) can notify users via text message, and email, with phone call notification.



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.

Alert Hamilton County By The Numbers



32,897

Residents registered



14

Alerts Sent



43

Different Opt-In Alerts

Local Emergency Planning Committee

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 2022.

In 2022, many of the LEPC's projects addressed Objective 6.1 and 6.2 of the Strategic Plan, which focuses on fostering public and private sector collaboration of chemical safety throughout Hamilton County and promoting hazardous materials incidents preparedness. In 2022, **650** facilities submitted their hazardous chemical inventory reports to the LEPC, **83** hazardous materials spills/releases were recorded, **5** exercises were facilitated, **10** LEPC-sponsored training courses were held, and **263** students were trained.

Exercises

The LEPC conducted its annual exercise required by the Ohio State Emergency Response Commission in March of 2022. This exercise was done in conjuction with the City of Madeira and simulated a train derailment, chemical release, and fire in downtown Madeira. This exercise was a great success and an opportunity to engage and encourage local jurisdictions in planning, training & exercising for potential hazardous materials incidents. Other exercises developed and facilitated by the LEPC in 2022 include tabletop exercises for Veolia and Mount St. Joseph University. In December, the LEPC conducted its 3rd annual functional exercise with CFD and Samuel Adams Cincinnati Brewery(SACB), simulating an anhydrous ammonia leak.







Commodity Flow Study

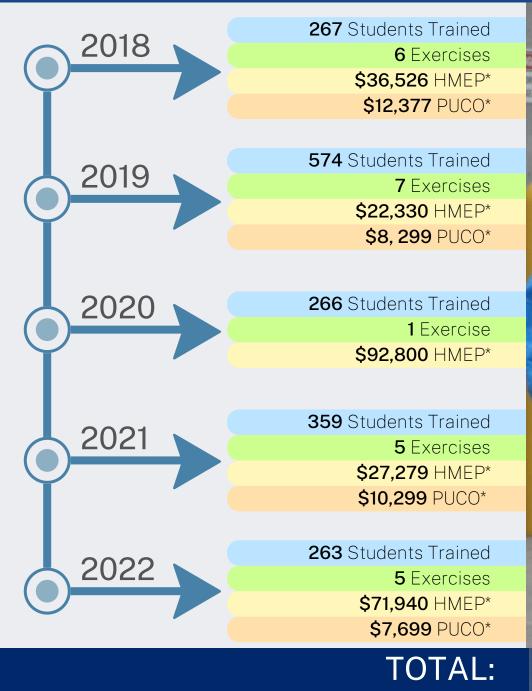
A Commodity Flow Study (CFS), a detailed assessment of the types and volumes of hazardous materials that travel through a county via all major transportation modes, was released for Hamilton County in March 2022. The information found from this study was shared with all the jurisdictions and emergency responders in Hamilton County so that they may be aware of the chemical hazards their community may face and be able to plan and train for any potential spills or releases. The CFS was funded 80% by the Federal Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant and 20% by the LEPC.

Boom Deployment

In April of 2022, the LEPC, in conjunction with the National LEPC Trade Group (NASTTPO) Conference, conducted a Spill Exercise and Boom Deployment on the Ohio River. This exercise was a great demonstration of the region's ability to respond to a significant spill on the Ohio River and was also a great opportunity to foster public and private sector collaboration in hazardous materials safety.

LEPC: 5-Year Snapshot

In the last 5 years, the LEPC, has continually worked to strengthen Hamilton County's ability to respond to hazardous materials through grant-supported trainings and exercises. Below is a record of all the grant funding the LEPC received and students trained from 2018 to 2022.



1,729 Students Trained
24 Exercises
\$289,549 Worth of Grants Awarded

*Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant
*Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) Grant

\$189,549 for Training \$32,000 for Commodity Flow Study \$68,000 for Exercise Support

Community Outreach

One of our goals in our Strategic Plan is to develop a "Culture of Preparedness" through community engagement and public awareness efforts because an informed community is a resilient community. As an Agency, we want to ensure that Hamilton's County's residents are aware of the hazards that impact the County and that they understand how to prepare and respond to a disaster. In 2022, the Agency focused on Objectives 1.1. and 1.2 of the Strategic Plan by engaging with community residents through social media, local media interviews, and attending various community outreach events, which included local fire department touch-a-truck events, school presentations, and private-sector company's safety days. We also worked towards Objective 1.3 to advance the county's emergency public information system by developing new strategies to promote AlertHC. This included working with our partners at Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW) to include information about AlertHC in a bill insert, as well as working with our partners at Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library to have informational materials in libraries throughout the County.



Raise public awareness through enhanced outreach efforts and activities.

National Preparedness Month

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 560 new residents register for AlertHC!**

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. A poster contest was held for 3rd, 4th, & 5th graders in Hamilton County. The Agency also ran a special social media campaign to increase engagement and promote severe weather preparedness tips with











7,321 Twitter <u>Follow</u>ers





282,972 Nextdoor Residents

Training & Exercise

Training and exercising is essential to emergency preparedness and the coordination of both is identified as Goal #5 in our Strategic Plan. Training ensures personnel have the knowledge and skills to do their job. Exercises enhance knowledge of plans, allow staff to improve their own performance, and identify opportunities to improve capabilities to respond to real-life events.



Assistant Director Ryan McEwan teaching Damage Assessment Course.

Trainings

Objective 5.1 of the Strategic Plan outlines the need to request and provide trainings following a multi-year schedule that addresses community-defined needs. In 2022, EMHSA focused on the gaps and needs of the **13** courses were hosted by the Agency and **143** students were trained. The agency also developed and released 25 biweekly training bulletins for over **900** of our partners. The training bulletin is a compilation all training opportunities for the Southwest Ohio Region in one easily accessible and organized format.



Springfield Township Public Works, Fire, & Police work through an Active Shooter Threat Tabletop Exercise.

Exercises

27 staff drills were conducted in 2022. These drills tested EMHSA staff's knowledge, skills, and abilities about emergency public notification, activation of the outdoor warning sirens and response to hazardous materials incidents. Routine testing and practicing of these skills was listed under Objective 5. 2 in the Strategic Plan and is an important task for the Agency to complete each year because these drills ensure EMHSA staff can respond efficiently and effectively in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Throughout the year, staff also developed and facilitated various exercises, To help address our Strategic Plan's Objective 1.3 of advancing the county's emergency public information system, a Joint Information Center (JIC) Workshop was held for Hamilton County's public information officers where they worked through a flood scenario and discussed how they would operate in the JIC. EMHSA staff also developed and facilitated a tabletop exercise

consisting of a high wind and active threat scenario for Springfield Township.

Exercise Highlight: Regional Cybersecurity Exercise

In October of 2022, and in concurrence with Cybersecurity Awareness Month, EMHSA participated in the Southwest Ohio Regional Cybersecurity Exercise. This exercise was an opportunity to engage with our public and private infrastructure partners in prevention and protection activities. Prior to the actual exercise, EMHSA staff routinely met throughout the year to plan for and coordinate the exercise with our partners.





143



Students Trained

864





Southwest Ohio
Weekly Training
Bulletin Subscribers

Community Planning

Strategic Plan & Annual Review

At the beginning of 2022, the Agency developed a new Strategic Plan for 2022-2026 that will serve as a guide for the Agency and which outlines our goals and objectives over the next 4 years. At the end of 2022 all staff met to review all of our activities from the year, ensuring we stay on track with the Strategic Plan and allowed us to prioritize projects going into 2023.



Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) & Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) Update

Goal #4 of our Strategic Plan is to reinforce planning efforts by focusing on improved plan integration and ensuring the inclusion of additional partners in planning activities. Planning is the foundation of emergency management and preparedness and for plans to be effective, it's vital to keep them up to date and shared with partners. In 2022, the Agency's Planning Specialist and Assistant Director began the process of updating the EOP and ESFs, a task outlined under Objective 4.2 in the Strategic Plan. This past year, Planning Specialist Destiny Jardin worked with our partners to update ESF# 2 (Communications) and ESF #9 (Search & Rescue) were updated. ESF #4 Fire/EMS. Destiny also began working on ESF #4 (Fire & EMS).

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. In 2022 all departments identified as an Emergency Support Function in the County's EOC were required to update their section of the County's general COOP plan. Planning Specialist Jardin coordinated with each department and agency throughout the year to review and update their plans. Improving the County's COOP program was identified as Objective 4.2 in the Strategic Plan.



Planning Specialist Destiny Jardin leads a COOP planning meeting with partners.

Local Planning Assistance

Disasters start and end at the local level which is why it is so important to engage our local communities in the planning process and offer our assistance. With this in mind, EMHSA developed EOP and COOP templates for our local jurisdictions, partners, and key stakeholders to utilize. In 2022, the Agency continued to review and provide guidance to communities utilizing our EOP templates and COOP templates. This past year, Planning Specialist Jardin assisted **7** local jurisdictions with their EOP and COOP plans.

Mitigation

In 2022, the Agency began the process of revising the Hamilton County's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP), which was idintified as Objective 3.1 in the Strategic Plan. In 2022, a request for proposals was created and from that the Agency was able to select a contractor to facilitate updating the 2018 MHMP for 2023. An initial meeting was held in November with the contractor, and the plan is anticipated to be complete in September of 2023.

Community Planning & Mass Care

School Safety Plan Review

In 2022, a new process for School Safety Plan reviews was introduced by the Agency. Assistant Director Ryan McEwan met with district and school personnel to review their emergency plans and provide feedback and suggest area of improvement. In 2022, **203** plans were reviewed. This new process which increases face-to-face time with school administration has led to increased engagement on additional planning, exercises, and vulnerability assessments with Hamilton County schools.



Mass Care

This year, our Agency was able to make substantial steps towards Goal #2 in our Strategic Plan, which identified the need to create a system that supports equitable mass care efforts for all residents. In June of this past year, EMHSA created a Mass Care Coordinator Position and hired Allison Ferreri. Since starting at EMHSA, Allison has begun establishing support for the County's mass care efforts and planning for the



delivery of better services and resources in the event of a disaster. She hit the ground running by working towards Objective 2.1 of the Strategic Plan and meeting with over **25** different partner organizations and agencies, strengthening new and existing partnerships throughout the County. In 2022, Allison also initialized the development of Mass Care plans including Donations Management, Family Assistance Center, and Volunteer Reception Center plans.

Looking ahead to 2023, Allison will also focus on Objective 2.2 of the Strategic Plan by creating a Community Organization Active in Disaster (COAD) organization and coordinating with our partners from community organizations, businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies. COAD's are extremely beneficial for Mass Care because the organization brings awareness to the needs of the community and connects the capabilities of community partners with those needs during all stages of a disaster.



Strategic Plan Task 2.1.1

Develop and fulfill a Community Mass Care Coordinator position within the Agency.

Hurricane Ian Deployment

In September 2022, Allison deployed for 14 days with the Red Cross to Naples, Florida in response to Category 4 Hurricane Ian. During her deployment, Allison worked at a Red Cross Shelter, assisting with shelter operations and providing for people impacted by the destructive storm. From her time, Allison was able to take many key lessons learned back to our Agency that will be utilized and applied in our own Mass Care services and strategy.

Operations

Goal #7 of the Strategic Plan is to ensure Hamilton County's ability to support multi-faceted response through enhanced facilities, technology, and well-documented procedures. In 2022, the Operations Division worked towards objective 7.1 and 7.2 in the Strategic Plan and continued to make various improvements to technology and facilities as well as managing a wide array of resources in 2022.

Emergency Operations Center

Throughout 2022, EMHSA staff routinely checked Warning Room and Emergency Operations Center equipment to make sure it was functional and ready to be used at a moment's notice in the event of an activation.

The Agency continued to strengthen the Alternate Emergency Operations Center through the installation of additional equipment and dynamic displays which enhance functionality and coordination of information during an activation. To ensure the readiness of the Alternate EOC at all times, Operations Manager Morgan Peterson performed monthly equipment checks and led multiple activation drills for staff to practice.







EOC Team

The EOC Team, comprised of **73** representatives from County and City departments, local jurisdictions, and external organizations, met at the beginning of 2022 and were then drilled monthly to ensure all representatives would be prepared in the event they were asked to staff the EOC for a major disaster.



EMHSA currently manages and maintains **189** outdoor warning sirens. All 189 sirens are routinely tested every first Wednesday of the Month. In 2022, the warning room equipment was updated and a new software system was introduced that automatically activates the outdoor sirens from an issuance of a Tornado Warning by the National Weather Service.

COVID-19

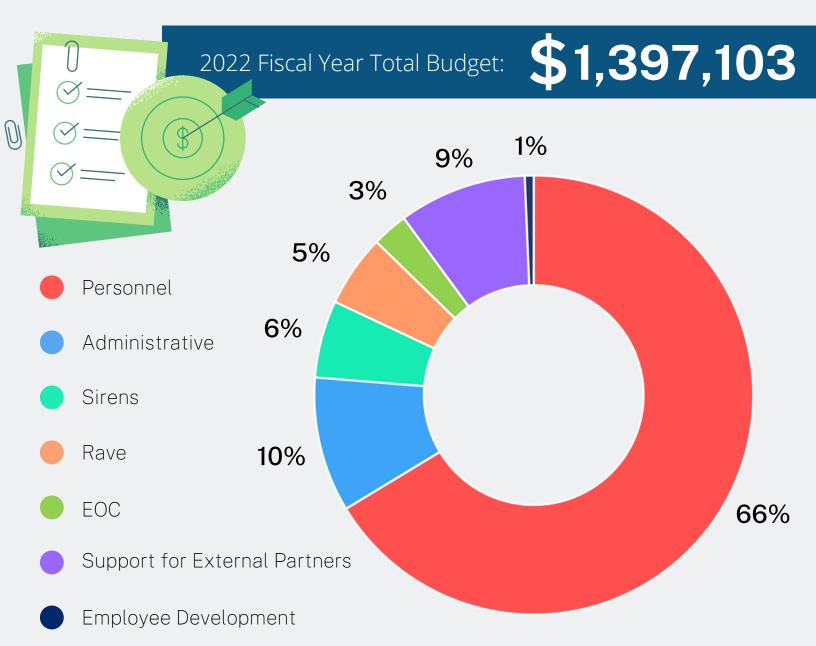
The Agency continued to support Hamilton County COVID-19 operations through the staffing of the Warehouse and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) to first responders and several Hamilton county partners and agencies. In 2022, the Agency also secured a new warehouse location.

PPE Distributed in 2022:

4,100,455

174 Organizations Served

Budget & Grants



Grants Managed by EMHSA: **\$4,973,080**

Emergency Management Performance Grant

State Homeland Security Grant

State Emergency Response Grant (LEPC)

Urban Areas Security Initiative Grant

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio Grant

Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Duke Energy Foundation Grant







Allison Ferreri Mass Care Coordinator

In 2022, the Agency welcomed Allison Ferreri into the new position of Mass Care Coordinator. Allison has a Master's in Public Health from the University of Colorado, where she concentrated in Community Health and Public Health Preparedness and Disaster Response. Allison has experience working with disaster relief organizations and vulnerable populations, and is excited to help coordinate services for the people Hamilton County in the event of a disaster. When not at work, Allison likes

spending time with her husband and their golden retriever, enjoying the outdoors with friends, or cheering on the Bengals as an admittedly proud bandwagon fan.

Ben Casteel

Resource Management Coordinator

Our new Resource Management Coordinator was hired in October, Ben Casteel a 20+ year veteran of the Fire and EMS industry has been hired into this role. Besides the fire service, he has been a part of many things including owning his own business and sitting on a non profit board. Ben is a Cincinnati native and resides in Mason with his wife and two children who inevitably keep him busy outside of work.



2,169

Preparedness Materials
Distributed

406 People Trained

113

Emergency alerts sent to residents 36 Exercises Conducted

2,744,923
Social Media Engagements

22

Events & Weather Incidents Monitored by Duty Officers

Warning
Room
Activations

lans reviewer

Looking Ahead

Innovation is one of our core values and as an Agency we are constantly looking for new and better ways to improve upon the services we offer to Hamilton County. We want to ensure Hamilton County's ability to support multi-faceted response through enhanced facilities and technology. In 2022, the Agency started working towards Objective 7.1 in our Strategic Plan which identifies the need to streamline Hamilton County's operational readiness by moving into a new joint-operated facility with the Communications Center. In beginning of 2022, a new facility was purchased in Springdale and EMHSA began the process of designing and developing the new building

For the past year, EMHSA staff has met bi-weekly with architects to be involved in the entire design process and ensure the new facility will meet all of Agency's needs. The facility, among many features, will have a multi-purpose room that can be used for trainings, exercises, press conferences and community meetings. Staff have also worked to design and build an EOC and JIC that will improve overall function and coordination of the County in the event of a disaster. We look forward to this new facility and expect to move in 2024.



Strategic Plan Objective 7.1 - In Progress

Streamline Hamilton County's operational readiness by moving into a new joint- operated facility with the Communications Center.













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Hamilton County Emergency Management



2000 Radcliff Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45204 (513) 263-8200 www.hcready.org www.alerthc.org