

2016 Annual Report- Emergency Management Agency

Bridgewater's Emergency Management Agency (BEMA) is responsible for the safety of the citizens of Bridgewater in the event of a natural or manmade disaster. BEMA is responsible for coordinating the resources for multiple disciplines related to public safety within our community so the incident commander during an incident or large scale event has the proper resources to mitigate and effectively resolve or control any situation.

Bridgewater has worked to formalize its initiative to regionalize emergency planning with the formation of the Sachem Rock Regional Emergency Planning Zone (SRREPZ). With assistance from MEMA, the communities of Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Halifax, Hanson, Raynham, West Bridgewater and Whitman formed a Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC). The REPC was officially certified by MEMA in 2016. As an REPC, these seven communities coordinate emergency preparedness initiatives relevant to our region to provide a comprehensive and integrated emergency management system that coordinates regional resources to protect lives, property and the environment through mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery from all natural and manmade hazards that may impact our communities.

Through the SRREPZ, BEMA remains successful in organizing and developing training for the now regional Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The regional CERT team is now comprised of nearly 200 volunteers able to respond and assist regional first responders at an emergency or planned event. We plan to continue to grow this community based program by training citizens to be prepared to help themselves and their neighbors if a large scale event were to occur in Bridgewater.

The team is operational and has responded to numerous events and emergencies both in Bridgewater and on a regional basis. The SRREPZ Team also supports planned events including the July 4th parade and fireworks, Relay for Life, AutumnFest, and the tri-town Veteran's Day parade. I would like to thank Bridgewater CERT Director Dennise Caratazzola for her efforts in coordinating this wonderful resource and Bridgewater Lieutenant Thomas Luckman for his expertise and training of the volunteer team.

BEMA continued coordination of efforts with Town Departments and FEMA to prepare reimbursements for Federal Aid for the January 2015 blizzard. More than \$250,000 in claims have been submitted to FEMA.

The Town of Bridgewater receives a grant each year for \$115,000 for its support of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant's evacuation plan. The grant funds are reused to maintain the operations of BEMA. Representatives of BEMA attended MEMA-coordinated monthly meetings, several nuclear safety training events and mandatory drills during the calendar year. Town employees and volunteers participated in the practice and FEMA graded nuclear tabletop exercise in the fall of 2016.

In 2016, Entergy, the parent company of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant announced its plan to close the plant. It is anticipated the Plant will close in the spring of 2019. The grant funds the Town receives from Entergy are contingent upon the Town meeting its obligation to provide services per the contract from Entergy. At the time of this report, it is unknown the extent or timing of ongoing responsibility the host communities will have past the date of plant closure.

The Town of Bridgewater was selected to host a regional equipment cache site through the Department of Homeland Security. The site, located behind Station 2 on Plymouth Street was constructed as a non-engineered, steel-framed fabric shelter. It houses message boards and light towers for use by communities in the southeast region of the State for emergency or planned use. As host community, Bridgewater is responsible for coordinating the loan of cache resources. The site became operational in 2016.

I would like to thank John Mitchell, BEMA Director of Operations, for his dedication and countless hours of time volunteered to protecting the members of the Bridgewater community.

Thomas D. Levy
Emergency Management Director
Town of Bridgewater