



Michael R. Pannell, Director

# ANNUAL REPORT 2015



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This executive summary provides highlights of accomplishments in 2015 by Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (FCEM&HS).

**IRM Decision Maker Meeting:** FCEM&HS held the 3rd Annual Integrated Risk Management (IRM) Decision Maker Meeting on March 6, 2015. The meeting provided the leadership of Franklin County jurisdictions with the information necessary to make informed decisions regarding planning, training, exercises, resource allocation, and funding related to emergency management and homeland security policies and issues.



**2015 Severe Weather Spotter Training:** The National Weather Service (NWS) depends in part on eyewitness information from citizens, public safety and emergency management personnel trained to recognize and report potentially life-threatening severe weather conditions. In March, FCEM&HS in concert with the NWS, OSU Emergency Management and the Central Ohio Severe Weather Network (COSWN) conducted the annual Severe Weather Spotter Training at the OSU Fawcett Center. The half-day training seminar educated more than 230 participants on how to spot, report, and prepare for tornadoes and other severe weather.



*Franklin County Commissioner Marilyn Brown participates in the launch of ALERT Franklin County.*

**ALERT Franklin County:** FCEM&HS launched ALERT Franklin County, a new county-wide mass notification and warning system, on July 29, 2015. The state-of-the-art system will be used to alert residents about emergencies and other important community news in all 42 jurisdictions within Franklin County. ALERT Franklin County allows residents to choose what kind of community notifications they want to receive, how they would like to receive them and the location(s) they want to receive them for. Text message is the fastest way to receive messages.

**2015 Statewide Tornado Drill:** Due to inclement weather, the 2015 Statewide Tornado Drill was postponed by the National Weather Service and the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness until Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:50 am. At that time, the Franklin County Outdoor Warning Sirens were activated one time for three minutes. Over 123,700 Franklin County citizens participated in the drill. The annual drill was part of Ohio's Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week.

**StormReady® Certification:** In the spring of 2015, Franklin County earned its StormReady® Certification from the National Weather Service (NWS). The program, sponsored by NWS, helps community leaders and emergency managers strengthen local safety programs through advanced planning, education and awareness. To receive certification, communities must meet certain criteria including education, community outreach, advanced planning and training as well as multiple avenues to receive and distribute severe weather information.



**Risk Ex'15 Fall Exercise:** FCEM&HS, utilizing Homeland Security Grant funds, conducted Risk Ex'15, a regional full-scale exercise on October 22, 2015. The event focused on responding to an EF-4 tornado which touched down in western Franklin County and began a march across Columbus, The Ohio State University campus and hospital and the suburbs, leaving an Oklahoma-style furrow in its wake. During the response, a low-tech cyber-attack occurred. Franklin, Delaware and Licking County EMAs, The Ohio State University and many response partners participated in the exercise.

**FCEM&HS**

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Register  
[www.alertfranklincounty.org](http://www.alertfranklincounty.org)



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## Siren Watch Program

The FCEM&HS Siren Watch program continued to expand in 2015. Siren Watchers are citizen volunteers who monitor and report on one assigned outdoor warning siren every Wednesday after the noon test to confirm each outdoor warning siren is working properly. The program currently has over 110 volunteers monitoring 94 sirens.



FCEM&HS now offers an interactive online mapping system to report weekly siren information. The interactive Siren Watcher Mapping System enables siren watchers to report their assigned siren results within seconds. Anyone interested in the Siren Watcher Mapping System or the Siren Watch Program can call (614) 794-0213 or visit our website at [www.fcemhs.org](http://www.fcemhs.org).

In 2015, FCEM&HS installed a new repeater at the Franklin County Courthouse to increase signal strength and coverage area for the Outdoor Warning Siren System. The repeater will provide redundancy in the ability to successfully activate the Outdoor Warning Siren System in the event of a Tornado Warning or an emergency.

## ALERT Franklin County



Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (FCEM&HS) launched ALERT Franklin County, a county-wide mass notification and warning system, on July 29, 2015. The state-of-the-art system is used to alert residents about emergencies and other important community news in all 42 jurisdictions within Franklin County.

ALERT Franklin County enables officials to provide critical information directly to residents as emergencies happen via text message, phone, (home, cell or work) and email. Text message is the fastest way to receive messages.

ALERT Franklin County is customizable and allows residents to choose what kind of community notifications they want to receive, how they would like to receive them and the location(s) they want to receive them for. Residents can elect to receive emergency notifications about severe weather and disasters as well as location specific information regarding crime alerts, road closures, utility outages, government closings and other important community news.

FCEM&HS and all jurisdictions within Franklin County are authorized to issue notifications through ALERT Franklin County. FCEM&HS will warn residents of severe weather automatically through SMART Weather Alerting. The upgraded feature leverages Accuweather and Weather Decision Technologies meteorological resources to notify registered users of severe weather alerts such as tornadoes, thunderstorms, ice, snow, extreme temperatures, high winds, flash floods, and flooding. SMART Weather sends out weather alerts based on NWS-issued polygons to all registered recipients in an affected area instantly.

In addition, FCEM&HS will warn residents of dam failures, terrorism, major hazardous material incidents, major aircraft accidents, significant civil disturbances, major utility disruptions, damage producing earthquakes and other alerts issued by the agency director.

Non-emergency notifications will be issued by local government departments/agencies having information that may affect the geographic locations for which residents register. Residents will only receive non-emergency notifications for the topics they choose.

Residents are encouraged to register online at [www.alertfranklincounty.org](http://www.alertfranklincounty.org), which can also be found on [www.fcemhs.org](http://www.fcemhs.org) or any Franklin County local jurisdiction's website.



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## School Safety Plans

Ohio's new school safety plan statute went into effect in September 2014. House Bill 487 was implemented in 2015 and requires each school administrator to submit a "comprehensive emergency management plan". The plan consists of an all-hazards safety plan, floor plan, emergency contact information and a site plan detailing the facility and the surrounding area for each school in their district. All school safety plans are required to be evaluated to ensure state compliance.

FCEM&HS, Ohio Homeland Security and the Ohio Department of Education collaborated to evaluate school emergency operation plans. In October, a joint school safety planning meeting was held with public schools in Franklin County and the Catholic Diocese to assist schools with developing and updating their school safety plans.

During the meeting, FCEM&HS provided an overview of the school safety planning process and the Franklin County School Planning Portal on the FCEM&HS website. The secure password-protected web portal allows for school district emergency plans to be easily displayed and accessed for day-to-day use and during emergencies by qualified personnel from anywhere on any device 24/7/365. Representatives from Ohio Homeland Security and the Ohio Department of Education provided information regarding the Ohio Safer Schools Initiative and the process to ensure each school's safety plan is in compliance with current state law.

In 2015, FCEM&HS reviewed 26 school safety plans.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual IRM Decision Maker Meeting



*2015 Integrated Risk Management (IRM) Decision Maker Meeting*

FCEM&HS hosted the 3rd Annual Integrated Risk Management (IRM) Decision Maker Meeting on March 6, 2015. The meeting brought together elected officials and decision makers throughout Franklin County as well as members of the FCEM&HS Executive Committee. During the meeting, Franklin County leaders were briefed on achievements in the IRM Initiative and were taken through a visual study detailing the resources required to respond to a dam failure scenario in Franklin County. The study showed the impacts of the event (deaths, injuries, and property damage) in relation to the resources necessary to respond to an event of such great magnitude.

**Integrated Risk Management is a process which takes a risk-based approach to assess capabilities and identify gaps in order to inform decision making and shape emergency management and homeland security strategic planning for the Homeland Security Enterprise.**

The Integrated Risk Management (IRM) Initiative continued to make progress in 2015. FCEM&HS began the process of updating the program's foundation document, the Risk Assessment for Franklin County. The updated version considers the impacts of climate change as well as the addition of a new hazard - Space Weather. The final updated version of the Risk Assessment will be published in 2016. The IRM Implementation Plan made steady progress as well. The plan provides a roadmap for closing some of the gaps in Franklin County's capabilities as identified in the Gap Analysis. Measures put in place to close gaps identified in the plan have been successfully executed, including the launch of ALERT Franklin County, a county-wide mass notification and warning system; and the Central Ohio Cybersecurity Initiative, a program developed to increase public awareness of cybersecurity preparedness. FCEM&HS continues to work to identify the risks facing Franklin County and enhance our capabilities to respond to those risks through identifying and addressing known gaps.



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## Commodity Flow Study



### FCEM&HS Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study

To assess the type and volume of hazardous materials transported through Franklin County by highway, railroad, pipeline and air and better prepare emergency response personnel for a hazardous materials emergency, FCEM&HS updated the Franklin County Commodity Flow Study in 2015. As part of the study, subject matter experts visually surveyed highway, rail and air traffic at select locations and times to assess the current type and volume of hazardous material being transported through Franklin County. The 2015 FCEM&HS Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study is available on our website under the Planning section at [www.fcemhs.org](http://www.fcemhs.org). Funding for the project was provided through a grant awarded to the Chemical Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council (CEPAC) from the 2014 Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) Hazardous Materials Grant Program. The last Franklin County Commodity Flow Study was completed in 2010.

## Central Ohio Cybersecurity Initiative



FCEM&HS served as the lead agency for the development of the Central Ohio Cybersecurity Initiative, a grant funded, regional (Franklin, Fairfield, Licking, Delaware, Madison, Union and Pickaway), public/private sector partnership focused on Cybersecurity. More than 60 leaders from local, state and federal government, as well as business leaders from higher education, utility and financial industries worked collaboratively to form the Central Ohio Cybersecurity Work Group to develop a regional cybersecurity plan. The work group, co-chaired by Jack Partridge, Chief Policy Officer of NiSource, Inc., Franklin County Commissioner Paula Brooks and Columbus City Councilmember Zach Klein, developed the Cybersecurity Preparedness Strategy which was incorporated into a guide for use by local jurisdictions to improve their cybersecurity.

Key elements of the strategy include:

- The development of a vision and mission statement for the working group.
- The identification of goals and objectives to help shape the focus of the work group.
- The definition of thresholds to determine a large-scale cyber event.

The Local Jurisdictions Guide to Cybersecurity Strategy outlines the seven-step process the work group developed to help local communities, businesses and individuals guard against and prepare for natural or manmade cyber incidents which could cripple public and private information technology systems. The guide walks users through the steps necessary to establish trusted communication paths between public and private sectors in order to collaborate and share information, how to define a large-scale cyber event and develop a protocol to respond to such events, and how to increase public awareness of cybersecurity preparedness.

The guide is being distributed by the Ohio Emergency Management Agency to all counties in Ohio. In addition to the published guide, the group also produced a TV public service announcement and distributed it to local stations and cable systems. The complete guide and public service announcement is posted on our website under the Cybersecurity Initiative tab at [www.fcemhs.org](http://www.fcemhs.org). FCEM&HS received funding for the Central Ohio Cybersecurity Initiative through the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP).



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## StormReady® Certification

**Damage Assessment:** In 2015, FCEM&HS continued to develop the Damage Assessment Operations Plan and train volunteers as Damage Assessment Specialists. During the Risk Ex'15 Full Scale Exercise, FC CERT volunteers performed damage assessments at the Ohio Historical Connections Ohio Village. More than 200 assessments were conducted by 9 volunteer teams. Damage reports were transmitted from the field to the FCEM&HS Assessment Center by the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club. A total of 26 volunteers participated in the exercise.



**FC CERT volunteers review damage criteria at the Ohio Village during Risk Ex'15.**

### Franklin County CERT:

The Franklin County Citizen Emergency Response Team (FC CERT) Basic Training Program is a national curriculum of 9 units covering a 9-week period totaling approximately 27 hours. The program educates people about disaster preparedness. In 2015, FCEM&HS conducted five CERT Basic Training classes. Members of the Ohio Hispanic Coalition attended one of the courses. The training provided participants with the basic skills needed to help themselves, their families and their community in a disaster. FC CERT has over 400 graduates of the training course.



**Michael R. Pannell, FCEM&HS Director, Ken Haydu, NWS Meteorologist, Chris Williams, CERT Coordinator and Fire Chief Jeff Young, FCEM&HS Executive Committee Chair during the NWS StormReady® Certification Ceremony**

On April 22, 2015, Franklin County earned its StormReady® Certification from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Wilmington. StormReady® is a "grass roots" program sponsored by NOAA's National Weather Service and focuses on improving communication and severe weather preparedness in communities. The program encourages communities to take a proactive approach to improving local hazardous weather operation by helping provide communities with the communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property--before, during and after the event.

To become StormReady® a community, agency or county must:

- Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center.
- Have more than one way to receive severe weather warnings and forecasts and to alert the public.
- Create a system that monitors weather conditions locally.
- Promote the importance of public readiness through community outreach.
- Develop severe weather plans, which includes training severe weather spotters and holding emergency exercises.

StormReady® communities are better prepared to save lives from the onslaught of severe weather through advanced planning, education and awareness. The project took over 10 months and over 320 hours to complete the application and achieve StormReady® certification for Franklin County.



Michael R. Pannell, Director

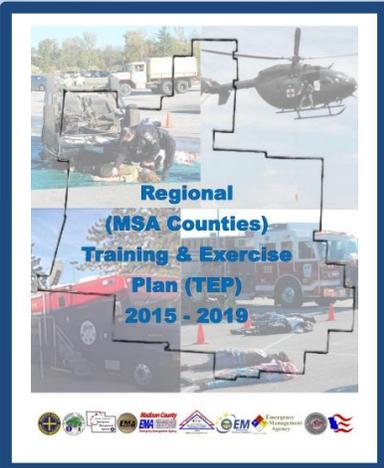
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## Training

### 2015 Franklin County and Regional MSA Training & Exercise Programs

FCEM&HS continued to develop the Franklin County and the Regional Training & Exercise Programs in 2015, continuing collaboration to improve the region's ability to prevent, respond to and recover from all hazards.

FCEM&HS conducted both the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Franklin County and the Regional Training and Exercise Planning Workshops. Both the Franklin County and Regional MSA Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plans (2015-2019) were updated and expanded to provide a five year outlook for training and exercises in Columbus, Franklin County and the Regional Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).



In 2015, FCEM&HS held 26 training classes for a total of 796 first responders, emergency partners, and volunteers to better prepare Franklin County to respond to all hazards.

## Risk Ex'15 Fall Exercise

The Risk Ex'15 Fall Full-Scale Exercise was held on October 22, 2015. The exercise was designed to test information sharing and evaluate multiple jurisdictions' current response plans and capabilities through a simulated exercise scenario that featured an EF-5 tornado and cyber-attack affecting large parts of Franklin County and Central Ohio. The exercise occurred at multiple locations, including the Emergency Operations Centers of Franklin, Delaware and Licking Counties. The exercise also tested mass casualty and mass fatality capabilities at the Kinneer Road Center at The Ohio State University. In addition, FCEM&HS exercised damage assessment team operations at the Ohio Village at the Ohio History Connection. Primary exercise participants were FCEM&HS, CFD, CPD, FCSO, COTA, COTS, FCPH and CPH, HandsOn Central Ohio, COC DPU/DPW, COARC, MRC and CERT. Hot Wash feedback suggests Risk Ex 15' was successful in validating earlier training on the critical elements of emergency response in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).



*Joint Emergency Operations Center (JEOC) operations during Risk Ex'15 Exercise*



*Teamwork '15 Annual LEPC/CEPAC Exercise*

## Teamwork '15 Spring Exercise

FCEM&HS conducted Teamwork '15, the annual LEPC/CEPAC Exercise on February 24, 2015. The tabletop exercise was based on a hazardous material transportation incident involving the release of liquid Sulfuric Acid on State Route 161 in Plain Township near New Albany, Ohio. The exercise successfully demonstrated the abilities of over 12 agencies to integrate their resources into the incident, coordinate actions together, and mitigate the incident back to safe conditions. FCEM&HS met all evaluated objectives which included: Notification of Response Agencies, Incident Command, Resource Management and Communications. The exercise was funded by a PUCO Grant and received concurrence from the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) at their April 8, 2015 meeting.



OHIO  
Michael R. Pannell, Director

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## Risk Assessment

In an effort to maintain a state of readiness and ensure our first responders and decision makers remain aware of the risks facing Franklin County, FCEM&HS began updating the Franklin County Risk Assessment in 2015. FCEM&HS and a committee of local subject matter experts provided input and scored hazards based on a pre-determined methodology. The document ranks the hazards in relation to each other allowing Franklin County to prioritize efforts based on the highest risks. The project was funded through Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant funds. The new hazard rankings and final document will be available in 2016.

**Dangerous Wild Animal Response Plan Updated:** In 2013, new legislation required stricter regulations for owning dangerous or exotic animals in Ohio. The law mandates each county to have a Dangerous Wild Animal Emergency Response Team (DWARD) and a dangerous wild animal response plan in the event a wild animal is released or escapes. The bill is in response to the 2011 incident in Muskingum County in which over 50 lions, tigers, bears and other wild animals were released. The law requires the plan to be reviewed and updated annually. FCEM&HS worked with local agencies and authorities to update the plan for Franklin County.

Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (FCEM&HS) continued to receive grant funding for training and projects to help improve local jurisdiction's abilities to prevent, protect, respond and recover from natural and man-made disasters.

In 2015, FCEM&HS received funding for an Indoor Early Warning System. The indoor warning receivers will be directly linked to the Franklin County Outdoor Warning Siren (OWS) System and sound when the OWS are activated. The system will allow more effective communication for at-risk populations who may be unable to hear the outdoor sirens.

## 2015 Grant Funding

### Grants Awarded FCEM&HS in 2015

Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant	\$5,616.00
FY14 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Supplemental	\$135,000.00
FY14 Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Exercise Grant	\$75,000.00
2014/2015 Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) Grant	\$18,893.11
FY15 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)	\$450,000.00
FY15 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) Grant	\$208,170.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$892,679.28</b>

## Joint Information Center (JIC) Upgrades



FCEM&HS Joint Information Center (JIC) Upgrades

The Franklin County Joint Information Center (JIC) was upgraded in 2015 through an FY14 Emergency Management Performance Special Projects Grant. Technological upgrades include a video conference system, desktop printer, podium, microphone, DVR system, 90 inch Monitor and redesign of current sound system.



Michael R. Pannell, Director



**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR**

On behalf of the Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Executive Committee, I would like to offer our sincere gratitude to the staff of Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (FCEM&HS) for another year of commendable service to the citizens of Franklin County.

In 2015, FCEM&HS launched ALERT Franklin County, a state-of-the-art mass notification and warning system used to alert residents about emergencies and other important community news in all 42 jurisdictions within Franklin County. The system enables officials to provide critical information directly to residents as emergencies happen via text message, phone and email. The Third Annual IRM Decision Maker Meeting was held to inform the leadership of Franklin County about achievements in the Integrated Risk Management Initiative and the Central Ohio Cybersecurity Initiative.

In addition, FCEM&HS achieved StormReady® Certification for Franklin County from the National Weather Service and conducted the Risk Ex'15 Fall Exercise, a full-scale, regional exercise designed to test information sharing and evaluate multiple jurisdictions' current response plans and capabilities. These achievements and others are concisely described in this report.

The members of the Executive Committee who represent all 42 jurisdictions are dedicated to achieving the highest level of preparedness for the safety of our citizens. We look forward to another successful year in 2016 as FCEM&HS implements a new Indoor Early Warning System which will work simultaneously with the Franklin County Outdoor Warning Siren System to further ensure the well-being and a more resilient community for the residents of Franklin County.

Jeff Young  
Fire Chief, City of Upper Arlington  
2015 FCEM&HS Executive Committee Chair

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**FCEM&HS 2015 CASH ANALYSIS (unaudited)**

**OPERATIONAL FUND (9029)**

BEGINNING CASH BALANCE JAN. 1, 2015	\$ 1,280,866
<b>2015 REVENUE SOURCES</b>	
Emergency Management Performance Grant	\$ 415,291
2015 Local Proportionate Shares	1,160,550
Other Income	86,482
Federal & State Grant Revenue	<u>896,526</u>
Total 2015 Operational Revenue Sources	\$ 2,558,849
<b>2015 EXPENDITURES</b>	
Salaries	\$ (709,618)
Benefits	(242,043)
Operations	(772,455)
Pass-Through Expenditures	(42,047)
Grant Funded Expenditures (Materials & Services)	<u>(894,442)</u>
Less Total 2015 Expenditures	<u>(2,660,605)</u>
ENDING CASH BALANCE DEC. 31, 2015	\$ 1,179,111

**WARNING FUND (9031)**

BEGINNING CASH BALANCE JAN. 1, 2015	\$ 505,477
<b>2015 REVENUE SOURCES</b>	
Annual Warning Fees	\$ 234,000
Purchase/Installation/Removal Reimbursement	14,777
Other Revenue	<u>          -</u>
Total Warning Revenue Received in 2015	\$ 248,777
<b>2015 EXPENDITURES</b>	
Warning Maintenance Expenditures	\$ (128,565)
Overhead Relegated to Warning	(5,751)
Pass-Through—New Sirens, Installs, Billable Purchases	<u>(14,777)</u>
Less Total 2015 Expenditures Warning	<u>(149,093)</u>
ENDING CASH BALANCE DEC. 31, 2015	\$ 605,161

*Note: all calculations are rounded.*



Michael R. Pannell, Director

FCEM&HS, a local government agency, coordinates countywide planning, education, warning, response and recovery to minimize the impacts of emergencies and disasters.