



TO: Delegates of QVCOG  
FR: Susan G. Hockenberry, Executive Director  
RE: Regional Emergency Management Agency Study Committee  
March 23, 2018

At the August 16, 2017 PI Team / Board Meeting of Quaker Valley Council of Governments (QVCOG), a presentation was made on Coordinated Rail Disaster Emergency Response. Initially placed on the agenda because of Delegates' concerns regarding the shared risk of rail disaster, the discussion emerged a broader discussion of municipal capacity to comply with the regulations of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) as well as overall preparedness.<sup>1</sup>

An outcome of the meeting was a request to Allegheny County Emergency Services to provide a program audit on the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) programs of the QVCOG member municipalities and that report was issued December 11, 2017 (attached).

As a follow up to the Programs Audit, it is requested that member municipalities express their interest in participating in a Regional Emergency Management Agency Study Committee by adopting the attached resolution by May 31, 2018. This Resolution is to assure good communication between QVCOG, member municipalities, and Allegheny County by clearly articulating the geography of the study area. Adopting the Resolution for the study is not tantamount to implementing its findings.

Although the Programs Audit Suggestions section discusses a paid position dedicated to emergency management, it is important to note that this was included in the Programs Audit as follow-up to the discussions at the August meeting. It is only one option that the study may propose, and no particular solution is sought for QVCOG communities.

Also noteworthy is that the study will focus on emergency management as a function and responsibility of local government--not evaluate first responder operations. Member communities are encouraged to engage with their first responders to gain their insight as well as assure good understanding about the study purpose.

In advance, thank you for sharing this memo, the Programs Audit, and Sample Resolution with your governing board members. Please introduce this Resolution at your April and May meetings and provide QVCOG a copy of the approved resolution by May 31, 2018. Feel free contact me if I may provide further information or assistance or if you would like a presentation at your municipality's meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> It was also felt that this was an appropriate follow up to the June 21, 2018 presentation on Public Libraries and Community Safety.

# Quaker Valley Council of Governments Emergency Management Programs Audit

December 11, 2017



Prepared by:

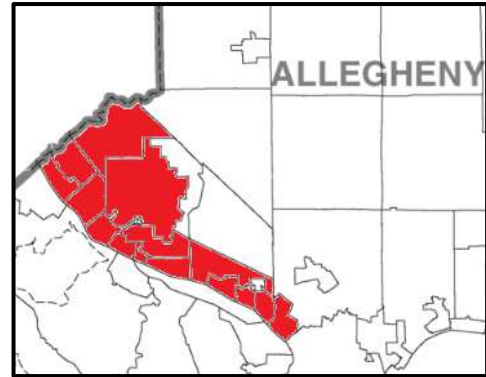
- Robert G. Gerlach, Training and Certification Coordinator  
Allegheny County Emergency Services  
Division of Emergency Management



# Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services Quaker Valley Council of Governments Emergency Management Programs Audit

## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to audit the various emergency management programs that encompass the Quaker Valley Council of Governments (QVCOG) and present a solution for improvement. This report is in reference to an event that the QVCOG held in August in which Allegheny County Emergency Services (ACES) was asked to attend. That event initially began with the intent to coordinate emergency response along the rail lines that is common to a majority of the member communities. It was determined that this was not the complete course of action needed and that a Regional Emergency Management District may better serve the community by reducing duplication of services and savings.



*QVCOG Member Municipalities*

The QVCOG is a non-profit organization that facilitates multi-municipal efforts and implements efficient, cost-effective programs on behalf of its members. A Council of Governments (COG) is a way for local governments to work together. Enabled by both the PA Constitution and the legislature, local governments voluntarily form COGs to accomplish more than individual municipalities can accomplish on their own. The beneficiaries are the residents and taxpayers of their communities; COGs reduce duplication and the costs of public services, improve an area's chances of obtaining grants, and facilitate planning and big picture thinking. Quaker Valley COG is established by the 15 member communities along Route 65 from the City of Pittsburgh line to the Allegheny County line. The members municipalities with statistical information listed in Table 1 to the right.

Municipality	Size (mile <sup>2</sup> )	Population
Aleppo Township	1.8	1,916
Avalon Borough	0.7	4,706
Bell Acres Borough	5.2	1,388
Bellevue Borough	1.1	8,370
Ben Avon Borough	0.5	1,781
Edgeworth Borough	1.7	1,680
Emsworth Borough	0.7	2,449
Glen Osborne Borough	0.6	547
Glenfield Borough	1.0	205
Haysville Borough	0.3	70
Kilbuck Township	2.6	697
Leet Township	1.6	1,634
Leetsdale Borough	1.1	1,218
Sewickley Borough	1.1	3,827
Sewickley Heights Borough	7.3	810
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>30,670</b>

*Table 1*

Pennsylvania Title 35, Section §7503 requires every local-level municipality to provide individually, or through an Intergovernmental Cooperation agreement with other political subdivisions to provide:

- Prepare, maintain and keep current a disaster emergency management plan for the prevention and minimization of injury and damage caused by disaster
- Establish, equip and staff an emergency operations center, consolidated with warning and communication systems
- Provide individual and organizational training programs to insure prompt, efficient and effective disaster emergency services
- Organize, prepare and coordinate all locally available manpower, materials, supplies, equipment, facilities and services necessary for disaster emergency readiness, response and recovery



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- Adopt and implement precautionary measures to mitigate the anticipated effects of disaster
- Execute and enforce such rules and orders as the agency shall adopt and promulgate under the authority of this part
- Cooperate and coordinate with any public and private agency or entity in achieving any purpose of this part
- Have available for inspection at its emergency operations center all emergency management plans, rules and orders of the Governor and the agency
- Provide prompt and accurate information regarding local disaster emergencies to appropriate Commonwealth and local officials and agencies and the general public
- Participate in all tests, drills and exercises, including remedial drills and exercises, scheduled by the agency or by the Federal Government
- Participate in the program of integrated flood warning systems

Furthermore, each municipality must have an emergency management coordinator who shall be responsible for the planning, administration, and operation of the local organization subject to the direction and control of the executive officer or governing body. At the local level, the coordinator shall be appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of the executive officer or governing body of the political subdivision. A candidate for coordinator for two or more political subdivisions may be recommended to the Governor for appointment upon agreement by resolution of the governing bodies of such political subdivisions.

At a minimum, Local Level Emergency Management Coordinators are required to:

- Attend three of four quarterly trainings held annually by the County
- Complete the requirements for Basic PEMA Certification within one year of appointment
- Complete the requirements for Advanced PEMA Certification within three years of appointment

Failure to meet these requirements as described for a period of two consecutive years shall be cause for replacement. It should be noted that each appointed coordinator, As per Title 35, shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties and attendance at scheduled meetings by the municipality.



**Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services  
Quaker Valley Council of Governments  
Emergency Management Programs Audit**

### Current Situation

This section will outline the status of emergency management programs for the QVCOS member municipalities. Table 2 illustrates each municipalities current level of compliance and status of their respective emergency management programs.

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>EOP Current</b>	<b>NIMS Adopted</b>	<b>HazMit Plan Adopted</b>	<b>Quarterly Training Attendance</b>	<b>Basic PEMA Certification</b>	<b>Advanced PEMA Certification</b>
Aleppo Township	Yes	No	Yes	0	Yes	Past Due
Avalon Borough	Expired 11/2005	No	No	1	Past Due	Past Due
Bell Acres Borough	Expired 11/2016	No	Yes	2	Yes	Yes
Bellevue Borough	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	Past Due
Ben Avon Borough	Expired 5/2003	No	Yes	0	Past Due	Past Due
Edgeworth Borough	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	Due in 2018	Due in 2020
Emsworth Borough	Yes	No	No	0	Past Due	Past Due
Glen Osborne Borough	Expired 6/2005	No	No	0	Due in 2018	Due in 2020
Glenfield Borough	None	No	No	<b>VACANT (No EMC)</b>	No	No
Haysville Borough	Expired 5/1999	No	No	0	Due in 2018	Due in 2020
Kilbuck Township	Expired 2006	No	No	0	No	No
Leet Township	Expired 2005	No	Yes	2	Due in 2018	Due in 2020
Leetsdale Borough	Expired 1/2017	No	Yes	3	No	No
Sewickley Borough	Expired 2008	No	Yes	3	No	No
Sewickley Heights Borough	Expired 12/2017	Yes	Yes	3	Due in 2018	Due in 2020
Aggregate Data	4 Current Plans	3 Adopted	9 Adopted	4 compliant	3 Compliant 5 Due in 2018	6 Compliant

*Table 2*

To explain the criteria above:

- Every municipality in Pennsylvania is to develop and maintain a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). A plan contains at least four volumes: the Basic Plan, the Notification and



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Resource Manual (NARM), Functional Checklists, and a Hazard Specific Annex. **Biennially** the plan is to be reviewed, updated as necessary, and promulgated by the elected body of the municipality. Only four municipalities have current EOP's.

- The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a comprehensive, national approach to incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. It is intended to:
  - Be applicable across a full spectrum of potential incidents, hazards, and impacts, regardless of size, location or complexity.
  - Improve coordination and cooperation between public and private entities in a variety of incident management activities.
  - Provide a common standard for overall incident management.

Consistent application of NIMS lays the groundwork for efficient and effective responses, from a single agency fire response to a multiagency, multijurisdictional natural disaster or terrorism response. Entities that have integrated NIMS into their planning and incident management structure can arrive at an incident with little notice and still understand the procedures and protocols governing the response, as well as the expectations for equipment and personnel.

Currently only three municipalities have adopted NIMS.

- Every municipality in the United States is required to develop and maintain a Hazard Mitigation (HazMit) Plan. This plan must be reviewed and revised every five years. To decrease the burden on local-level municipalities, the Federal Government permits municipalities to adopt the County-Level Plan. Allegheny County has a comprehensive HazMit Plan that all 130 municipalities may adopt in lieu of developing their own.

The effect of not adopting, or developing, a HazMit Plan is that the municipality will not be eligible for pre- and post- disaster hazard mitigation grant funding for projects to strengthen the community.

The process for adoption is by resolution by the elected body. The template form has been submitted to every municipality more than once, yet only nine municipalities in QVCOG have adopted the HazMit Plan

- As per PA Title 35, the appointed EMC of each municipality is required to attend at least three of four Quarterly Training sessions held by the County. Since the majority of the EMC's in Allegheny County are volunteer, Allegheny County Department of Emergency Service (ACES) holds two sessions each quarter to meet various schedules. Each quarter, on the same day, the ACES quarterly training starts at 1 PM with an evening session at 7 PM.

Four of the 15 QVCOG municipal EMC's are compliant with their training requirement attendance. Furthermore, there is one QVCOG municipality that does not have an appointed coordinator.

- As noted previously, all local-level EMC's are required to attain PEMA Basic Certification within one year of appointment and then achieve PEMA Advanced Certification within three years of appointment. Seven QVCOG EMC's are compliant with the Basic Certification with three achieving the certification and four are not due until 2018. As for the Advanced Certification, on **ONE** QVCOG EMC has achieved this requirement. Five are not due until 2020.



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This state of the various emergency management programs mirrors issues in volunteer fire departments throughout the region. These problems are a result of the growing shortage of new volunteers. For example, in the 1970's there were approximately 300,00 volunteer firefighters. Today that number is just under 50,000. Volunteer Emergency Medical Services has seen a similar decline. Furthermore, a majority of all volunteer agencies are seeing less and less volunteers.



## Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services Quaker Valley Council of Governments Emergency Management Programs Audit

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### Suggestions

This process started with asking “Is our current hazmat response a train wreck?” The answer to that is yes and no. No, because Allegheny County sponsors five regional HazMat Teams that can come together as one and they possess the experience and knowledge to handle these types of incidents. Yes, is indicated on a local level. A HazMat Team may take over an hour to arrive and then must set up before evaluating the incident. The first line of defense is the local responders: Police, Fire, EMS, and EMA.

Creating a paid position dedicated to the emergency management necessities of the QVCOG municipalities should assist in keeping them compliant with the requirements. This position will also directly benefit the community by being available to present community outreach programs to increase community awareness. A centralized COG EMA would reduce the duplication of services and maximize monies each municipality allocates to EMA. Currently, if compliance, each municipality must individually pay for or provide an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and EMA supplies. With a QVCOG EMA, there would be, at the minimum, one EOC for all of the municipalities, one Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), and individual EMA budgets can be combined for greater resource acquisition and training. Furthermore, the pooling of allocated individual municipalities budgeted money for EMA will better serve as a larger pot for the coordination of EMA for the region.

While it may appear that combining the QVCOG into one Regional EMA, take in account that the entire QVCOG member municipalities are similar in size and population of the Borough of Plum. Plum, also located in Allegheny County, has a population of 28,386 and is 29.0 square miles. They have one EMA system that meets the needs of their community, thus a QVCOG EMA is achievable.

Allegheny County Emergency Services promotes the regionalization of the County’s municipal emergency management programs to better serve the community and will provide all assistance that is necessary. All that is required to start the process is two, or more, contiguous municipalities to be interested.



**A Resolution of (Municipality) establishing participation in the  
Quaker Valley Council of Government Regional Emergency Management Study**

**March 20, 2017**

WHEREAS the Pennsylvania Title Section 35, Section 7503 requires every local-level municipality to provide individually or through an Intergovernmental Cooperation agreement with other political subdivisions to:

- Prepare, maintain and keep current a disaster emergency management plan for the prevention and minimization of injury and damage caused by disaster
- Establish, equip and staff an emergency operations center, consolidated with warning and communication systems
- Provide individual and organizational training programs to insure prompt, efficient and effective disaster emergency services
- Organize, prepare and coordinate all locally available manpower, materials, supplies, equipment, facilities and services necessary for disaster emergency readiness, response and recovery
- Adopt and implement precautionary measures to mitigate the anticipated effects of disaster
- Execute and enforce such rules and orders as the agency shall adopt and promulgate under the authority of this part
- Cooperate and coordinate with any public and private agency or entity in achieving any purpose of this part
- Have available for inspection at its emergency operations center all emergency management plans, rules and orders of the Governor and the agency
- Provide prompt and accurate information regarding local disaster emergencies to appropriate Commonwealth and local officials and agencies and the general public
- Participate in all tests, drills and exercises, including remedial drills and exercises, scheduled by the agency or by the Federal Government
- Participate in the program of integrated flood warning systems
- Have an emergency management coordinator who shall be responsible for the planning, administration and operation of the local organization subject to the direction and control of the executive officer or governing body, AND

WHEREAS, (Municipality) is a member of Quaker Valley Council of Governments (QVCOG) for the purpose of improving efficiency and effectiveness of local government AND,

WHEREAS QVCOG provides various services to its members including receiving a Programs Audit of the Emergency Management Programs within the Quaker Valley Council of Governments, conducted by Allegheny County Emergency Services as requested by Quaker Valley Council of Governments at its August 16, 2018 meeting, AND

WHEREAS the Programs Audit dated December 11, 2017 revealed various levels of compliance with state regulations and services to the public, AND

WHEREAS Allegheny County Emergency Services is possessing of expertise to advise local municipalities on staying compliant with emergency management requirements, AND

WHEREAS **(Municipality)** recognizes there may be efficiency and improvements occurring if a multi-municipal approach to emergency management were taken

NOW THEREFORE **(Municipality)** does hereby resolve that:

1. **(Municipality)** hereby joins the QVCOG Regional Emergency Management Agency Study Committee
2. **(Municipality)** requests technical assistance from Allegheny County Emergency Services in identifying intergovernmental solutions to various gaps in compliance identified in the Program Audit dated December 11, 2017
3. **(Municipality)** will designate its **(Municipal Manager or Other official)** as its representative to the Committee
4. **(Municipality)** understands that the results of the Regional Emergency Management Agency Study Committee are non-binding and advisory only,
5. **(Municipality)** must inform QVCOG of the adoption of this Resolution by May 31, 2018,
6. **(Municipality)** understands that QVCOG and Allegheny County will review the number of resolutions adopted to determine if a viable geographic study area exists and that if the QVCOG and Allegheny County determine a viable area does not exist, the study will not proceed and **(municipality)** will be informed by June 29, 2018

Entered into as a joint resolution on the dates set forth below.

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Governing Board President  
Municipality

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Governing Board President  
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