



Local Emergency Planning Committee

Gem County LEPC
July 20th, 2021
Meeting Minutes

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Gem County Local Emergency Planning Committee is an organized gathering of community members, response agencies, organizations, and public officials, sanctioned by Congress to work together prior to any emergency, natural or man-made disaster, or hazardous material incident, in an attempt to improve planning, response, and coordination as well as the mutual understanding of capabilities and resources to the situation.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Gem County Local Emergency Planning Committee is to enhance capabilities in order to successfully mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergency situations in Gem Co community.

In Attendance:

Laurie Boston, Gem Co. EM
Bill Butticci, Gem Co. Commissioner
Curt Christensen, Emmett Fire Dept.
Tim Garity, Emmett Ranger Dist.
Adam Gonzalez, Payette Co. EM
Jason Kinley, Mosquito Abatement
Joe Mayer, Member of the Public
Jessica McBride, 101st WMD CST
Kandice Rembelski, Valley Family Health Care
Denise Sorenson, Emmett City Councilman

Will Babcock, Emmett Police Dept.
Staci Carr, Valor Health
Bryan Elliott, Gem Co. Commissioner
Liz Gochnour, LEPC Secretary
Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor’s Office
Bev Martin, Gem Co. Sheriff’s Posse/
Fire Dist. #2
Mark Rekow, Gem Co. Commissioner
Jake Silvester, Gem Co. Prosecutor’s Office-Extern
Barbara Weber, American Red Cross
TJ Wilson, Southwest Dist. Health

Meeting called to order by Curt Christensen at 8:30a.m.

Approval of June 15th Minutes:

- Motion to approve June 15th minutes by Bill Butticci. 2nd by Bev Martin.

Heroes & Ice Cream/First Responder Community Event – Denise Sorenson, Emmett City Council:

- It will be held Tuesday, August 3rd at 6pm in the Emmett City Park.
- Kiwanis wanted to do an event to help our youth develop a relationship with our first responders outside of a tragic event. National Night Out Against Crime is an event that is held the first Tuesday in August every year. Heroes & Ice Cream is Emmett/Gem County’s National Night Out.
- Kiwanis, City of Emmett, Emmett Police Department, City Fire, Gem County Fire/EMS, Gem County Emergency Management, National Guard, Sherriff’s Posse, and the Gem County Sherriff’s Department will all be present.
- The first year, over 500 ice cream and snow cones were served. We are adding popcorn this year as well. Fire will have trucks spraying water in the park.
- Laurie will email the flyer. Please reach out to Denise for any questions.

Cruise Night Overview – Will Babcock, Deputy Chief of Police:

- Patrol cars were placed in areas around the cruise to keep officers hydrated and cool due to the extreme heat.
- Caldwell Police Department’s Street Crimes Unit, Valley County, Weiser, and two Emmett reserve officers assisted with Cruise Night. There were around 25 officers walking the cruise.

- Overall, it was not as busy as cruise nights have been in the past and numbers have been declining over the years.

AWR 148 Crisis Management for School-Base Incidents Class on 11/4 – Laurie Boston, Gem County Emergency Manager:

- This training will be held Thursday, November 4th at Emmett City Hall Chambers. It is an all-day training. Registration information should be available by the August LEPC meeting.
- First Responders, the Critical Incident Stress Management Team, school Administrators, school Resource Officers, or anyone that is interested in attending this class is welcome to come.
- It is being offered by the Rural Domestic Consortiums to partner law enforcement and first responders with schools to make sure there is a plan and response to school-based incidents.

Public Comments:

- No public comments at this time.

General Reports:

- **Tim Garity, Emmett Ranger District:** They are in Stage 1 fire restrictions. They are patrolling the areas to make sure people are following restrictions. Dead fuels are extremely dry.
- **Cpt. Jessica McBride, 101st WMD CST:** They will be in Twin Falls next week for their every 18 months certification. There will be a Region 3 exercise tentatively scheduled for February 2022. They will be reaching out looking for a venue and to see if Region 3 Hazmat would like to attend.
- **Bill Buttici, Gem Co. Commissioner:** The Commissioners passed Impact Fees which should bring in some finances to help the EMS, Sherriff's Department, and Fire Districts in the next 30 days. Last month, power was lost in Dispatch during one of the storms. Keller Engineering is coming out to look at the power system to prevent power loss in the future. Road crews are out doing chip sealing. The Gem County Fair has been moved up a week to July 28th – July 31st.
- **Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor's Office:** Long-time Prosecutor Dick Linville retired July 1st. Denyce Thompson-Udink will be the new Prosecutor primarily handling the criminal calendar that Dick had.
- **Laurie Boston, Gem Co. Emergency Manager:** Across the County, there have been COVID surges due to the variant. There have been 26 cases since July 6th with 1 death. SWDH has identified 4 variants within the community since May. 15% of cases has been contributed to the Cherry Festival. Please continue to take precautions.
- **Bev Martin, Fire District #2/Ola Community:** The June 22nd storm that hit the upper country downed extremely large trees and damaged buildings. Community members helped to clear roads with chainsaws that had been blocked by downed trees. There was a fatality at Sage Hen and several injuries with one person needed to be Life Flighted out. Two cars were crushed by trees at Sage Hen. A back hoe was needed to clear downed trees and debris from 3rd Fork Rd and the Woodard camp area. A fire South of Ola was put out by rain. The incident was reviewed at the Ola training and their truck will be equipped with a few more chainsaws.
- **Kandice Rembelski, Valley Family Health Care:** VFHC currently has all 3 COVID vaccines. They are available five days a week.
- **Denise Sorensen, City of Emmett/Senior Center:** The City of Emmett has worked very hard with the Senior Center to stay open to serve lunch during the road construction. They have made sure there are routes open to the Senior Center.
- **Chief Christensen, City Fire:** There is a Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) in place and ready to deploy if needed. Leadership is working through how they will deploy and train new members. During the recent storm, power went out around town as well as Dispatch. Fire Fighters immediately came to the station to hook up the generator and had phones working. People were able to

call the Fire Station to ask for assistance. A man came to the station saying that his house was on fire. Since Fire Fighters were already at the station, response time was phenomenal. One complication was trying to get through to Idaho Power to get the power turned off to the downed line to safely put out the fire. The Idaho Fire Chiefs have been working collaboratively to combat fire season. This has been one of the worst droughts with hot and dry weather with a ton of fuels. There could potentially be a low response on a federal level due to staffing. There is a weekly conference call with the Idaho Fire Chiefs every Monday. Anyone that would like to listen in is welcome. Curt will send the information to Laurie to send to the group.

- **Barbara Weber, American Red Cross:** They are in readiness mode for wild fire season and standing by to help. The Red Cross has already assisted in the Snake River Complex and Dixie fire with open shelters and evacuations.
- **Staci Carr, Valor Health:** The thirty-day trend is at 12.88% and the seven day trend is just over 11%. They have been watching the variants. Vaccines are available through the Family Medicine clinic. Urgent Care is back open seven days a week.
- **Jason Kinley, Mosquito Abatement District:** It has been a challenging mosquito season. The hot weather has shortened the development rate for the mosquitos. The time from hatching to adulthood is 3 days. They have been struggling to keep up with the increased development rate. The amount of standing water in Gem County, the challenges of the amount of growth in the area, and being short staffed have all contributed. An aerial application was approved and arranged for over 10,000 acres. There was over a 95% control rate for the area in almost every area of the application area. The Gem County Sports Complex was the outlier, most likely due to the river. How you can help: Drain your standing water, do not over irrigate, refresh live-stock troughs. Please report anyone that you see with standing water on their property. They only have 3 days to treat the area before the mosquitos are fully developed. No West Nile has been detected in the mosquitos that have been trapped in the Gem County areas. Other counties have started to see West Nile. Canyon County detected it in June. They currently have 4 full-time positions open starting at \$15 an hour.
- **TJ Wilson, Southwest District Health:** They are still tracking COVID cases. Over the weekend from Friday to Monday, there were 43 confirmed cases. They are still receiving calls from people wanting to get the vaccine. Land development and growth is keeping their environmental health department busy. They are being diligent regarding the Delta variant.

Motion to adjourn at 9:16 am. by TJ Wilson. 2nd by Bill Butticci.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 17th at 8:30 am. Direction will be provided at a later date on whether the meeting will be in person or remote.