

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

2018

2018 continued to be a year where a variety of weather events determined emergency management response. The annual fire department report indicates that there were 43 incidents of trees and wires down requiring response from the fire department which provides the primary source for emergency response. Fortunately these responses did not require opening the Emergency Operations Center. These were calls that may have taken several hours but did not necessitate opening the EOC. The winter storm floods did require opening the EOC for a short time to manage resources, take phone calls away from Hanover Dispatch, and to gather equipment and personnel to respond to flooding in the downtown area. As this report was being written, we just had a winter rain storm producing minor flooding on Potato Road, Transfer Station Road and in several basements. Fortunately this last storm did not require much emergency management response.

Concerning wind events that bring down power lines, it is always good to prepare for the next event by making sure that residents stock extra batteries for flashlights, check the status of emergency generators with fuel supplies, and take all other necessary precautions before the next town wide emergency occurs. Homeowners can check restoration efforts by utility companies by looking at power outage maps on cell phones if cell service is still available from the tower or internet if available. Residents should also have a communication plan to stay in touch with family and friends during an emergency and a relocation meeting point should they have to leave their residence.

The floods in November of 2017 and January 2018 did not last a long time, but they did require considerable volunteer personnel to place sandbags around property in downtown Canaan to minimize damage. This type of flooding activity and emergency response in the Village is likely to continue unless a flood remediation program is accepted and/or funded by the state of New Hampshire or through FEMA. If you are living in a floodplain area please make sure your flood insurance is up to date. Also take the necessary steps to protect your valuable possessions and documents ahead of time when you can calmly and safely organize. Keep documents in a waterproof container and in a location in your house where they may be removed quickly from your

house should you need to evacuate. If you have a basement that floods during heavy rains or frozen ground or possibly frozen drains, also make plans now to protect your furnace and other appliances in the basement. Have 1 or 2 sump pumps to handle the water that suddenly comes in at the worst time of the year. Now is the best time to plan as we never know completely how the weather will affect us locally. It is frequently different from forecasts.

There are good resources available at the FEMA website and at the NH Department of Emergency Management with lots of suggestions to be prepared.

William Bellion
Emergency Management Director