



Ice Storm

December 2008

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EMA Director
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ICE STORM 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ice Storm that passed through the Town of Falmouth on December 11th - 14th caused power outages to nearly the entire community. History has shown it very unusual for the entire Town to be without power. During many storms, including the 2006 Patriots Day Storm and the 1998 Ice Storm, while power outages have been widespread, there are normally areas of town that remain with power. Our bordering communities of Cumberland, Portland, Westbrook, and Windham, along with much of Cumberland and York Counties, experienced major outages during this storm as well.

The storm also had caused major problems in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, thus limiting the amount of regional power crews available to help in Maine. Central Maine Power called in crews from many locations throughout the United States and Canada. The end result was that the majority of Falmouth residents were without power from the early morning of December 12th through the late afternoon of December 13th. Some neighborhoods remained without power through the weekend.

Cumberland County Emergency Management officials began sending out detailed weather forecasts beginning on December 10th. While the storm had proven dangerous in Southern New England, the early reports forecast the storm to pass to the West of Sebago Lake. The Town of Falmouth was forecast to receive some freezing rain and minimal icing. This forecast remained intact until approximately 10:00 p.m. on Thursday December 11th when the Winter Weather Advisory was upgraded to a Winter Storm Warning with the potential for significant icing in Falmouth and surrounding areas.

The emergency calls for downed power lines, trees blocking roads and alarms sounding began in the early hours of December 12th and continued through the afternoon of the 14th. Throughout the event all emergency calls were handled by the staff of various Town Departments, many of whom had no power or heat in their own homes. Crews were rotated but the volume of calls received required multiple crews working many incidents simultaneously. When a fire erupted on Foreside Road the Falmouth Fire-EMS Department was aided by crews from Cumberland and Portland to supply the firefighters and equipment needed, since many of Falmouth's assets were tied up at two other scenes.

No serious injuries were reported during the weekend. Many homes encountered water damage when sump pumps were not able to operate without power. Several fire and burglar alarms were caused by the fluctuations of the power. Others were caused by the duration of the power outage outlasting the life of the battery backup systems.

The Ice Storm Recap meeting held on December 23rd provided a meaningful dialogue between several town departments. Lessons were learned during the event and a list of needs and areas of improvement were created. The next steps the group envisioned were a review of the lists as well an examination of brainstorming ideas and collaborative work that should help better prepare the Town of Falmouth for the next major emergency.

ICE STORM 2008

FALMOUTH EMA TIMELINE

- 12/10/08 @ 1320 hrs - E-mail rec'd from County EMA re: storm
 - Updated Forecast from National Weather Service (NWS)
- 12/10/08 @ 1415 hrs – E-mail to Falmouth Police Chief, Public Works Director, Fire-EMS Assistant Chief, and Town Manager to alert of incoming storm.
 - Advised all to prepare apparatus and equipment
 - E-mail forwarded to Council by Town Manager
 - E-mail forward to entire Fire-EMS Officers Group by Fire Chief
- 12/10/08 @ 1539 hrs - Falmouth EMA e-mail group created
 - Town Administration – Nathan Poore, Amy Lamontagne
 - Fire-EMS – Howard Rice, Doug Patey, Jay Hallett
 - Police – Ed Tolan, John Kilbride, Al Twombly
 - Public Works – Skip Varney, Jeff Buxton
- 12/11/08 @ 0839 hrs – Updated forecast e-mail to Falmouth EMA Group
 - Bulls-eye reported to be west of Sebago Lake
 - However still a possibility for freezing rain and icing conditions
 - More information would be available at 1100 hrs meeting
- 12/11/08 @ 1000 hrs – Conference Call with County EMA Directors
 - Discussed weather forecast from NWS – Gray
 - Discussed preparations at state, county and local level
 - Towns and County traded contact information
- 12/11/08 @ 1100 hrs – Falmouth EMA Group meeting at Central Fire Station to discuss plans for storm
 - Discussed preparations being made at the Police Department, Fire-EMS Department, and Public Works
 - Discussed updated weather forecast
- 12/11/08 @ 1127 hrs – Update sent out to Falmouth EMA Group
 - Forwarded update received from County EMA on a 1000 hrs MEMA conference call.
- 12/11/08 @ 1155 hrs – E-mail to County EMA
 - Advised County EMA that Falmouth was considering opening shelter based on potential forecast

- 12/11/08 @ 1330 hrs - Conference Call with County EMA Directors
 - Discussed updated forecast – bulls-eye still expected west of Sebago Lake
 - County and State Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) were opened

- 12/11/08 @ 1409 hrs – e-mail to Falmouth EMA Group and Falmouth Fire-EMS Officers group
 - Update from County 1330 hrs conference call
 - County EOC and State EOC were opened
 - Weather forecast remained unchanged

- 12/11/08 @ 1628 hrs – first Fire-EMS emergency related to storm
 - Motor Vehicle Crash on Blackstrap Road – roads beginning to ice over

- 12/11/08 @ 2150 hrs – Phone call from Falmouth EMA Director to Dispatch
 - Checking status of any outages or other emergencies – none thus far

- 12/11/08 @ 2157 hrs – E-mail to Falmouth EMA Group
 - Update of weather forecast – storm upgraded to “warning” from “watch”
 - Update on status from dispatch – reporting no issues at this time
 - Alerting group that outages and other problems likely through the night

- 12/12/08 @ 0225 hrs- Transformer on fire on Middle Road
 - Beginning of multiple storm related calls
 - There would be 26 more incidents before 10:00 a.m.

- 12/12/08 @ 0830 hrs – Conference Call with County EMA Directors
 - Communities provided overviews of damage to County
 - Significant power outage issues occurred along the coast and particularly in Scarborough, Cape Elizabeth, Falmouth, South Portland, Portland, North Yarmouth, Freeport, Harpswell, Brunswick, and Chebeague Island
 - Several Roads were closed throughout the County
 - CMP reported that the balance of the day today will be spent "making safe" as well as much of the day on Saturday. Real power restoration efforts may not begin until Sunday.

- 12/12/08 @ 1000 hrs - Conference Call with County EMA Directors
 - CMP Update
 - Discussion of Shelters
 - Discussion of weekend weather forecast
 - Request to start tracking costs

- 12/12/08 @ 1200 hrs – Conference Call with County EMA, Red Cross, and Falmouth, Freeport, Westbrook, South Portland, Portland, Cumberland, Cape Elizabeth EMA Directors to discuss shelters
 - Discussed notifications to be made to open shelters
 - Red Cross discussed options available for staffing
 - Falmouth, Portland, and South Portland were to be the 3 staffed regional Red Cross shelters

- 12/12/08 @ 1200 hrs – Ambulance and crew responded to Sedgewood Commons to check and discuss power and heat status
 - Staff advised all was ok

- 12/12/08 @ 1215 hrs – Ambulance and crew responded to Oceanview to check and discuss power and heat status
 - Staff advised all was ok

- 12/12/08 @ 1230 hrs – Ambulance and crew responded to Foreside Harbor and Falmouth By The Sea to check and discuss power and heat status
 - Staff advised all was ok

- 12/12/08 @ 1230 hrs – Falmouth EMA Group Meeting at Police Station
 - Discussed recent info from County and CMP and current needs of Town
 - Created plans for opening shelter and providing rides to shelter
 - Created press release for opening the shelter
 - Created list that dispatch would record for those needing shelter

- 12/12/08 @ 1400 hrs – Shelter Opened at Falmouth High School
 - Falmouth EMA Director, Falmouth Police Chief, Fire-EMS crews, Police Officers, and School Maintenance Staff Opened Shelter at High School
 - Police Department Sign Message Board placed at entrance to high school
 - Falmouth Fire-EMS Lieutenant named Shelter Manager
 - Crew from Falmouth Fire-EMS plus 1 volunteer provided shelter staff

- 12/12/08 @ 1530 hrs - Conference Call with Falmouth EMA Director and County EMA Directors to update all on power outages
 - Discussion of shelter status and warming hut locations
 - Info from Mercy Hospital for medical needs

- 12/12/08 @ 1611 hrs – E-mail to Falmouth EMA Group
 - Update on use of High School Shelter
 - Update on number of current outages statewide
 - Update on schedule of power coming on for Woodville, Leighton and Falmouth Road

- 12/12/08 @ 1830 hrs – EMA Director visited High School Shelter
 - Brought hot food for shelter occupants and volunteers
 - Checked on status and needs – advised all set

- 12/13/08 @ 0230 hrs – Structure Fire on Foreside Road
 - Fire in walls of multi-family residence
 - Assistance received from Portland, Cumberland, and Salvation Army Canteen Unit

- 12/13/08 @ 0830 hrs – Phone Call to Falmouth Community Programs Director
 - Discussion over use of high school for community programs

- 12/13/08 @ 1100 hrs – EMA Director visited High School Shelter
 - Spoke to residents at shelter
 - Notified occupant that her power was back on at her residence
 - Contacted EMS to transport of an occupant back to her residence

- 12/13/08 @ 1200 hrs – Meeting between Falmouth EMA Director and Police Chief and with Town Manager via cell phone
 - Update on use of High School Shelter
 - Update on Emergency Incidents

- 12/13/08 @ 1200 hrs – Ambulance and crew responded to Oceanview to check and discuss power and heat status
 - Staff advised all was ok

- 12/13/08 @ 1230 hrs – Falmouth EMA Director tour of High School Shelter
 - Met with Red Cross Shelter Staff
 - Discussed Needs at Shelter

- 12/13/08 @ 1230 hrs – Ambulance and crew responded to Sedgewood Commons to check and discuss power and heat status
 - Staff advised all was ok

- 12/13/08 @ 1300 hrs – Ambulance and crew responded to Foreside Harbor and Falmouth By The Sea to check and discuss power and heat status
 - Staff advised all was ok

- 12/13/08 @ 1540 hrs – E-mail to Falmouth EMA Group
 - Update on use of High School Shelter
 - Update on current outages in Falmouth
 - Update on numbers and types of calls received by Police and Fire
 - Update on Communications with Falmouth Community Programs

- 12/13/08 @ 1830 hrs – EMA Director visited shelter
 - Checked on status of occupants and volunteers
 - Last occupant of shelter had left around 1800 hrs

- 12/13/08 @ 2200 hrs – Phone Call with Falmouth EMA Director and Red Cross to discuss status of shelter.
 - Since there were no residents at the shelter, the decision was made to close shelter on 12/14/08 @ 1000 hrs.

- 12/13/08 @ 2209 hrs – E-mail to Falmouth EMA Group
 - Forwarded decision to close shelter

- 12/14/08 @ 0700 hrs – Phone Call with Falmouth EMA Director and Red Cross to discuss status of shelter.
 - Shelter Closing operation started
 - E-mail sent to County EMA to change 211 and notify press
 - Phone Call to Dispatch with press release info

- 12/14/08 @ 0713 hrs – E-mail to Falmouth EMA Group and Falmouth Community Programs Director
 - Notification that Shelter Officially Closed

- 12/19/08 @ 1641 hrs – Maine Emergency Management Agency’s Damage Assessment Form (Form 7) compiled and sent to County EMA
 - Initial estimate of damage in Falmouth was \$37,398.28
 - As more estimates came in the Form 7 was adjusted

- 12/30/08 @ 1226 hrs – E-mail from Cumberland County EMA
 - Preliminary Damage Assessment figures reached the threshold for the County to ask the State for an Emergency Declaration
 - Cumberland County will now be incorporated into the Governor's Presidential Disaster Declaration Request (with York County)

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FALMOUTH FIRE-EMS INCIDENTS

12/11/08

1628 hrs – Motor Vehicle Crash on Blackstrap Road

12/12/08

0225 hrs - Transformer Fire on pole on Middle Road

0311 hrs – Fire Alarm on Hat Trick Drive

0313 hrs – Medical Emergency on Blueberry Lane

0317 hrs – Wires Down on Middle Road

0434 hrs – Branch Burning on Wires on Brook Road

0515 hrs – Carbon Monoxide Alarm on Clearwater Drive

0518 hrs – Wires Down on Just-A-Mere Road

0610 hrs – Wires Down on Foreside Road

0637 hrs – Water Problem on Leighton Road

0648 hrs – Wires Down on Heather Lane

0651 hrs – Wires Down on Johnson Road

0652 hrs – Wires Down on Brook Road

0723 hrs – Fire Alarm on Fundy Road

0724 hrs – Tree Down Blocking Road on Allen Avenue Extension

0733 hrs – Wires Down on Ledgewood Drive

0746 hrs – Water Problem on Eugene Street

0751 hrs – Wires Down on Amerscoggin Road

0821 hrs – Wires Down on Whitney Road

0839 hrs – Tree Fallen on House on Hurricane Road

0851 hrs – Wires Down on Middle Road

0852 hrs – Wires Down on Edgewater Road

0859 hrs – Mutual Aid Tanker response to Bruce Hill Road in Cumberland

0901 hrs – Wires Down on Mast Road

0921 hrs – Water Problem on Brown Street

0937 hrs – Medical Emergency on Falmouth Road

0939 hrs – Water Problem on Eugene Street

1008 hrs – Water Problem on Old Mill Road

1052 hrs – Water Problem on Hedgerow Drive

1132 hrs – Tree on Fire in Wires on Brook Road

1200 hrs – EMS to Sedgewood Commons to check and discuss power and heat status

1215 hrs – Engine Company to Oceanview to check and discuss power and heat status

1230 hrs – EMS to Foreside Harbor and Falmouth By The Sea at 191 Foreside Road to to check and discuss power and heat status

1249 hrs – Water Problem on Brackett Road

1301 hrs – Fire Alarm on Northbrook Drive

1434 hrs – Water Problem on Merrill Road

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FALMOUTH FIRE-EMS INCIDENTS

12/12/08 continued

1535 hrs – Fire Alarm on Route 1
1608 hrs – Water Problem on Middle Road
1653 hrs – Station Coverage
1754 hrs – Fire Alarm on Landing Woods Lane
1802 hrs – Medical Emergency on Route 1 in Cumberland
1842 hrs – Fire Alarm on Lunt Road
1940 hrs – Wires Arcing on Clifton Road
2052 hrs – Carbon Monoxide Alarm on Greta Way
2220 hrs – Medical Emergency on Northbrook Drive

12/13/08

0007 hrs – Carbon Monoxide Alarm on Woodlands Road
0157 hrs – Ammonia Smell on Hat Trick Drive
0202 hrs – Fire Alarm on Lunt Road
0230 hrs – Structure Fire on Foreside Road
0259 hrs – Fire Alarm on Route 1
0526 hrs – Public Assist on Lunt Road
0548 hrs – Fire Alarm on Fundy Road
0613 hrs – Fire Alarm on Route 1
0617 hrs – Water Flow Alarm on Route 1
0840 hrs – Chimney Fire on Mast Road
0847 hrs – Sprinkler Flow Alarm on Route 1
0856 hrs – EMS transport occupant of Fundy Road to High School Shelter
0940 hrs – Sprinkler Flow Alarm on Congressional Drive
1014 hrs – Public Assist on Foreside Road
1116 hrs – EMS transport occupant of Shelter to Residence on Fundy Road
1230 hrs – EMS to Sedgewood Commons to check and discuss power and heat status
1200 hrs – EMS to Oceanview to check and discuss power and heat status
1300 hrs – EMS to Foreside Harbor and Falmouth By The Sea to check and discuss power and heat status
1302 hrs – Fire Alarm on Lady Cove Lane
1324 hrs – Water Flow Alarm on Route 1
1327 hrs – Fire Alarm on Foreside Road
1344 hrs – Motor Vehicle Crash on Ledgewood Drive
1737 hrs – Carbon Monoxide Alarm on Lakeside Drive
2041 hrs – Medical Emergency on Applegate Lane

Falmouth Police Department

For the period of 0200 hours December 12th
to 1600 hours December 14th

Communications Center Activities

The Communications Center was the central location for communication for the citizens and the emergency service divisions. The center:

- Answered 970 incoming telephone calls that ranged from requests for assistance to informational questions
- Dispatched 277 *Requests for Service* for PD, FD, EMS and DPW
 - Of the 277 *Requests for Service*, 75 were Fire and EMS calls
- Responded to many walk-in requests at the lobby window
- Dispatched DPW for barricade requests, road closures, stop sign requests and removal of branches and trees in the roadway
- Placed numerous calls to CMP for updates and emergency assistance for the fire department
- Dispatched 38 burglary and fire alarm calls due to power issues
- Provided shelter information to callers
- Dispatched officers to well-being checks from relatives out of state who were concerned for their family members who resided in Falmouth

Patrol Division Activities

During the storm the Patrol Division experienced an influx of storm related calls that required increased staffing. The Patrol Division:

- Assigned 202 *Calls for Service* to officers during the three day event.
 - This is an increase of 45 calls over a normal winter weekend.
- Assigned three officers to assist setting up the shelter
- Assigned an officer to deliver and activate the sign board at the high school to display to the public that the shelter was open.
- Assigned one officer to the shelter during the evening hours for security.
- Assigned one officer to dispatch to assist with the increase of *Calls for Service*.
- Increased patrol coverage to perform building checks of business due to there being no power for nearly two days on Route 1
- Assigned officers as needed to assist Fire, EMS and Public Works.
- Responded to several well-being checks from relatives out of state who were concerned for their family members who resided in Falmouth
- Made available officers to transport elderly citizens to the shelter if requested after operating hours.

The Patrol Division handled the normal volume of calls, thefts, domestics, accidents and alarms, but no *Crimes of Opportunity* were related from the Ice Storm.

ICE STORM 2008 REVIEW

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS - 12/23/08

Introductions / Role(s) During Event -

Emergency Management (EMA) – Fire Chief Howard Rice discussed his role as EMA Director. To focus on EMA items, Deputy Hallett was placed in charge of day to day operations of the department for most of the weekend. As EMA Director, Chief Rice monitored the incoming weather reports, provided information updates to Sr. Staff, drafted press releases, and kept an open dialogue with Cumberland County EMA as well as neighboring towns through their EMA Directors and Fire Chiefs.

Public Works – Director Skip Varney discussed the need to keep crews working on the roads. Director Varney attended EMA meetings throughout the storm. He directed crews to constantly keep roads open by clearing debris in addition to plowing, salting, and sanding. Public Works had nine plow trucks and two pickups working.

Fire-EMS Department – Deputy Fire Chief Jay Hallett was the Area Incident Commander. The Fire-EMS Department used an Area Command structure whereby Deputy Hallett coordinated all Fire and EMS units through a central point. Each separate incident was managed by the company officers on scene, with each separate scene answering to Deputy Hallett as the overall Area Incident Commander. During the bulk of the storm the Fire Stations were all staffed with personnel. The Fire-EMS Department assisted in putting out barricades with the two pickup trucks. The department also performed well-being checks to nursing homes and senior housing residents.

Police Department – Police Chief Ed Tolan discussed his role working with dispatch, the police department, and with the EMA Director. Chief Tolan and PD staff helped facilitate EMA meeting at the Police Department as well as the deployment of the Shelter Trailer and various traffic signs. Lieutenant Kilbride discussed his role of coordinating the increased patrol needs due to the storm and related incidents. Lt. Kilbride worked with his staff to fill shifts and provide security at the shelter overnight. Officer Twombly discussed his role as working with the EMA Group and Fire-EMS crews to provide signage for intersections with no stop lights. He also coordinated the delivery and inventory of the shelter trailer, in addition to his patrol duties.

Wastewater Department – Superintendent Pete Clark discussed the role of trying to keep the sewer department functioning despite the loss of all power. Working with his staff, he had to coordinate the operation and moving of generators to keep the pump stations in operation, as well as finding fuel to supply the generators. At 0100 hrs on the 12th, 13 pump stations were without power and without backup power systems. The department hired a vacuum truck to service the small pump stations to prevent a backup.

Town Manager – Town Manager Nathan Poore discussed the communications with the EMA Director and various senior staff throughout the event. Town Manager Poore also facilitated information back and forth with the Town Council and EMA, Police, and Fire.

Community Programs – Director Lucky D’Ascanio discussed her role working with the EMA Director, the School Maintenance Staff, and the Community Programs staff to cancel and re-schedule various functions at the high school and middle school. There were many events scheduled at the High School and Middle School on both Saturday and Sunday, as well as a home varsity basketball game on Saturday night.

Shelter Operations – Chief Rice discussed the role of two of the Fire-EMS Lieutenants, Lt. Paul Goldstein and Lt. David Cuttler, to set up and manage the shelter until relieved by volunteers from the American Red Cross. Both shelter managers were Emergency Medical Technicians, should EMS be needed. Once the Red Cross volunteers came, Falmouth Fire-EMS staff was told that they were not needed. Chief Rice outlined the group effort to set up the shelter and use the equipment in the shelter trailer for the first time. Chief Rice discussed the meetings and various phone calls surrounding the creation and opening of the shelter. Chief Rice advised the group that the Falmouth Shelter was created as a pet friendly site when it was set up last year with the American Red Cross. One cat in a carrier was brought to the shelter by a resident. Chief Rice described some of the uses of the shelter by residents. While few slept there, several came in for hot showers, and at least one couple came in just to read the paper in a warm, lit area. A discussion was had surrounding the use of a room other than the community gymnasium. Perhaps a smaller, cozier room, in place of the large open space. The community gymnasium was selected due to the ability to close off other areas of the school and due to the close proximity of the men’s and women’s bathrooms and showers. The group also talked about how to better promote the use of the shelter as not just a place to sleep, but a place to warm up, shower, or just spend some time with lights and electricity if needed to recharge something. The group was in agreement that better public relations in front of the storm might let townspeople know of the benefits. Once the power went off, many people were cut off from television and radio.

What went well –

- Communication between EMA, Police, Fire-EMS, Public Works, Town Manager, and Dispatch went well. Meetings were held and phone calls occurred to keep the parties informed on the weather and on the operations of the town.
- Several Town employees from all departments worked long hours while their own homes and families were without power and without heat.
- All emergency calls received were handled by the appropriate department.
- The fire call on Foreside Road used Portland and Cumberland Fire Departments to backfill the need for more fire crews that were already committed on 3 other incidents at that time.
- The roads were kept in excellent condition by Public Works
- The use of Area Command structure by the Fire-EMS department helped take pressure off Dispatch by assigning resources from Central Fire Station.
- Several residents took advantage of the shelter being opened.
- The opening of the shelter was a team effort between multiple departments and the school
- Generators at the High School, Police Station, and Fire Stations operated for nearly 2 days without problems

Areas for improvement –

As is true to most incidents, a post incident review serves as an excellent tool to compile items for improvement. The following list was created from discussions at the meeting:

- Advance communication – getting the word out before a storm about the shelter, State 211 emergency line, and other town functions. EMA Director Rice would talk with Mike McDade about using public access television to accomplish this.
- Communication to other town departments, aside from Police, Fire, and Public Works – While the of opening the EOC was discussed, due to the nature of the emergencies being mostly police and fire, and the ability to keep up by senior Fire and Police command staff, the EOC was not opened. The use of Dispatch also provided the coordination of information that Public Works, Police, and Fire-EMS needed. At the review, the group felt that the EOC should have been opened, simply to facilitate the transfer of information between all town departments. While not needing to be fully staff, the opening of an EOC simply lets all departments know that the coordination of information has begun. Without opening the EOC, the information was still being coordinated between Police, Fire-EMS, and Public Works, but departments like the Wastewater Department were not receiving or providing any information. The main function of an EOC is to share and manage resources. During the storm, the Police, Fire, Public Works, and Wastewater Departments all contacted the fuel delivery companies separately. Had the EOC been activated, there could have been one town-wide request. The group agreed that the EOC should be opened more frequently. Dispatch would still play a major role in the EOC, and at times may be the only position staffing the EOC. This would work fine for smaller events.
- Several groups still held events at the high school and middle school, even though both buildings were on backup power. The varsity basketball game still was held on Saturday night. When the shelter is open it might be wise to automatically cancel all non-essential events. If there were emergencies; medical, police, fire, or even facilities, resources were already spread very thin. Also, if the shelter is open, there is a large enough emergency ongoing somewhere in Town.
- Communications at the Fire-EMS Central Station were not adequate. Phone lines were not functioning and there was no internet. Cell phones being used by the EMA Director/Fire Chief and other senior staff were constantly running out of battery power. Multiple batteries were needed for an event with widespread power outages. The Deputy Chiefs' Office phones also need to be checked to see if they are functioning properly. A wireless card to allow the EMA Director/Fire Chief was needed as well as one for the mobile laptop for Rescue 1. The mobile laptops of the fire department need to be configured and placed into service ASAP.
- More advanced training is needed. In addition to training on setting up and staffing an EOC and shelter, training in the NIMS curriculum in courses such as public information officer and Advanced Incident Command is needed.

Needs List –

A needs list was created and updated throughout the meeting. The following list is in no particular order:

- Accountability System for Fire, Police, and EMS
- Trailer with Road Signs already in place so that DPW, PD, or FD could haul.
- More signs and barricades
- Food for staff – perhaps have large cans of sauce and boxes of spaghetti stored
 - The Fire-EMS Dept could store and use periodically for dept-wide functions to rotate the stock
 - Perhaps the schools and their cafeterias could partner with this
- Dedicated emergency / information line for residents to call for information
 - Example – Shelter info, Power line info, etc..
- Add signs for Shelter Trailer
 - Signs for doors, streets, and perhaps a large sign for the side of the trailer
- Better Cell Phone coverage
- Tracking system for shelter occupants
- Process for non-emergency transports to and from shelter
 - Use of ambulances
 - Use of Buses
- Town-wide Fuel Management Plan
 - Use of EOC
 - Process for obtaining emergency diesel fuel during an event
 - Look into a portable system
- More direct contact with Central Maine Power
- Hardware upgrades for Wastewater Department telemetry
- Process that includes all town departments for notification of shelter
 - Example – notifying Community Programs
- Standard Operating Guideline to Opening the High School Shelter
- Backup system for Public Works Department computers
- Look at the backup plan for the VOIP phones being unavailable
- Town-wide communications plan
 - Involving all town departments
- A call-back system like Reverse 911 to notify residents of important information
- A plan to perform door-to-door checks if necessary
- A mobile radio in the Town Managers' car to allow communication when cell service is unavailable
- Better process to track Fire-EMS payroll during long incidents

Brainstorming Ideas –

The EMA Group performed brainstorming on new ideas. These ideas centered on the use of our staffing during the entire incident. Had the incident continued, staffing could have been an issue that needed to be resolved. Our dedicated staff performed many hours of service to the Town, while many had family needs to take care of as well. If we could assist the staff either by adding more resources, or helping take care of their families, the Town would benefit.

- One idea was to set up a program with town employees and a local electrician where the electrician would provide the employees with assistance in obtaining alternate power sources when CMP lines were out. A seminar and possibly a group discount on generators or electrical work might be possible if several town and school employees were to be interested. Several group members commented that many town employees spend considerable hours away from home in emergencies such as storms, while their own residences might be without power and heat. If the town could assist these employees with securing heat and power for their homes, the employees would be more able to perform their duties. The group agreed that many families of our employees are neglected once major emergencies occur in town. Ideas ranged from providing the consultant to issuing partial reimbursements for the purchase of backup power supplies. Lieutenant Kilbride from the Police Department will spear head this initiative.
- Another idea was to create “sister” relationships with a town or towns outside of the region. Chief Rice had been pondering the idea of using a town in Vermont that was of a similar size and makeup of Falmouth. In a major event, staff from the town could come to Falmouth and help support operations in Falmouth. Conversely, Falmouth could send assistance to the town in Vermont in a major emergency there. The size of the emergency would be such that all local assistance from mutual aid partners was unavailable. Several details would need to be explored, such as insurance, logistics, and possibly licensing. However, assistance might be obtained for Public Works, Fire Department, Wastewater Department, and Communications / Dispatch. Town Manager Poore suggested the group explore possible communities in Maine as well. Some of the licensing and jurisdictional concerns might be lessened if the “sister” town was also in Maine. The group was not sure if a Maine community would be available in a large emergency due to the proximity to the same weather pattern.

Future Steps -

- Work with American Red Cross to identify process of being a pet friendly shelter and determine steps to become one, or not become one.
- Create Standard Operating Guideline for opening the High School Shelter
- Create a list of volunteers who can be called to staff the shelter if needed during an emergency
- Update town phone numbers and incorporate into the EMA plan
- Create a town-wide phone number that can be used as an information line in emergencies
- Create process for performing door-to-door checks if needed
- Create a plan for opening the EOC at the Police Station
- Work with the GPCOG REACT committee to explore more sharing of resources other than the typical fire and EMS mutual aid systems
- Create a town-wide communications plan for all town departments
- Explore costs of many of the equipment items on the needs list and prioritize if necessary
- Investigate a town-wide service contract with a company to maintain all town generators
- Schedule quarterly meetings of the Falmouth EMA Group
- Perform a review the Falmouth Emergency Operations Plan

Council Comments

Ice Storm Event – December 12, 2008

A. Communication:

1. Pleased to receive a call from the Town Manager about the status of our service delivery and the opening of the shelter.
2. How did Falmouth residents hear about the shelter; could we use something like Reverse 911; text messaging (like Channel 6 school closure notices; other means; etc?
3. People who did know we had a shelter didn't know what the services were.
4. Announcement on Web and in newspaper about brush clean up is important.
5. When people called the dispatcher, (who was obviously busier with more serious issues), she did not offer any detailed information about the shelter unless she was asked.
6. Most people I spoke to stayed in their houses and went out for food, if necessary. They did not plan on using the shelter to sleep, but they would have been interested in showers had they known about them.
7. Saint Mary's attempted to reach all its parishioners but could contact only about 20%. Land lines don't work if the phones are connected to a base that needs electricity. People relied on their cell phones, recharging them in their car, on back-up battery recharges. But the church couldn't contact them because they didn't have the cell phone numbers.
8. Someone needs to be available, either through dispatch or at a separate number, who can answer detailed questions for people seeking shelter or basic services.
9. Notification in a storm. I don't think reverse-911, if we had it, would work because of the problem Saint Mary's ran into.

B. Shelter Operations

1. I heard from several members of the Community that were glad we accepted pets at the shelter (despite the fact that we were not supposed to accept pets).
2. There was conflicting information about whether the shelter accepted pets. The dispatcher said no pets, but a couple was accepted at the shelter Friday night with a Maine Coon cat in a carrier. (There was no one else there at the time.) By Sunday, I heard from one person that the radio was saying Falmouth was one of two shelters that DID accept pets. (I learned Monday that Cumberland County Emergency Management sent out a press release saying Falmouth accepted pets.).
3. It was good to see residents take advantage of the shelter to take a hot shower even if they didn't stay long and chose to return to their home.
4. The American Red Cross workers, who were volunteers from neighboring towns, said they were trained generically but they didn't know what services were available in Falmouth. One said she would have appreciated a checklist specifically for the high school of where supplies could be found, how people were supposed to be fed, etc. When the couple came in hungry, one of the workers talked about the Red Cross usually having "Hostess Twinkies" available....Eventually I believe someone went out and bought them take-out food. When two ladies came in Saturday morning from Foreside Estates, they were provided hot meals in take-out containers.
5. Basketball courts, equipped with some balls, were available for exercise, and there were two board games on the registration desk. Kate Harris, from Community Programs, stopped by Saturday because a program had been canceled, and she offered to provide more activities, but no one needed them at the time.

C. Marketing Shelter

1. We should do more with marketing the shelter such as a press release and maybe tour for the public and the Forecaster.
2. Few people knew we had a shelter. Some heard about it on the radio or read it in the paper.

3. It is important to get the word out that we have an emergency shelter, even when there's no storm. It would be worthwhile to submit a column for the op-ed section of the Forecaster, explaining when it would be used, what the services are, what to bring, who can use it. Is this a Falmouth shelter? A regional shelter? Run by the town? Run by the Red Cross? Who's in charge? Also point out that the use of the shelter is somewhat fluid during a storm and might be shut down or its focus might be changed.
4. During an emergency, I think many councilors would like to help their neighbors and the Public Safety Department with the most up-to-date information possible. At least two Councilors stepped forward – how can they best be used?

D. Miscellaneous

1. The town was much more prepared for this storm than the 1998 Ice Storm. Complimented all staff including Topper West at the School Department for his role with the shelter.
2. I'll be interested in the report from Chief Rice as our EMA Director to learn the numbers of calls for service all departments had, any challenges experienced, and what we need to improve on next time. This “debriefing” or “critique” is a great idea.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POWER OUT: SHELTERS OPEN

Cumberland County, Maine, December 12, 2008 - As a result of power outages within Cumberland County, the following shelters will be available. Those needing shelter locations or other non-emergency assistance can call 211.

Portland:	Riverton School 1600 Forest Avenue Portland, ME	Opening at 14:00 AM
Portland:	Portland Expo Building 239 Park Ave. Portland, ME	Opening at 12:00 Noon
Gorham:	Gorham Middle School Weeks Rd. Gorham, ME	Opening at 2:00 PM
Falmouth:	Falmouth High School 74 Woodville Rd. Falmouth, ME	Opening at 2:00 PM
Freeport:	Freeport High School 38 Holbrook Rd. Freeport, ME	Opening at 12:00 Noon
Scarborough:	Scarborough High School 20 Gorham Rd. Scarborough, ME	Opening at 2:00 PM
South Portland:	South Portland Community Ctr. 21 Nelson Rd. South Portland, ME	Opening at 2:00 PM
Windham:	Windham High School Gray Rd. Windham, ME	Opening at 11:00 AM

A list of items to bring to the shelter is attached.

Current as of 11:53 AM December 12, 2008 ###