



AAEM Today

Official quarterly newsletter of the Alabama Association of Emergency Managers
Fourth Quarter 2009 and Legislative Conference Issue

Disaster Reimbursement Committee gets to work.

During the 2009 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislative Session, Senate Bill 160, now Act 2009-342, passed on the heels on the F-3 tornado that tore through a large residential section of Prattville, Ala., in 2008 and massive flooding issues that plagued most of Alabama's counties earlier this year.

In fact, when rising flood waters rushed inside the Alabama State House during the legislative session forcing legislators to move to higher ground, timing for this particular piece of legislation couldn't have proven any better.

Under pre-existing Alabama law, there was no specific state program or funding to assist counties and municipalities in addressing the costs of cleaning up and restoring government services after disasterous events occurred.

This act, which established the Alabama Disaster Recovery Program, was sponsored by **Sen. Bobby Denton** (D-1st District) and **Rep. Mac Gipson** (R-88th District).

The legislation does not provide funding for the program, but created the Alabama Disaster Recovery Program Fund, which will be available to receive state, federal or private funds to reimburse local governments.

The law also carefully stipulates that the funds are available only for those

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events that **do not** qualify for federal disaster assistance.

The Alabama Disaster Recovery Committee is already hard at work drafting guidelines for determining the eligibility of the local jurisdictions applying for assistance through the Alabama Disaster Recovery Program.

The committee members include: Chairman **Eric Jones**, Elmore County EMA and Homeland Security Director; Vice Chairman and Alabama Emergency Management Agency Director **Brock Long**; **Ed Phillips** of the Alabama Department of Transportation; **Dan Jackson** of the Alabama Forestry Commission; Marshall County Commissioner **Bill Strickland**; Mayor **Ted Jennings** of the City of Brewton; **Dennis McCall**, CEA, Butler County Engineer; and **Josh Blades**, representing the Office of the Governor of Alabama.

The committee first met during ACCA's Annual Convention in August where

the deadline for the preparation of the guidelines was set for Nov. 1. The committee is also working on a draft set of Rules of Governance and bylaws for operation. The committee's next meeting is Nov. 10.

Once the guidelines are finalized as a draft, the committee will distribute them to all local jurisdictions for comments. Committee members encourage all AAEM members to please comment and reply to your representatives about the guidelines.

Once the guidelines and rules have been approved, finding funding for the program will be the next project for the committee.

AAEM's Legislative Committee has been working on developing ideas and gathering information on potential opportunities. If you have any ideas, please let the AAEM Legislative Committee know.

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www.aem.us

When you are mailing **anything** to AAEM, especially your membership dues or conference registrations, please make sure that the address your county commission office (particularly your accounts payable office) has on file is **100 N. Jackson Street, Montgomery, Ala. 36104.** Thank you for your help!

Does your county have a contingency plan?

Contingency planning for severe weather, fires, or hazardous materials incidents is at the top of the list for most agencies. Contingency planning for a pandemic outbreak is often overlooked. How do we adjust for employee absence of 40 percent or more? Who will handle billing? Who will post payments and make deposits? Who will address and mail the annual tax notices? Will the county's bills be paid on time? Who will run payroll? Will employees receive checks on time? What happens to law enforcement and other emergency services? And last, but certainly not least, who is in charge when the entire commission is out sick?



For several years, emergency managers have worked with Alabama Department of Public Health officials to raise awareness of the pandemic possibility. Well folks, we're there. The pandemic that many thought would never happen...**has happened.** The H1N1 Influenza Pandemic has shed light on the need for continuity of operations and mass fatality management planning at the local level. The benefits of Continuity of Operations planning include:

- 1 The ability to perform functions that agencies and local government is mandated and expected to perform through times of crisis.
- 2 To provide a safe and orderly work environment for an agency's essential and non-essential personnel.
- 3 To provide assurance to the community and businesses that the government is stable and able to provide services and functions as demanded.
- 4 The ability of staff to become aware of the non-availability of every day services and put in place their own personal capability to be self-sufficient during disruptions to power, fuel, telecom and food supply chains.

Planning for a pandemic outbreak presents some unique considerations. Many of those have to do with personnel management. Do current personnel policies address high absenteeism due to pandemics? Do we require a doctor's excuse for all absences of more than three days? Have employees received information and training in personal protection with regard to infectious disease? Who will provide the training? What is the policy for hiring temporary employees during a pandemic? What is the procedure? Local government leaders and personnel managers should consider reviewing current policies and procedures to ensure as many questions can be answered as possible. Policy flexibility may be necessary during a pandemic outbreak.

COOP planning provides guidance to ensure essential services continue with a minimum of disruption. Stability of government operations is essential to providing the services necessary for life and property safety. This includes continuing operations by law enforcement, emergency services, and revenue producing agencies, such as water, sanitation and property tax. By planning for continuity of government services and encouraging employees to develop personal preparedness plans, we lessen the fear of the unknown and create a more stable, less stressful work environment.

Each employee of is a vital part of the process. COOP planning shortens the downtime for essential operations. It provides a guide to bring all essential and nonessential services online quickly and in an orderly manner. This is not a stagnant process, nor can it be done in a vacuum. Support of the county commission is essential to the planning process. *Plans must be reviewed regularly and updated as needed.* Personnel changes, expansion of services, and changes to facilities must be documented in the plans. Planning templates are available online at www.fema.gov, as well as on the AEMA and ADPH Web sites.

Developing plans is not easy. Many times you will be met with stumbling blocks and resistance in completing your task. Don't stop! Sometimes sheer perseverance and stubbornness can overcome. Remember the old adage, *"Failing to plan is planning to fail."*

Phyllis Little
Cullman County EMA Director

AAEM

EMA BOOT CAMP

**NOVEMBER 17–19, 2009
BROOKLEY FIELD, MOBILE, ALA.**

DRAFT AGENDA

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

This course is designed to help "jump start" new members of the emergency management family into their jobs. The course content is planned by the AAEM Training Committee and attempts to only offer topics that would not be covered in other Emergency Management Training. Emergency managers from state and local agencies serve as instructors. Registration is \$100 per person and covers all meals and lodging.

If you have any questions please email Eddie Hicks (ehicks@hiwaay.net) or Patrice Payne (ppayne@scema.co.saint-clair.al.us).

**Register online at
www.acca-online.org**

AAEM

100 North Jackson Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 263-7594
Fax (334) 263-7678

12–1 p.m.	Registration
1:15–2:15 p.m.	EMA Overview
2:15–3:15 p.m.	Automation
3:30–4:30 p.m.	Acquiring Supplies
4:30–5 p.m.	Wrap Up
6:30 p.m.	Cookout Dinner

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

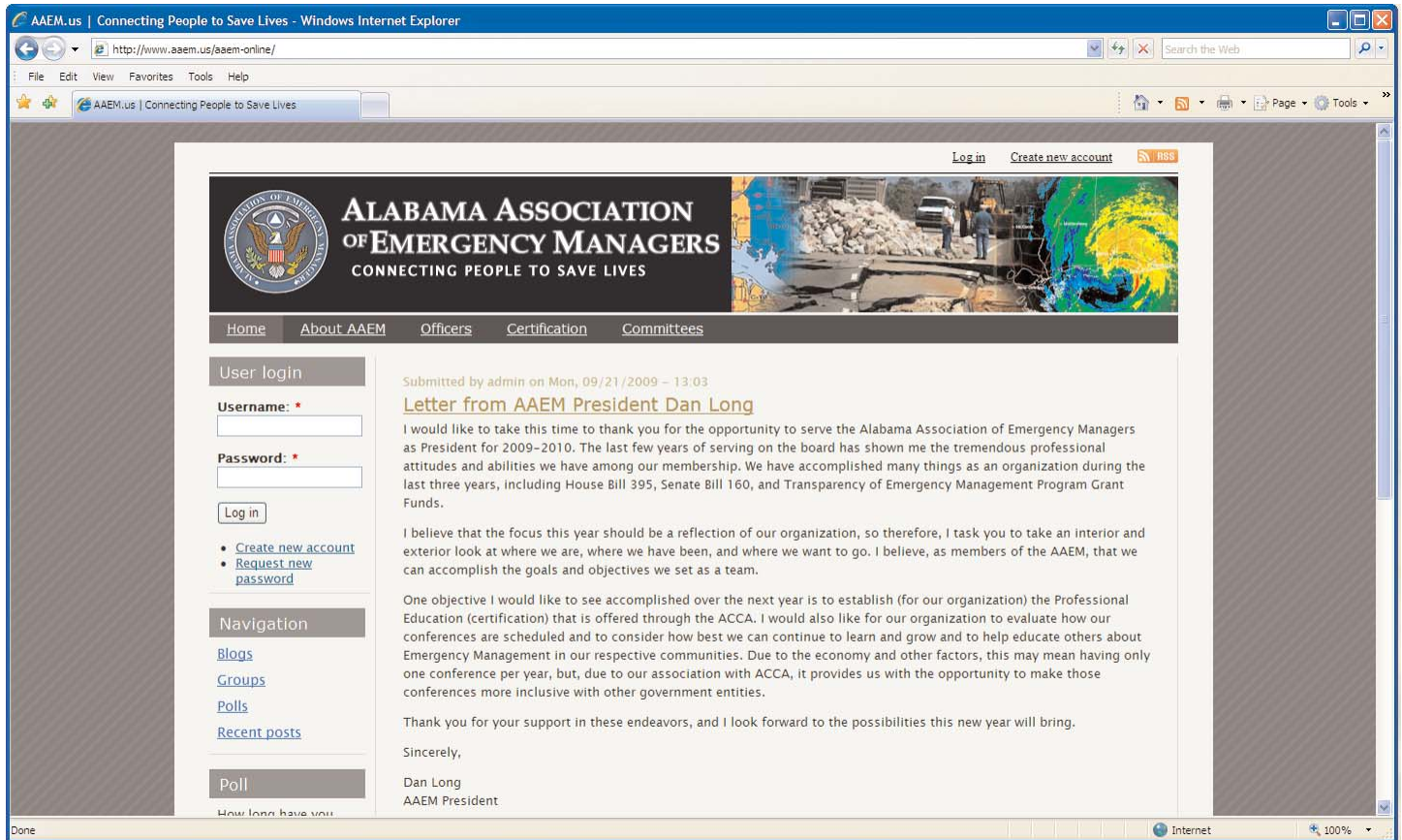
8:15–9 a.m.	Breakfast
9–10 a.m.	EOC Staffing and Activation
10–1:30 a.m.	AAEM Certification Part 1
10:45–11:15 a.m.	AAEM Certification Part 2
11:15 a.m.–Noon	Legal Issues
12–1 p.m.	Lunch
1:15–2:15 p.m.	Communications Part 1
2:30–3:15 p.m.	Communications Part 2
3:15–4 p.m.	Professional Organizations
4–5 p.m.	Support Agencies
6:30 p.m.	Dinner

Thursday, November 19, 2009

8:15–9 a.m.	Breakfast
9–10 a.m.	Check out and move to EOC
10–11 a.m.	Alert and Notification
11–11:45 a.m.	Realities of EMA
11:45 a.m.–Noon	Graduation
Noon	Lunch

There's still time to register! Log on today!

AAEM gets a new Web site...



The Alabama Association of Emergency Managers has updated its presence on the Internet with a new and improved Web site with our same address: www.aaem.us.

Still under development, the new site aims to allow AAEM members to login and collaborate, share files and network with their colleagues. Features soon to be added include:

- ✓ A training calendar for upcoming events;
- ✓ An information-sharing library for members to share ideas and questions with other members of the emergency management family;
- ✓ A community “links” board to share interesting Web sites about emergency management and what we do;
- ✓ An AAEM membership directory; and
- ✓ Committee pages that allow committee members to share information and communicate online.

The new site is powered by a free, open-source software package called Drupal (www.drupal.org). This system allows easy changes as the association’s needs evolve. One major advantage of the new site is that content, such as web pages, photo albums and association news, can be quickly updated and modified as necessary.

We hope that the site will become more than just a bulletin board for AAEM members by allowing everyone to get involved as an online community. Updates posted to the site will remain hidden to the world at large, visible only to members with a specific username and login password.

Additionally, we are looking for “moderators” to help us keeping the site organized and adopt a section to maintain. These members would become part of the AAEM Technology Committee.

Please take a moment to visit the new site and request a username and password. However, don’t be alarmed if you don’t find much information available at first — it is still a work in progress.

I would like to thank **Blount County EMA Director Max Armstrong** for his work on the original AAEM Web site and assistance with the migration to our new system.

If you have any questions or comments, or would like to join the Technology Committee, please contact Jonathan Gaddy at jgaddy@calbounema.org.

2009 LEGISLATIVE Conference

Dec. 9-10 • Renaissance Montgomery Hotel and Conference Center • Montgomery, Ala. • REGISTER TODAY!

OPENING GENERAL SESSION

- **Preview of the 2010 Legislative Session**
Hon. Seth Hammett, Speaker of the House
- **Financial Challenges for the 2010 Session**
Rep. John Knight (D-Montgomery)
- **Projections on the Federal Highway Trust Fund**
Speaker TBA
- **A Health Care Reform Update**
Paul Beddoe, NACo Associate Legislative Director
- **An Unemployment Forecast**
Tom Surtees, Director of Alabama Department of Industrial Relations
- **A Forecast for the Coming Election Year and a Focus on Overseas Absentee Voting**
Beth Chapman, Alabama Secretary of State

AAEM BREAKOUT AGENDA

- **Licensing and Regulation of Emergency Medical Persons and Transportation Legislation**
Dennis Blair, State EMS Director, Alabama Department of Public Health
- **Disaster Recovery Committee Update**
Bryant Raby, ACCA Governmental Relations Specialist
- **Projections on Homeland Security Funds**
Jim Walker, Director of Alabama Department of Homeland Security
- **Immunity for Volunteers and Salary Subsidy Update**
Bryan Prescott, Attorney, Alabama Emergency Management Agency

For more details, log online at www.acca-online.org.

HOW TO REGISTER ONLINE FOR ACCA'S LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

- Registrations will not be accepted via any other method. You **MUST** register through the online system.
- Think about assigning the duty of registering everyone in your office to one staff member. That staff member would then be responsible for registering each person for all ACCA events and keeping up with everyone's login and password.
- Go to www.acca-online.org.
- Click on the **Conferences and Events** tab on the top left side of the menu bar. Scroll down to the **ACCA Legislative Conference**. Click on the tab to register online. *(This will bring you to a welcome page.)*
- Your first step is to login. You must be logged in to register for an event. Click on **Login** on the left side of the page.
- Enter your primary e-mail address. *If you have never registered before, your default password is **Password1**.* After you login for the first time, it will prompt you to change to password. After you change your password, click on **Click Here to Continue**. This will bring up all of your current account information.
- **If it says incorrect e-mail or password**, we must not have you in the system. Go up to **New Visitor Registration** to create an account. You'll need to enter your contact information and hit **Create Account**. From there continue on to the next step.
- From here click **Upcoming Events** on the left side of the page. This will bring up a list of all upcoming events. There will be several pages. Scroll through the pages to find the Legislative Conference.
- Click on the **Legislative Conference** and click **Register for this Event**. Look over the badge information provided and click on **Add to Cart**.
- When you click on Add to Cart you might see a button at the bottom of the page that says **Group Registration**. Click on this to register multiple people from your county at once.
- When you are ready, hit the **Checkout** button in the shopping cart. Enter your billing information if necessary. Click **Next**. Then choose your payment option. You have the option of being billed for the event or paying with a credit card. **If you choose Bill Me, please print your receipt and use that as an invoice for payment.** Please make all checks payable to ACCA, 100 N. Jackson Street, Montgomery, AL 36104.
- Once you complete your registration, you will receive a confirmation e-mail detailing your purchase.
- Questions? Please call (334) 263-7594 or e-mail Jennifer Datcher (jdatcher@acca-online.org) or Donna Key (dkey@acca-online.org) in the ACCA Office.

