



Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management Annual Report 2023

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Philadelphia,

I am pleased to share this year's review of the Office of Emergency Management's (OEM) work with you. While we have certainly encountered challenging and uncertain days this past year, we also have many accomplishments to celebrate – and even more we are looking forward to in 2024. This year has been about partnerships – plans – and practice. OEM, alongside our partners and nearly every Philadelphian, faced some unique and infrequent challenges this last year. That

includes poor air quality as a result of Canadian wildfire smoke, the collapse of I-95 with traffic detours, and impacts to local businesses, and a potential threat to our drinking water as a result of a chemical spill from a private facility to our north. This was all along several rounds of severe weather – especially wind and flooding, extreme heat, and other emergencies causing injuries, damages, and displacements experienced by Philadelphians all over the city. Despite these emergencies, several new and important initiatives have been launched to reinforce our plans for events like those experienced last year and to capitalize on the lessons that we have learned. A few of the highlights from this last year include:

- Delivery of technical training and support for hazard mitigation grant opportunities to city stakeholders resulting in the submission of several applications for federal grants.
- Addition of cooling centers for heat health emergencies with Parks & Recreation and the Free Library.
- Launch of an unmanned aerial systems (UAS), or drone, program with specialty units of the Philadelphia Police and Fire Departments to more effectively manage incidents and conduct damage assessment more quickly.
- Activation of new workgroups made of local and regional subject matter experts – they include a UAS (drone) public safety workgroup, a community advocacy panel focused on meeting people's access and functional needs during emergencies, and a regional supply chain group spanning Philadelphia – Baltimore – Washington D.C.

As we move into 2024, we are excited for our ongoing and planned initiatives to align with Mayor Parker's safer, cleaner, and greener priorities. We are focused on even more emergency planning and training with our stakeholders, better ReadyPhiladelphia access for the public, and supporting community mitigation projects that address and respond to environmental hazards. Stay connected to important information and follow our progress over the coming year on our social media and through ReadyPhiladelphia. As always, thank you for playing your part in creating a ready and resilient Philadelphia for all.

Yours in service,

Dominick Mireles

Director, Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management

2023 BY THE NUMBERS

Emergency Operations Center and Field Assignment

- **9** EOC activations
- **10** Mobile Command Post Deployments
- **32** EMLO Deployments
- **37** On-Call Team Deployments
- **15** Special Events

Regional Integration Center

- **7,893** RIC public safety incidents monitored
- **6,495** RIC situational awareness messages to partners
- Increased number of partners who receive daily operational notifications

Public Outreach

- **186** Public Alert Messages
- Added new incident and event types for ReadyPhiladelphia alerts
- **38.4k** X and **11k** Facebook followers
- **18** blogs & **12** newsletters

In The Media

Putting plans into action and information in hands



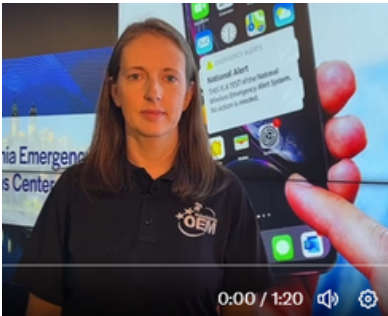
I 95 Collapase

On the morning of June 11, 2023, a vehicle fire under I-95 near the Cottman Avenue exit in Northeast Philadelphia caused a portion of the highway to collapse. Multiple City and state agencies responded. OEM's command post was deployed to the incident and hosted as the meeting place for officials such as Josh Shapiro and Pete Buttigieg. OEM led liaison meetings, as well as a resource meeting for impacted businesses. On June 23, Mayor Jim Kenney joined Governor Josh Shapiro and Secretary Mike Carroll to officially reopen traffic on I-95.



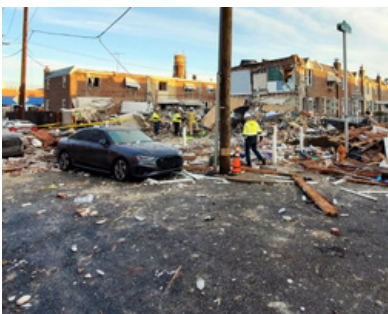
Wildfire Air Quality Alert

Philadelphia was under an air quality alert during the month of June. OEM Logistics disseminated over 59,415 masks to Citywide Partners including the Philadelphia Police Districts, Fire Stations, and Community Health Clinics that were impacted. OEM maintained a situation room in the EOC for five days and seven ReadyPhiladelphia Alert messages were sent to the public.



National Emergency System Test

FEMA in coordination with The FCC tested Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and Emergency Alert System. These messages are reserved for the most emergent situations and only delivered during an urgent situation when a protective action is needed for a wide area during the most life-safety critical emergencies. The brief messages will alert you to the issue, direct you to life-safety information, or where to find more facts. OEM made the public aware of the test alert by producing videos, going on the local news, and sharing this information through all channels.



Miller Street Explosion

Public safety responded on January 1 to an explosion in Port Richmond on the 3500 block of Miller Street that injured at least five people, destroyed three houses, and damaged 43 other homes and the Samuel Recreation Center. OEM opened a reception center for those affected, assessed the overall impact through damage report surveys, and ran the keyword "REOVERPHL" to publicly get out the latest updates and information.

Mon, Mar 27 at 12:00 PM

Drinking water for Baxter Treatment Plant remains safe at least through 11:59pm and is safe to fill containers at home. Updates avail at www.phila.gov

Mon, Mar 27 at 2:12 PM

El agua potable para los clientes de la Planta de Baxter permanece segura al menos hasta las 11:59PM. Actualizaciones www.phila.gov

Latex Product Spill

A synthetic latex product spilled from the Trinseo facility along a tributary of the Delaware River. The Emergency Operations Center was activated with dozens of partners for several days. 19 alerts including English and Spanish Wireless Emergency Alerts were sent. As part of the City's emergency response protocol, the City is worked with partners to refine the water distribution plan in the event that it was needed.

Home Preparedness Tip! A family emergency plan includes a go-bag and shelter in-place kit, including a three day supply of water which is recommended one gallon a day per person or pet!

PLANS, PRACTICE, & PARTNERSHIPS

Working to improve preparedness and public safety response in Philadelphia



Our Hazard Mitigation Program hosted a plan review workshop with over 40 representatives from city, state, local, and community organizations.

- Seven city risk reduction actions moved from planning towards implementation
- Nine new mitigation actions were formally added to the plan

In preparation for severe weather, we updated both the Winter Weather and Severe Weather plans, hosting workshops with over 70 partners to discuss updates and hear from agencies about their programs.

Two new Logistics Plans were created to enhance emergency preparedness and response.

- Resource Request PlayBook
- Distribution Management Plan

Our office completed the annual FEMA Stakeholder Preparedness Review, an annual assessment conducted by staff to evaluate the city's emergency management capabilities and gauge its ability to collaborate and coordinate with stakeholders during times of crisis.

Philadelphia was the host city for “Big City Emergency Managers” where resources, new technologies, and connections were shared with EM partners all over the country to better prepare and recover from emergencies.

OEM received the 2023 Public Safety Partnership Award from the Office of Immigrant Affairs “Welcoming Awards”.



EPEX Drill

OEM, along with city, state, and federal partners, participated in the Philadelphia Airport's Emergency Preparedness Exercise. The simulated incident allowed PHL and public safety personnel to practice their skills and ensure they are ready to act in the event of an actual emergency. For the first time since 1999, the 2023 EPEX included a water rescue with volunteer “victims”, police and fire units from Philadelphia and Delaware County, and ambulance services.

Did you Know? Flooding is the greatest natural hazard in PA. Flood insurance is not typically covered in standard property insurance and can take 30 days to go into effect.

SPOTLIGHT ON GRANTS

Assessing and seeking ways to lessen risks from threats and hazards



OEM manages a citywide application process and provides technical assistance to City agencies applying for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grants.

- Four City of Philadelphia mitigation project applications were submitted for FEMA's 2023 BRIC and FMA grants.
- Two mitigation projects were awarded hazard mitigation funding through FEMA in 2023, totaling over **\$25 million**.
- Three mitigation projects moved onto the next stage of the application process for FEMA's BRIC 2022 National Competition, totaling over **\$60 million**.

OEM finalized a **\$250,000** grant agreement with PEMA secured through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and is starting work towards a kickoff to Philadelphia's next FEMA-required, full-scale Hazard Mitigation Plan update in 2024. Key priorities for the next plan update include a more refined risk and vulnerability assessment and a more robust community engagement strategy.



We were awarded a grant from the Operations Transformation Fund ("OTF") by the Philadelphia Office of the Chief Administrative Officer in Summer 2022. With this grant, OEM has been working diligently to enhance its already robust alert and warning system to ensure it is more accessible.

This includes translating nearly 50 pre-scripted emergency alerts into ten new languages: French, Arabic, Spanish, Swahili, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Simplified Chinese, Russian, and American Sign Language (ASL). OEM is also finalizing emergency alerts for the new pilot place-based messaging system that will focus and send information that is area-specific to the Eastwick neighborhood due to their flooding vulnerability. OEM is working to launch these projects in Summer 2024.



Through FEMA's Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program OEM completed a comprehensive analysis of the regional food and medical supply chain in the region. This analysis included a risk and resilience assessment, a stakeholder engagement strategy, and key recommendations for enhancing the region's supply chain resilience.

New in 2023



- **New Roles** at OEM Hazard Mitigation Program Manager & Operational Coordination Group Leads
- **Emergency Operation Center Upgrades** increased communications and information sharing capabilities to improve the city's response during incident and special events
- **EMerging Responders** program shares emergency preparedness messages with youth and ignites curiosity into the EM world through Parks and Rec summer camps
- **UAS Program** allows OEM to use unmanned aircrafts (drones) during emergency events, enabling more thorough and safer emergency responses

Stay Tuned! We've begun planning for America's 250th birthday in 2026. Follow our social media accounts to keep connected to exciting information about events coming to Philly!

STAY CONNECTED

Sign up for Free **ReadyPhiladelphia** Alerts

Get weather, emergency, and special-event text and email alerts.

Text "**READYPHILA**" to **888-777** to get text alerts to your phone.

or

Customize your text or email alerts. Visit www.phila.gov/ready to select location important to you.



voicemail

Have a concern?
Give us a call and leave a message.

215-683-3261

Not monitored 24/7
Dial 911 for emergencies.

Follow us on social

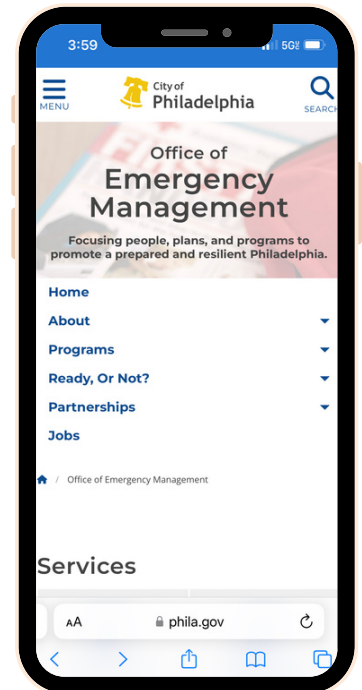


@PhilaOEM



Sign up for the READYCOMMUNITY monthly newsletter visit:
bit.ly/workshopready

The City of Philadelphia wants you to be ready for any emergency. To be ready, you need to start planning for an emergency now, not in the middle of one. Visit the website below for information on how to get and stay prepared.



Hazard Mitigation Plan



Make an Emergency Plan



Preparedness Workshops



OEM@phila.gov



phila.gov/Ready