

Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee
RESF-8 Health and Medical
December 2, 2009
South Congregational Church, 277 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut

Members Present: *(See attached attendance lists pages 2-4)*

The meeting opened at 9:08 a.m. Dr. Shaw stated the usual business meeting was being waived and welcomed the many people attending from other CREPC disciplines. He introduced the two speakers who presented the responses to the severe ice storm in mid-December last year in the greater Worcester area.

Christopher Monteverdi is the Deputy Director of Emergency Management for the City of Worcester. He is also the program coordinator for the Worcester MMRS, and the Regional Hospital Preparedness Coordinator. Using a PowerPoint presentation (*see pp 5-10, attached*), he described the events that began in the evening of Thursday, December 11, 2008. The storm developed enough ice that by 3:00 a.m., widespread power outages and fallen tree limbs had begun to paralyze the region. Nearly 600,000 households were affected, and in some areas it took up to 5 days for power to be restored. By then, damages were estimated to \$10M. Twenty nine shelters were wet up in central Massachusetts with nearly 5,000 people reporting their homes had lost heat. In his discussion of the community responses, Mr. Monteverdi highlighted several issues and problems:

- Lack of shelter resources such as blankets;
- Lack of medical staffing for shelters with people with medical needs;
- Lack of vendor oxygen supplies (ambulance companies provided reserve tanks to those who needed this);
- Major communications barriers with telephone, Nextel, cell phone, reverse 911 and internet interruptions;
- The 11 hospitals in central Massachusetts were at or beyond their surge capacity;
- There was no single point of volunteer coordination, and *difficulties in providing the public with essential information.

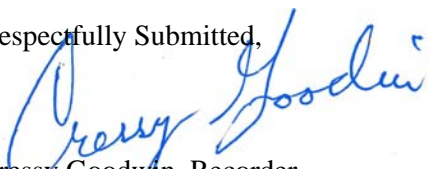
Scott Janssens is the Director of Safety and Materials Management at Heywood Hospital in Gardner, Massachusetts. He described the problems faced by his hospital during this ice storm. The state and federal governments declared a state of emergency. At Heywood Hospital;

- The emergency operations plan was activated and the hospital command center remained open for more than 105 hours (more than 4 days);
- Emergency generators were used for 48 hours;
- Expenditures exceeded \$100,000 of which \$45,000 was for overtime costs (only \$40,000 was reimbursed by FEMA);
- There was neither CT scan nor MRI capability during this period;
- The major difficulty was reaching staff at home to give directions on when and how to come in.

In the hospital's after action report, several issues were identified and discussed by Mr. Janssens. (*See the details, pp. 11-22 attached*). These included issues with communications, coordination with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the City Of Gardner, electrical outages, finance, facility management, staffing, supplies, and patient census. Mr. Janssens stated that hospitals really do need to plan for 96 hours of operations without resupply.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20

Respectfully Submitted,



Cressy Goodwin, Recorder