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Class Teaches Ice Rescue

Responders trained at IDHS Search and Rescue Academy

For five years, the Indiana Search and Rescue Academy has hosted the Ice Rescue Awareness Class. The class is a coordination of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Indiana State Police (ISP) and the Greenfield Fire Department.

The most recent class, held January 10, worked to spread the word of ice safety. The goal is to teach the public and local responders how to recognize safe ice and perform a safe and successful rescue.



Students in the Ice Rescue Awareness Class practice tactics to rescue a simulated victim from a frozen over pond. Students are not allowed to step foot on the ice at any point of the demonstration portion of the class. Courtesy of the Indiana National Guard.

Presentations included:

- Ice emergency response preparations, Chip Sunier, IDHS. Sunier also covered awareness of weather conditions and making homemade rescue throwing devices.
- Informing witnesses how to assist first responders, Trooper Jonathan Caddell, ISP. The victim's last known location is crucial to rescue attempts, but as time progresses, it may be harder for witnesses to recall exactly where that location is. Caddell also covered how to escape a sinking vehicle.
- Ice safety, Officer Jeff Wells, DNR. This included the dynamics of the ice and laws governing frozen bodies of water.

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Jeff-Craig Fire and Rescue Expand Capabilities

Midway between Louisville and Cincinnati sits the small town of Vevay, Ind. The county seat of Switzerland County, it is also home to the Jeff-Craig Fire Department. Founded in 1954, Jeff-Craig's volunteer staff of 60 respond to emergencies in Jefferson and Craig Townships, as well as provide aid to neighboring townships and counties.

In January 2015, Jeff-Craig Fire Department announced two new programs to further support emergency activations in their area – a K-9 Search and Rescue Unit, as well as new HAM Radio Communications availability.

The new K-9 Search and Rescue Program consists of seven canine and 10 human members. All 17 have undergone extensive training and testing, and the team is certified for a multitude of

situations, including tracking, structural collapse search, and both wilderness and urban search. Handlers are also prepared to respond in events involving Alzheimer's and Autism, and are certified in crime scene awareness. Six of the 10 search and rescue personnel are also HAM radio licensed, providing additional communication resources for the area.

The new program will supply support during emergency situations without a drain on local resources. The Jeff-Craig Fire and Rescue SAR and HAM Radio Team are self-sustainable for 72 hours, and able to be active within approximately 30 minutes.

While search and rescue programs are important in their own regard, improving services additionally benefits the

Joe and Paula Lomax and their dog Louie completed Search and Rescue training. Six other K-9s participated in the training for the Jeff-Craig Fire Department.



community. Insurance Service Organizations (ISO) rate fire departments based on their available programs, training and infrastructure. The lower the rating, the better and more protective the fire department. Some insurance companies use this information to set rates, meaning that a stronger fire department can translate to lower premiums for local residents.

► What's Going On

Collaboration key to handling 2,000 pigs on highway

Nothing quite prepares first responders for what they encountered November 20, 2014, on the ramp from I-465 to I-74 on the west side of Indianapolis. It's not all that uncommon to see an animal running on the highway, but more than 2,000 pigs? Well, that's one for the books.

About 6:30 p.m., the Wayne Township Fire Department began tweeting that a truck carrying 2,000 piglets had overturned in Indianapolis during its trip from North Carolina to Iowa. The driver and passenger of the truck were not injured, but about 700 piglets did not survive the crash.

Firefighters from multiple agencies worked more than four hours trying to corral and save the remaining piglets, which was no small task given darkness and the challenges of corralling animals on a highway. Wayne Township Captain and Public Information Officer Michael Pruitt was one of many responders on the scene.

"I was fortunate to have grown up in the family's livestock business," Pruitt said. "But most of the others had never even touched a pig. The first question I got was, 'Do pigs bite?' I just told them to treat this like it was a truckload of



The 2,000 piglets are in a makeshift corral right on the highway, with the overturned truck serving as the back wall and the other walls made from ladders covered in plastic. They were then transported to the Indiana State Fairgrounds until another truck arrived to take them on to Iowa.

puppies, only they'd just smell different afterward."

Pruitt said one of the most immediate needs was to rig up something to corral the surviving piglets. Thinking quickly, he had firefighters remove the ladders from their trucks, wrap them in plastic to cover the holes and make a "fenced-in" area right in the road. He said while it was difficult for them to see the deceased piglets, they did everything they could to get the others out of the overturned truck and to a safe location.

With the help of many other agencies, including the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, the Indiana State Police, and Hancock and Hendricks County Emergency Management agencies, they were able to transport the surviving piglets to the Indiana State Fairgrounds for evaluation and safekeeping until the company receiving the animals arrived with another truck. It didn't hurt that Pruitt also knew that the

head of Safety and Security for the fairgrounds, Jessie Olvera, used to be employed by IMPD and the Indianapolis Division of Homeland Security. After receiving a call from Pruitt, Olvera worked with members of the fairgrounds' education, event services and safety departments to locate, set up and staff a building for the arriving piglets.

"Hendricks County supplied about 50 bales of straw for the animals and delivered them to the fairgrounds," said Pruitt. "Hancock County located and supplied a truck with a livestock trainer so we could transport them safely to the fairgrounds."

Olvera added, "This was really a great example of collaboration and partnership among agencies in the emergency management world. In times like these, it really is about who you know. Having those connections ahead of time, not the day of the emergency, is truly important and certainly was in this case."



Wayne Township Firefighter John Robinson holding a pig he caught.

Ice Rescue Class (*cont.*)

- Hypothermia, Beth Haggard, a paramedic with the Greenfield Fire Department. Hypothermia occurs when the body's temperature falls dangerously low. Haggard's presentation covered signs, symptoms, treatment and prevention of hypothermia.

After the presentations, the class moved outside for a demonstration at the facility's pond. Participants were able to see and participate in the proper rescue procedure. This is the fifth year conducting the course. More than 500 students have been trained, including some off-site training.

The class was planned after a drowning death in December 2010. Three teens fell through ice on a frozen pond. Two were rescued by a resident with a boat, but the third couldn't hold onto the boat.

Media began looking for an ice rescue class, but no state agency offered one.

Sunier, who at the time was the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, decided to organize the class.

"My passion is prevention and education," said Sunier. "With a staff member from each department, we set in motion a class that was to be offered to private citizens, police, fire and anyone else interested in ice safety."

Sunier used his 37 years of service with ISP along with connections with Greenfield Fire Department and DNR to quickly assemble experts from all sides of an ice rescue.

The first class took place on January 18, 2011, less than a month after the drowning. The class consisted of 48 students with four hours of instruction and two hours of demonstration.

Since the inception of the course, it has evolved some due to interest of the students. ISP was interested in a Vehicle

Immersion Escape section after numerous instances of people dying after dialing 9-1-1 and staying in their vehicles after driving into a body of water.

"This topic has drawn numerous departments and citizens to this class. 'Seat belt off, window down, get to the front and get out,'" said Sunier. "Simple and effective."

Another change at the request of students was a version of the class as a classroom only presentation. It is designed to give participants the tools and knowledge to take the message back to their communities.

"Preparedness is key and knowledge is paramount to being prepared when lives are in danger," said Sunier. "Bad things happen to good people when they don't know what to do when emergencies happen."

Firefighter Deemed 2015's Most Stressful Job

CareerCast's 2015 list of the nation's most stressful jobs is in. And the winner is firefighter. The role of firefighter tops the list because of the physical danger inherent in the job, the overall unpredictability and the possible negative psychological effects. It's an occupation where people:

- work in constantly changing conditions;
- must be prepared for a crisis;
- are charged with keeping people safe; and
- are expected to not lose their cool.

Firefighter tops the list, followed by enlisted military personnel, airline pilot and police officer, all which share the above list to varying degrees. Good physical fitness and regular exercise and conditioning, along with mental preparation, can offset some of the stress that comes

with the job. Both are a big part of fire training.

"Job satisfaction and the pleasure of helping others can go a long way to outweigh stress," said Brandon Wood, Indiana Department of Homeland Security Fire Training Manager. "Another important key is the camaraderie we have as firefighters, the focus on the fraternity of the firefighters and their families."

Wood said firefighters watch out for each other, paying close attention to body language and changes in a firefighter's desire to eat or talk. "It's so important that firefighters have a life outside of the fire service," he said. "I know for myself, if I'm feeling stressed, I spend time with my kids or we visit an amusement park. Lots of firefighters golf or fish on their days off. We all know how dangerous it is if

one of us reaches burn out, because we need everyone focused and on their game."

The CareerCast study points out there are many factors that cause stress, like tight deadlines, long hours and high expectations, which have nothing to do with physical risk. The study cites reporters, broadcasters, photojournalists, event coordinators and actors as having high-stress professions without the threat of constant physical danger.

Among the least-stressful jobs are hair stylist, seamstress and forklift operator.

To read the full report, visit <http://www.careercast.com/jobs-rated/most-stressful-jobs-2015>.

District 1 Mass Casualty Plane Crash Tabletop

On January 22, first responders and members of the private sector had the chance to work together through a situation involving a mass casualty plane crash at Gary/Chicago International Airport.

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) District 1 Task Force hosted the table-top exercise, Steel-Air, with participants from Gary Fire Department, Gary Police Department, Gary/Chicago International Airport, US Steel, Olympic Steel and CSX.

During the session at the Crown Point Community Library, the 93 participants talked through aspects of mass casualty, fire and police response,



transportation security, public information and much more.

Lori Postma, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator at Franciscan Alliance (Munster), is the lead District 1 planner for the exercise.

“It’s important that we understand each other’s capabilities and know what each will bring to the table. We need to know what resources are available and how to ask for them. By working and training together we make our community safer,” Postma says.

Discussions focused around how agencies would respond, what their responsibilities and priorities would be, and how they would help each other and communicate. In this environment, strengths and weaknesses can be identified and professional relationships fostered before a full-scale response is tested either by exercise or a real emergency.

Tom Sivak Moves to Chicago

Tom Sivak, former Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director has taken a job with the City of Chicago’s Office of Emergency Management.

Sivak had been with the Hamilton County EMA for 2 ½ years as the Director. Before working for Hamilton County, he was the Indianapolis Division of Homeland Security Planning Section Chief. Prior to coming to Indiana, Sivak served as the Regional Homeland Security Planner for the Kalamazoo Sheriff’s Department.

In his time as the Director, Hamilton County EMA had many accomplishments. Among them were revamped cover to cover emergency plans, a non-profit preparedness program that helped create recovery and mitigation plans for non-profit organizations and engagement with elected officials.

“The partnerships make the program,” Sivak said. “Without them, we’re one

office that really just responds; now we’ve built a resiliency program.”

A better strategic plan was also established and the Hamilton EMA published its first annual report, allowing it to engage with the community. Hamilton County was able to participate in the June 2014 Vibrant Response exercise as well.

“Watching a caravan of assets, half of it from Hamilton County, was one of the greatest features of my job,” Sivak said. “It really shows us that we 100 percent have the capability to respond to any disaster that comes our way.”

Volunteers helped the Hamilton County EMA create a viable and engaged Community Emergency Response Team program, as well as growing the already established Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service group.

Sivak is now serving as the Deputy Director of the City of Chicago’s Office

of Emergency Management. His duties in his new role are similar to those he held in Hamilton County; overseeing the department and ensuring that the emergency management program continues to build on its foundation.

“I enjoyed the support from residents, partners and elected officials to build the program in Hamilton County,” Sivak said. “It’s bittersweet to leave something so great to go into the unknown.”



Tom Sivak has also taken advantage of rare training opportunities. Here, Sivak participates in a media event before leaving to respond to wildfires in Alaska.

Smart911 Aids Porter County Response Efforts

Smart911 is a free service that enhances communication and response. Porter County, the first Indiana entity to use the service, officially began utilizing Smart911 on July 1, 2011. Now, several other counties in Indiana, along with other public safety agencies across the country, use Smart911 in everyday emergency responses.

Citizen awareness of the program is important because it helps emergency personnel. Registering and using Smart911 can help emergency personnel respond faster and more efficiently to emergencies.

Smart911 has three different aspects to the service; 9-1-1 service, emergency management services, and emergency notification services.

The 9-1-1 service of Smart911 allows the creation of a safety profile for

households, which will proactively provide details on that specific family and home that 9-1-1 may need in order to send help in the event of an emergency.

The emergency management service of Smart911 allows answering of questions about oneself, family and households that will help emergency management officials plan for and respond to disasters by being able to understand the needs of their community.

Emergency notification service of Smart 911 allows the opt-in to receive alerts from one's community through a variety of communication channels including voice, text or email.

“With Smart911, if the caller is on the line we process the call just like any other. They answer our questions and the profile is not typically needed, maybe just for supporting questions. In those cases I

usually say that I see they have a profile and thank them for keeping it up to date. But all of the information is available to us if we need it,” said Paige Connelly, Porter County Central Communication Public Information Officer. “If a caller is unable to communicate we can use the information provided to begin investigating, possibly locating the emergency faster, and/or advising responders of information that may save time on scene.”

For more information on Smart911, visit <https://www.smart911.com/>.



Waverly Converts Flood-acquisition into Park

Waverly, the oldest town in Morgan County, has weathered eight flooding events in the last 10 years. This recurring flooding has made it difficult to inhabit portions of the town.

Due to persistent flooding, numerous properties in the area have been combined to form a county park. Eighty-four parcels will make up the 55 acres of the park at the site of the historic Central Canal.

This project has been in the works for several years and has been the main focus of the Morgan County Plan Director, Kenny Hale. The main goal for this project is to get Hoosiers out of harm's way. The projected completion date is September 2016.

Currently, this project has closed on 80 parcels and has put them into the county's name. The remaining four parcels are owned by two families. Offers have been made and the goal is to work with them to close by the end of the 2015.



The Waverly park project is expected to be completed in 2016. With input from the many involved agencies, the project has stayed in compliance with regulations regarding the used land.

Many of the flooded areas were purchased by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as part of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The purpose of the program is to provide funding to protect life and property from future natural disasters. Communities participating in the program must develop projects that will provide long-term protection, such as demolition of affected properties to create permanent green space or other cost-effective flood prevention activities.

“Waverly is just one example of the many well-done mitigation projects in the State of Indiana,” said Mary Moran, Director of Mitigation and Recovery for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security Response and Recovery Division. “The development of this open space not only fulfills program requirements, but is a solution that will help protect Waverly residents from future flooding events and will be a benefit for the community.”

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have additionally helped fund the project. With this support, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and assistance from the Build Indiana Fund, Morgan County has been able to relocate residents whose property is repeatedly damaged by flooding and demolish buildings in flood-prone areas.

Renovated Indiana Farmers Coliseum

Changes focus on safety and security

After extensive renovations, the Indiana Farmers Coliseum reopened its doors to Hoosiers in April 2014. The arena project brought significant advances to the original design of the building.

The first change citizens will notice is the remodeled lobby. The second is the addition of elevators, making the Indiana Farmers Coliseum more compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The concourse is now on the second floor and wraps around the arena so spectators can enjoy the view from any angle.

A focus point of the Indiana Farmers Coliseum was the safety and security aspect of the remodel.

Jessie Olvera is the Director of Safety and Security for the Indiana Fair Commission.

“The fire detection and suppression system is state of the art. It was put together with advisement from the Indiana State Fire Marshal,” said Olvera. “There are stand pipe connections in every corner on every floor for fire suppression and the beam detectors are tied into a smoke evacuation system. The



The box office has been moved back in the main lobby. This opens the lobby for easier movement of many people, a need for many events that take place at the venue.

security cameras throughout the Coliseum and Youth Arena can be viewed from the Operations Center. The back of house is restricted to credentialed personnel only, increasing our security posture.”

Additional measures were added to assist evacuations. The main concourse now has fire curtains that deploy in the event of an alarm, splitting the crowds so it is easier to evacuate the building. Each floor is assigned its own stairwell for exit. The staffing level for ushers is adjusted to the event attendance size so there will always be enough personnel to assist with an evacuation.

The Indiana State Fairgrounds Commission uses the same crew of Emergency Medical Technicians and off-duty security officers so responders know the building well. More than 70 firefighters from the Indianapolis Fire Department who would respond to a box alarm have all had the opportunity to tour the building before it opened. More than 40 Emergency Medical Service personnel took a tour, along with several law enforcement officers and emergency management personnel. In April 2014, tours were given over the course of three days. The focus was on public and private safety and security, first responders and planners.

All of Indiana State Fairgrounds contractors, vendors and tenants have gone through a crowd management presentation. Specifics affecting tenants, the Indy Fuel Hockey Team and the Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis basketball team were discussed prior to their seasons beginning. Table top exercises were held to test and validate those plans.

Symposium Addresses Paramedicine

Paramedicine a positive influence on chronic health problems

About 150 paramedics, hospital administrators, educators and public health professionals attended the Indiana Community Paramedic – Mobile Integrated Health Care Symposium on December 19 in Plainfield.

The goal was for community paramedics and stakeholders to discuss how to address minor and chronic health problems in the home to ultimately improve the quality of life in rural and urban populations through paramedicine. Working with other health care agencies they work to reduce readmissions and prevent unnecessary ambulance transports.

The symposium was led by the Indiana Rural Health Association and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS). Sessions provided an overview of community paramedicine and mobile integrated healthcare, the history and goals, funding, stumbling blocks and development of curriculum and education philosophies.

Speakers included Christopher Montera, Eagle County (Colorado) Paramedic Services; Anne Robinson-Montera, Caring Anne Consulting, Eagle, Colorado; Gary Wingrove, Mayo Clinic Medical Transport in Minnesota and

Western Wisconsin; Steve Davison of Fishers Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services; Michael Garvey, Indiana’s EMS director; William Gossett of Indiana University Health Ball Memorial Hospital; Michael Kaufmann, M.D., St. Vincent Hospital; Nathaniel Metz, Prompt Ambulance Central; Andrew Stevens, M.D., IU Health-Methodist Hospital and medical director for a several EMS services in and around Indianapolis; and Elizabeth Westfall, EMS educational program manager, IDHS.

Mission

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security will provide statewide leadership, exemplary customer service, and subject matter expertise for the enhancement of public and private partnerships and the assurance of local, state and federal collaboration to continually develop Indiana's public safety capabilities for the well-being and protection of our citizens, property and economy.

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The Hoosier Responder is a publication of
The Indiana Department of Homeland Security.
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