

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## 2019 Annual Report

2019 was a busy year for the Emergency Management Department. We were faced with 2 major events, the July 17 flood and the water main break that will require follow-ups in the coming year 2020. The July 17 flood required working with all town departments to coordinate a response to the extensive damage caused to private and public infrastructure. The Emergency Operations Center was opened to track the damage town wide and to coordinate responses for water rescues on Jerusalem Rd, pumping flooded basements throughout town, surveying road damage with the Highway Department, blocking off roads and advising NH Homeland and Emergency Management of the difficulties encountered in Canaan. We also needed to manage personnel response from town departments to ensure the best use of personnel.



The flood damaged the river bed and floodplain coming from Orange down through the Canaan Motor Sports Club, the Transfer Station bridge, the fields leading from the transfer station to Route 4, Williams Field, Potato Road area, and many town roads. Many of the roads became impassable for several days making it difficult to provide emergency services to Orange and assist other communities. We relied on Grafton for mutual response to parts of Orange as Canaan Emergency Services could not access Orange with Orange Road and Cardigan Mountain Road being wiped out.

The flood in Canaan was part of a weather event that greatly affected Canaan and at least 8 other communities and generated a state and federal response to the recovery efforts with the outcome being lots of meetings, paperwork, a coordinated response from NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management, FEMA, NH Department of Environmental Services, other state agencies and an on-site visit from Governor Chris Sununu and the director of Homeland Security, Jen Harper. The result was a federal declaration which will enable Canaan to apply for reimbursement for the costs of repairs including materials and salary costs. The July flood has also initiated a long series of meetings to investigate the mitigation efforts that are available for Canaan to prevent and reduce the impacts of future flooding on infrastructure. As a result, Canaan officials have met with many state and federal agencies to formulate and implement plans for repairs to the Transfer Station Bridge and floodplain area, the Rail Trail bridges, village floodplain and Potato Road area. All of the meetings have resulted in plans for making Canaan less susceptible to the more frequent weather events and the damaging effects, as well as funding prospects to underwrite the improvements.

Our second major event for the year was the water main break in September which caused the loss of over 200,000 gallons of water from the system. Much of the time spent on this event was trying to locate the source of the leak in the downtown area as well as mapping the shutoffs and curb stops for the affected neighborhoods. With the help of the Lebanon Water Department and their technology as well as the NH Rural Water System Association, we were finally able to locate the break at the intersection of Bruce Road and US Route 4.



There was also a tremendous amount of coordination between the Canaan Highway, Fire, Police and Water Departments and Enfield Fire Department, which helped establish a temporary water main to refill the town water tank and restore water flow to safe levels. We also took advantage of the Hanover Fire Department to arrange for a diver to come inspect and install a new screen on the water system inlet in Canaan Street Lake with the help of a Canaan Street boat owner.



During 2020, we will be working on rewriting and revising the Canaan Emergency Operations Plan and continuing to work on other emergency projects.



**Respectfully submitted,**

**William Bellion, Emergency Management Director**