

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

January 1- mid February, 2020:
A normal emergency year.

March 2 - December 31, 2020:
New virus takes over news;
Conference calls 2-3 hours then governors news conferences;
Emails from NH Homeland Security;
Emails to all firefighters and EMTs;
Revisions to emails;
Finding where we can order PPE;
Scrambling for resources;
Improvising PPE;
Road trips for supplies;
Morning algorithms for protecting staff;
Afternoon algorithms revised; and
Zoom meetings daily.



After the declaration of national and state emergencies, Emergency Management has been consumed with trying to keep up with our evolving pandemic situation. During this time, we have been doing lots of work to ensure that all Canaan Emergency Departments including Fire, Ambulance, Police, Water/Sewer and Highway can work together safely to continue to provide services to the Canaan community. We have been able to secure the Personal Protective Equipment we need mostly through state sources, but also through vendors. We improvised when necessary to create a decontamination sprayer for town vehicles ahead of what was commercially available. We have instituted policies of mask wearing across departments to try and keep all responders healthy.



We helped distribute food to Canaan families as part of a program with Friends of Mascoma early in the pandemic to keep food coming to families in need. This program used firefighters organizing and distributing the supplies we received.



Emergency Management takes advantage of personnel from town departments to help evolving community needs. Again joining with firefighters and EMTs, we helped set up, organize, and direct traffic for 2 community flu shot clinics. We are hoping that a simplified procedure will evolve for Covid vaccination registration. If so, Emergency Management will plan on participating in community vaccination sites. Right now, registration does not allow for on-site procedures as it has to be done by computer and cell phone access and use of QR Codes to establish eligibility and identity.

This year we will plan to update the town's emergency management plan and bring it back in-line with requirements. It will be completed with multiple town departments and personnel, New Hampshire Homeland Security, and other consultants. The revised plan will keep us eligible for the state and federal grant process.

We also use the Emergency Management system when we have to conduct search and rescue operations and large fire operations in areas such as Cardigan Mountain. Had the weather, topography and fuels combined correctly, the



fires on Cardigan could have been much larger. Timely reporting of the fire enabled Canaan and other towns to respond efficiently. We then have staff managing communications for operations, staging of resources, and management. This keeps our operations running smoothly and keeps us in-line for possible reimbursements due to a large scale event. We also use Emergency Management to communicate with residents the local response plans to the Covid-19 pandemic. Right now we sift through all the information and make it available to the Canaan town office to send out to residents via the flash email. This process will continue throughout 2021 as information is released.

William Bellion
Emergency Management Director