

TRORC Regional Emergency Management Committee

Quarter 4 Meeting

December 6, 2023

6:00 – 8:00 pm

In person at:

VA Training Building "Freedom" at the VA Medical Center,
163 Veterans Drive, White River Junction.
First building on the right coming from I-91, parking is on the left.

Pizza and refreshments will be provided.

Minutes

1. Call to Order at 6:03 PM
 - i. Voting Attendees: Vernal Stone (Vershire), Brenda Field (Tunbridge), Simon Bradford (Tunbridge), Chet Pashto (Hartland), Peter Berger (Fairlee), Jeffery Morin (Newbury), John Haverstock (Hartford), Rich Doolen (Brookfield), Jeffery McKelvey (Newbury), Al Poirier (Plymouth), David Olster (Plymouth), Tracy Simon (Chelsea), Gary Moore (Bradford, *Dan Perry III proxy*), Delsie Hoyt (West Fairlee), Aaron Dotter (Strafford, *Jason Schumacher proxy*)
 - ii. Others present: Tiana Smith (GMP), Taiga Christie (VEM), Emilie Daniel (Randolph Senior Center), Elizabeth Gilman (VT211/United Ways), Dr. Jackson Schonberg (Red Cross/VDart, Mark Bradley (Bugbee Senior Center), Misha McNabb (VDH), Peter Gregory (TRORC), Jerry Partin (VSP), Deanna Jones (Thompson Senior Center), Ariel Young (VA Medical Center)
2. Approval of May 31, 2023, REMC meeting minutes
 - i. Motion by Peter Berger, 2nd by Jeff Morin, motion passed
3. Presentation by Green Mountain Power on long-term power outages and communication with Town road crews as they balance needing to restore power with clearing roads
 - i. Storms are getting worse, more severe, more damaging, heavy wet snow. Snow composition changing to more like concrete.
 1. All of the top 10 of the most damaging storms GMP has recorded were in the last decade.

William B Emmons III, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director
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2. GMP has 2,500 customers on their "critical care" list (lifesaving medical equipment), GMP reaches out to them to let them know they need to have a plan in place when there's a coming threat to power.
 3. Lifted cap on # of critical care customers that can have backup power (batteries)
 4. GMP is part of NEMAG regional assistance group (North Atlantic Mutual Assistance Group). Engaging mutual aid to repair power infrastructure is more difficult when there's a regional event.
- ii. GMP does outreach before, during, and after storms including regional and local updates.
1. GMP tries to work with towns to ensure they can communicate if a town's power goes out
 2. Starting this year, can distribute portable Jackery batteries for critical care customers if a storm is coming (customers that don't have emergency power at home, to power small health appliances- o2, CPAP, etc.)
- iii. GMP invested in storm resilience- GMP climate plan, 0 outages goal with backup batteries, micro grids...
1. "0 outages" goal
 - a. Upgrading infrastructure including steel cable above power lines to support fallen trees and maintain power, undergrounding lines in circuit zones 1, 2, and 3, and providing support or batteries to those in zone 4 to ensure that "last mile" customers are prepared for outages. Batteries last as long as customers make them, but could last for days with careful use.
 - b. GMP has has 50MW of residential and utility scale batteries installed throughout the state. This is enough to power 25k homes for days. The batteries can be drawn from during peak times when energy is expensive and dirty compared to non-peak times. They saved Vermonters a cumulative \$3 million last year.
 - c. "Resiliency zones" in areas that have the most frequent outages to decrease frequency of outages. These are hubs that stay connected to themselves even when the grid may be experiencing issues. Three towns a year are added to the program. These are chosen by looking at the frequency of outages and the social vulnerability index.
 2. Panton micro grid
 - a. First in the country
 - b. Grid covers 50 customers in center of town, including town hall, that will have power regardless of grid outages
 3. Obrein Farms
 - a. Microgrid under creation, will include 155 homes, no gas infrastructure, all solar, microgrid with its own battery

4. Discussion on preparation for and response to long term power outages by Bugbee and Thompson Senior Centers with Deanna Jones (Thompson Senior Center, Woodstock) and Mark Bradley (Bugbee Senior Center, Hartford)
 - i. Meals on Wheels drivers could distribute information (fliers, updates) to Meals on Wheels recipients if asked to do so.
 - ii. Extensive checking-in on vulnerable people before, during, and after the storm
5. Questions
 - i. No questions
- b. Comments
 - i. TRORC will be sending out Red Cross Shelter trainings schedule to REMC.
- c. VEM updates (Taiga Christie)
 - i. Red Cross Shelter trainings- closest might be Barre
 - ii. Solidified new schedule for binary blizzard hazard exercise.
 1. Preparatory Tabletop Oct 2024
 - a. Ramping up town tabletops prior to south
 - i. Towns can reach out to VEM, plan workshops
 - iii. Reminder of Binary Blizzard functional Oct 2025
6. Adjournment
 - i. Motion by Peter Berger. Motion passed.

Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81652141646?pwd=g8aCJRNT4mwl1HPcZVMM8fLcLebgAn.1>

Meeting ID: 816 5214 1646

Passcode: 135998

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kd00eXciW8>