BARRON COUNTY
LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29th 2026 – 9:00 a.m.
BARRON COUNTY JUSTICE CENTER (EOC)
****

AGENDA

- CALL MEETING TO ORDER
- PUBLIC NOTIFICATION*
- APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- APPROVE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (JULY 30th 2026)
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- SPILL REVIEWS
- RESPONSE REIMBURSEMENTS
- BUSINESS REVIEW: (none)
- EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATES
  - Review of Bylaws
  - Review of Compliance Officer
  - IPP 2027 Ideas (Nate)
  - Review of EM Quarterly Report
- LEPC MEMBER UPDATES
- COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS
- NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 28th IN THE EOC AT 0900 HRS
- ADJORNMENT

To ensure a quorum, please e-mail or call Nate at 715-637-6712
and advise **if you are unable to attend** this meeting
Thank you

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Any person, who has a qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act and requires the meeting or materials at the meeting to be in an accessible format, must contact the County Clerk's office at 715-537-6200 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting so that arrangements may be made to accommodate your request.

*I, Nate Dunston, have complied with open meeting Public Notification Laws. Meeting notices are posted on the electronic meeting notice boards on the first and second floor of the Government Center and the main floor of the Justice Center.

PC: County Administrator, County Board Chair, Sheriff, Chief Deputy, Emergency Services Director, Highway Commissioner, Public Health Officer, Conservationist/Technician, Medical Examiner, Dispatch Lead, Public Health Specialist, Emergency Management Office Specialist, Webmaster, Four Public Postings

LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)
THURSDAY, July 30, 2026 – 9:00 a.m.
BARRON COUNTY JUSTIC CENTER (EOC)
1420 WI-25, Barron, WI 54812

MINUTES:

Present: Louie Okey, Barron County Board. Mike Judy, Barron County Emergency Management. Jodi Kummet, Barron County Sheriff. Nate Dunston, Emergency Management – Medical Examiner. Melissa Miller, Mayo Clinic Health System. Jamie McCready, Barron County Supervisor. Neil Shipley, Barron School District. Matt Feeney, Cumberland EMS. Patricia Wickman, Barron County Health Officer. Tyler Gruetzmacher, Barron County Soil & Water. Barry Kuenkel, Cumberland Fire Department. Travis Klukas, Mayo Clinic Health System. Dave Paulson, McCain Foods Inc. Joshua Miller, Saputo Cheese. Gabby Thomspon, Mosaic Telecom. Bob Zientara, Barron News-Shield. Mathew Heath, Synergy Cooperative. Katt Murphy, Ardisam. Jeff French, Barron County Administrator. Steven Roux, Rice Lake Police Chief. Michael Hover, Rice Lake Fire Chief.
Absent: Nate Nelson, Mike McElmury, Dale Hanson, Jenny Legaspi, Brian Cockerham, Paul Brooten, Greg Martin, Brittany Fry, Brian Kaczmarkski, Sue Dau, Dillon Palmquist, Rebecca Ekenstedt, and Jade Merrill.
Members Attending Virtually: None.
Others Present: Julie Bates-Maves, Chippewa Valley Emergency Support Service (CVESS)

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Louie Okey called the meeting to order at 09:00 am.

Public Meeting Notification: LEPC Secretary Dunston stated the meeting complied with Wisconsin Open Meeting Laws.

Approve Agenda: Motion: (McCready/French) to approve. Carried.

Approve Minutes of April 30, 2026: (McCready/Miller) to approve. Carried.

Public Comment: None.

Virtual Meeting Attendance: Discussion. **Motion: (McCready/Miller)** to approve virtual meeting attendance by committee members with prior approval of the chair. Members are encouraged to attend in person. The chair of the committee still needs to attend in person. Committee members attending virtually will not be able to attend closed sessions. Carried.

Spill Reviews: Emergency Manager Judy reviewed two spill reviews: 5-7-2026: Manure in Maple Grove and 6-23-2026: Hydraulic Oil in Cumberland

Response Reimbursements: None.

Barron County Justice Center • 1420 State Hwy 25 N, Barron, WI, 54812
www.BarronCountyWI.gov • Office: (715) 637-6732

Business Review: Chippewa Valley Emergency Support Service (CVESS): Julie Bates-Maves gave a presentation on the services that Chippewa Valley Emergency Support Services can provide to emergency responders in Barron County.

Miscellaneous Updates: Emergency Manager Judy gave the following informational updates:

- Mayo Barron – Alternate helipad is at the Barron Airport. If EMS agencies need ED key card badge, they can contact Lacey Huset or Melissa Miller.
- Dispatch implemented an automated voice attendant on the non-emergency line to help reduce non-dispatch-related calls (admin, records, jail, etc.)

LEPC Member Updates:

- Neil Shipley – Possibility of getting solar panels for school to utilize for science class.
- Melissa Miller & Travis Klukas – Mayo – Menomonie had a recent water shortage; Mayo Clinic is reviewing/updating all their EOP(s). Melissa is working on cleaning out her storage and has cots and shelters for possible donation.
- Jamie McCready – Discussed lessons learned from July power-outage at Cumberland Healthcare.
- Nate Dunston – Please watch your email before the October meeting for a IPP survey and LEPC Bylaws.

Set Next Meeting Date: Thursday, October 29, 2026 at 9:00AM at the Justice Center (EOC) located in Barron.

Suggestions for Future Agenda Items: Integrated Preparedness Planning (IPP) Workshop, Review of the LEPC Bylaws and EPCRA Compliance Officer

Adjournment: By Unanimous Consent at 9:45AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nate Dunston, LEPC Secretary.

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE AT THE NEXT MEETING.

Barron County Justice Center • 1420 State Hwy 25 N, Barron, WI, 54812
www.BarronCountyWI.gov • Office: (715) 637-6732

Michael Judy <michael.judy@co.barron.wi.us>

WI SPILL #24055 ID 20260805NO03-1 - CAUSTIC [BASE]

dnrlehotline@wisconsin.gov <dnrlehotline@wisconsin.gov> Wed, Aug 5, 2026 at 9:12 PM
To: michael.judy@co.barron.wi.us

SERTS ID:
20260805NO03-1

Reported:
08/05/2026 20:58

Occurred:
08/05/2026 17:00

Substance:
CAUSTIC [BASE]
Released Amt: 500 Gal
Recovered Amt: UNKNOWN
(AMOUNTS ARE OFTEN ESTIMATED)

Reported by:
SHAWN GILBERT
PLANT MANAGER
SAPUTO CHEESE USA
shawn.gilbert@saputo.com
(715) 790-1892
Also RP Contact

Location:
NO REGION
BARRON COUNTY
ALMENA, VILLAGE OF
DAIRY MANUFACTURING PLANT
1052 6TH ST
https://www.google.com/maps/place/1052%206th%20St%20ALMENA,%20WI

Responsible Party:
SHAWN GILBERT
1052 6TH ST
ALMENA, WI 54805
(715) 790-1892

Cause:
EQUIPMENT FAILURE

Cause Description:
A HIGH STRENGTH CLEANING LINE THAT RUNS UNDER THE PARKING LOT, NOTICED WATER LEAKING, INDICATES A BREAK SOMEWHERE UNDERGROUND. CHEMICAL IS A MIX OF CAUSTICS AND BASES

Environmental Impact:
UNDERGROUND

Contractor:
E&K EXCAVATING

Comments:
RP REQUESTED A CALL BACK TOMORROW.

Cleanup:

Michael Judy <michael.judy@co.barron.wi.us>

WI SPILL #24185 ID 20260903NO03-1 - SEPTAGE [SEWAGE]

1 message

dnrlehotline@wisconsin.gov <dnrlehotline@wisconsin.gov> Thu, Sep 3, 2026 at 12:12 PM
To: michael.judy@co.barron.wi.us

SERTS ID:
20260903NO03-1

Reported:
09/03/2026 11:57

Occurred:
09/03/2026 06:00

Substance:
SEPTAGE [SEWAGE]

AMOUNT RELEASED AND
AMOUNT RECOVERED ARE
UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME

Reported by:
KATIE GOIN
SUPERVISOR
CITY OF CUMBERLAND
katie@cmutility.com
(715) 419-3990

Location:
NO REGION
BARRON COUNTY
CUMBERLAND, TOWNSHIP OF
BRIDGE
NA
LAT: 45.54403 LONG: -92.01806
https://www.google.com/maps/place/45.54403,-92.01806

Responsible Party:
UNKNOWN

Cause:
TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT, LOAD SPILL

Cause Description:
A CONTRACTOR WAS DOING DIGGGING FOR A BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, AND HE HIT THE FORCE MAIN OUT OF THE LIFT STATION.

Environmental Impact:
SEWAGE WENT INTO THE LAKE. EVERYTHING IN THE LAKE IS CONTAINED.

Comments:
THE AMOUNT IS STILL BEING FIGURED OUT.

Cleanup:
THE PUMPS WERE SHUT OFF.

Notified S/W ROMFOE by Phone

BARRON COUNTY
LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE
BARRON, WI 54812

BY-LAWS

Effective Date: May 23, 1990
Revised August 19, 2002
Revised June 22, 2004
Revised August 22, 2006
Revised May 25, 2010
Revised July 27, 2010
Revised April 30, 2013
Reviewed: January 27, 2015
July 25, 2016
February 14, 2019
July 30, 2020
October 27, 2022
October 26, 2023
October 31, 2024
October 30, 2025

Preface

The County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) serves the county local planning district which was established by the Wisconsin State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) on the effective date of July 17, 1987. The LEPC was confirmed by the SERC on August 13, 1987. These rules of operation are promulgated under the directive of the Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act (SARA), Title III, Section 301 (c). The LEPC may be used as an advisory committee to the Law Enforcement/Emergency Management Committee for homeland security, natural hazards and other planning functions.

1. Posts, positions, appointments and elections:

    a. Chairperson:

    Subject to the requirements of Title III, Section 301 (c) The Chairperson will be a County board supervisor. That person shall be selected for a term of two years starting after the reorganization of the County Board. The Chairperson will preside over meetings of the LEPC. The Chairperson will hold only one elected position in the LEPC.

    b. Vice Chairperson:

    In order to assure the continuity of operations in the absence of the Chairperson, the committee has established a post of Vice Chairperson and will elect a person for that post. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson will preside over meetings of the LEPC. The Vice Chairperson will be elected for a term of two years and shall be a member of the LEPC.
    The Vice Chairperson will hold only one elected position in the LEPC.

    c. Director of Information:

    Subject to the requirements of Title III, Section 303 (c), the committee will designate a

Director of Information who will serve at the pleasure of the Committee. The Director of Information will undertake those duties and responsibilities as outlined under Title III, Section 301 (c) and those other responsibilities and duties assigned by the LEPC. The LEPC may also designate Deputy Directors of Information to serve in the absence of the primary designee. Barron County LEPC has designated the Emergency Management Director as the Director of Information and has authorized and approved a Deputy Director position.

d. Community Emergency Director:

Subject to the requirements of Title III, Section 303 (c) (3), the Law Enforcement/Emergency Management Committee will designate a Community Emergency Director who will serve at the direction of the Law Enforcement/Emergency Management Committee. The County Emergency Management Director will undertake those duties as assigned by the plan created under Title III, Section 303, and other responsibilities and duties assigned by the Emergency Management Committee. The LEPC may also designate Deputy Community Emergency Directors as required. The County Emergency Management Director may serve as the Director of Information.

e. LEPC Compliance Inspector

The Barron County LEPC will request the State of Wisconsin to designate a Compliance Inspector Officer when needed.

2. Members

a. The LEPC shall consist of the following permanent members to be appointed by the County Administrator and approved by the County Board: County Administrator, one state official, one elected official, Emergency Management Director, Emergency Management Secretary, Sheriff, Highway Commissioner, County HazMat Team Director, Soil & Water Conservationist or designee, and Public Health Program Manager and/or Public Health Officer.

b. Members are required to be appointed by resolution of the County Board Chair and approved by the County Board; are members represent Fire, Law Enforcement, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Hospitals, Environmental, Media, Community Groups, Hazardous Materials Facilities, and a Tribal Representative.

c. Members required to be appointed (b. above) will serve a three-year term with approximately one-third (1/3) of the membership being replaced in May of each year. Upon appointment, members will be entered into the LEPC minutes.

d. Members may be re-appointed.

e. Members may attend virtually on a case-by-case basis with the chair's prior approval, but in-person attendance is strongly encouraged. Committee members attending virtually will not be able to attend closed sessions.

f. In the event a member misses three (3) meetings in one calendar year, the Chairperson will contact the member to review the circumstances. If necessary, the Chairperson will request

the County Board Chairperson to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

g. In the event a vacancy occurs due to other circumstances, the County Board Chairperson will assign another person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

h. The Secretary of the Emergency Management Office shall serve as Secretary for the LEPC, committees, and sub-committees.

3. Quorum

a. A quorum will consist of a simple majority of LEPC members at a committee meeting.

b. A majority vote of members present where a quorum exists will be needed for passage, with the exception of when Barron County Rules and Procedures or Roberts Rules of Order dictates otherwise.

4. Meetings:

a. Location

Meeting location will be designated on the public meeting notice. Meetings of the LEPC will be held in the county with the exception of joint meetings held between the LEPC and the other LEPCs and the SERB which are required for coordination of activities or for the conduct of jointly related business.

b. Meeting Dates and Times

The LEPC will establish a quarterly meeting schedule. If there are no agenda items to be discussed, the meeting will be cancelled. Special meetings of the LEPC may be called by the Chairperson with public notice of at least 24 hours prior to the event.

c. Emergency Meeting

During emergency conditions when a release of a substance covered by the notification requirements of Title III, Section 304, has, is occurring, or is imminent, the Chairperson may call an emergency meeting of the LEPC as soon as possible with the provision that all reasonable attempts are made to notify the public of the meeting through local media channels. The conduct of business of such meetings will be limited to those items required by the emergency conditions present.

d. Agenda Items

Items included in the agenda will be submitted to the County Director at least 1-1/2 weeks prior to the LEPC meeting unless an emergency condition exists. The County Director will review and approve the agenda prior to posting. The agenda will be compiled and mailed to committee members, media reps,

and others who request copies at least 1 week prior to the committee meeting. Emergency agenda items may be added with a 2-hour notice per State Statute 19.84 (3) Public Notice Rules.

5. Public Opportunity

The LEPC will, on every agenda, provide at least 15 minutes, with a maximum of 3 minutes per person, for public comments and input. Time for public comment will be allotted on a first-come, first-served basis. The LEPC may limit comments to a certain time frame and limit public input to 15 minutes, with a maximum of 3 minutes per person per meeting, with a majority roll call of the committee. Members of the public must pre-register for public comment and provide their full name, home address, and home telephone number.

6. Minutes of Meetings

Minutes of all meetings and sessions of the LEPC and committees or sub-committees will be distributed to committee members, Law Enforcement /Emergency Management Committee, County Administrator, County Clerk, and area office of the Divisions of Emergency Management, and others who request them through the County Emergency Director. The Emergency Management Secretary will act as Secretary and take minutes of the business conducted at the LEPC, committee, and sub-committee meetings.

7. Adoption and Amendments of the Rules of Operation

Adoption of these rules or approval of amendments to the rules can be made at any regular or Special meeting of the LEPC as an agenda item with a two thirds (2/3) roll call vote.

8. Payment Process for Spill Response

The Barron County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) has authorized the Barron County Office of Emergency Management to serve as the designated billing agent for hazardous materials incidents occurring within Barron County. In this role, Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating and preparing a consolidated invoice for eligible costs incurred during a hazardous materials response. This process allows participating emergency response agencies—including law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services (EMS), first responder agencies, and other authorized response organizations—to document their actual and necessary response expenses for reimbursement through a coordinated county process.

Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute § 323.72, the person or entity responsible for causing a hazardous substance release, or possessing the hazardous substance involved in the release, is strictly liable for the actual and necessary costs incurred by local agencies during the emergency response. Accordingly, the Barron County Office of Emergency Management will submit the invoice to the individual, business, or other responsible party associated with the hazardous materials spill or release. If the responsible party cannot be identified or is financially unable to reimburse the eligible response costs, reimbursement may be sought through the Wisconsin Division of Emergency Management in accordance with applicable state procedures and funding requirements.

9. Emergency Plan

Emergency plans will be available to the public upon request. Area newspapers and radios will be contacted with information about public availability of the plan after completion. Release of information will be given following the Community Right To Know Policy by the Director of Information.

10. Committees

Shall be named by the LEPC Chair. The LEPC Chair shall appoint a chair and sub-committee chair persons when deemed necessary to facilitate the workings of the LEPC.

11. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in Barron County Rules and Procedures and Roberts Rules of Order, the latest edition, will govern this committee in which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws

Emergency Services Quarterly Report

July 1 2026 to September 30 2026

Each quarter, the Barron County (WI) Sheriff's Department – Office of Emergency Services publishes a quarterly community report that outlines activities completed over the previous three months, and identifies active initiatives over the next three months.

Barron County Sheriff's Department, Office of Emergency Services

GRANT FUNDING (AWARDED) AWAITING RECEIPT: $63,470

- Office of Emergency Services applied and was awarded the following grants this quarter:

$13,597	2026 Emergency Planning & Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)
$7,381	2026 Computer & Hazmat Equipment Grant (CHREG)
$42,492	Public Safety Communications Grant through Wisconsin Emergency Mgt

Grant funding awarded (year to date): $ 63,470

GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED: $67,318

- Office of Emergency Services applied and received the following grants this quarter:

$40,078	2025 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)
$13,798	2025 Emergency Planning & Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)
$5,985	Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning (HMEP) Grant
$7,457	2025 Emergency Management Performance Grant Closeout

Grant funding received (this quarter): $ 67,318

Total Grant Funding (year-to-date): $130,788

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

STORM SPOTTER TEAM

To strengthen severe weather monitoring and reporting capabilities throughout Barron County, an 18-member Storm Spotter Team has been established. All members complete annual (advanced) National Weather Service (NWS) SKYWARN Storm Spotter Training and are activated through the IamResponding notification system when severe weather threatens the area.



Upon activation, trained spotters monitor conditions within their communities or deploy to designated observation locations. Using an assigned radio frequency, spotters maintain communication with Barron County Emergency Management and 911, providing real-time reports of hazardous weather conditions. The team combines field observations with NWS information, 911 reports, radar data, and mapping resources to maintain situational awareness and coordinate countywide coverage.

When significant weather is observed, spotters immediately relay critical information to emergency management and submit official reports to the NWS. These field observations help meteorologists verify developing conditions and support the timely issuance of severe thunderstorm, tornado, and other public safety weather warnings.

CHURCH PREPAREDNESS

Throughout the quarter, Emergency Management met with representatives from several churches across Barron County to review and strengthen their emergency preparedness plans. These discussions focused on planning for active threats and other security incidents, medical emergencies and first aid, severe weather, fire safety, evacuation procedures, and the potential use of faith-based facilities for community sheltering during emergencies or disasters.

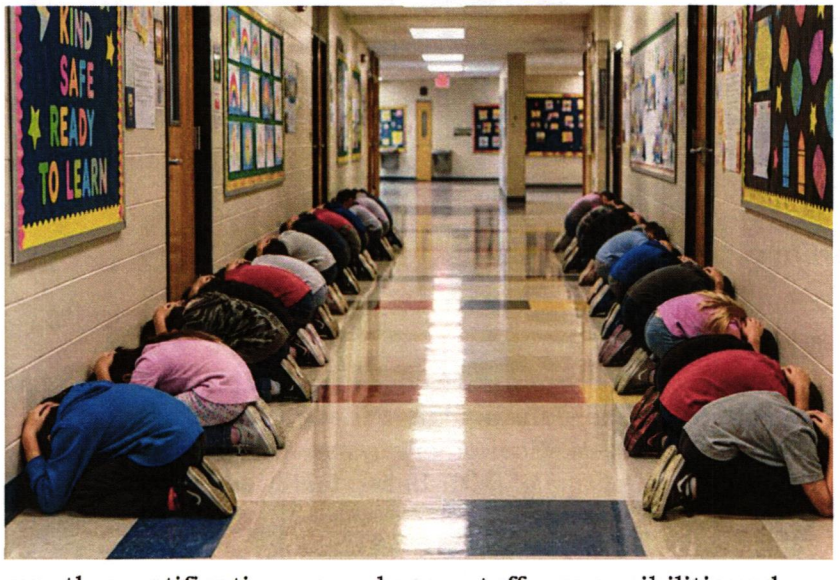
As critical incidents involving faith-based organizations continue to receive national attention, local churches are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of identifying facility vulnerabilities and establishing clear procedures to protect congregants, staff, volunteers, and visitors. In response, several churches have begun proactively requesting guidance, training opportunities, planning assistance, and other preparedness resources from Emergency Management. This outreach helps strengthen relationships with faith-based organizations while improving their ability to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies affecting their facilities and congregations.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ARTICLES

Through a partnership with the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Emergency Management has significantly expanded its community preparedness outreach by providing disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery information to more than 12,000 residents each quarter. Educational articles are published monthly in the *Barron Review* and focus on practical steps residents can take to prepare their households, reduce disaster-related risks, and recover more effectively following an emergency.

Approximately 4,000 copies of the publication are mailed directly to residents each month, with additional copies distributed at high-traffic locations throughout the county, including Kwik Trip, MarketPlace Foods, and other community businesses and organizations. This partnership provides Emergency Management with a consistent and cost-effective method of delivering preparedness education directly to residents while increasing public awareness of local hazards and encouraging greater individual and household resilience.



SCHOOL FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

Emergency Management conducted tornado preparedness assessments at several area schools to strengthen severe weather readiness and help protect students and staff during tornadoes and severe wind storms.

Assessments focused on identifying and evaluating designated tornado shelter areas, determining appropriate locations for staging students during Tornado Warnings, and reviewing potential vulnerabilities within each facility.

Emergency Management also coordinated with school personnel to review severe weather notification procedures, staff responsibilities when warnings are issued, movement of students to designated shelter areas, accountability procedures, and considerations for students with mobility or other special needs.

These assessments provide school administrators with practical recommendations to improve emergency procedures and ensure staff are prepared to respond quickly when severe weather threatens. The assessment process also helps strengthen coordination between schools, Emergency Management, and local public safety agencies. By identifying concerns before an emergency occurs, schools can address vulnerabilities, refine sheltering procedures, improve staff training, and conduct more effective drills, ultimately creating a safer and more resilient environment for students and staff.

COUNTYWIDE FIRST RESPONDERS

ADDITIONAL AEDs

Through the generous support of community donations, two additional Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) were purchased and assigned to first responders with Emergency Services of Barron County. These additions bring the total number of AEDs assigned to the first responder team to four, further expanding access to lifesaving equipment and improving the ability to provide early defibrillation during cardiac emergencies.



This effort builds upon a broader AED initiative supported by grant funding in previous years, which equipped every Barron County Sheriff's Department patrol squad with an AED. The initiative also provided updated AED equipment throughout Barron County government facilities, including the Justice Center, Government Center, Waste-to-Energy facility, Highway Department, and other county locations. Collectively, these efforts increase the availability of AEDs throughout the county and strengthen the ability of first responders, law enforcement personnel, county employees, and trained members of the public to provide immediate lifesaving intervention during a sudden cardiac arrest.

Emergency Management provided CPR refresher training to 32 Barron County Sheriff's Department personnel. The training reinforced critical lifesaving skills, including CPR, use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and appropriate response to sudden cardiac arrest. Providing routine refresher training helps ensure personnel maintain confidence and proficiency in these skills and are prepared to provide immediate lifesaving care until additional medical resources arrive.

COMMUNICATIONS

COUNTY BOARD NOTIFICATION GROUP

To streamline communications with the Barron County Board of Supervisors, a dedicated County Board notification group was created, utilizing the IamResponding mass notification platform. The system provides a centralized method for rapidly distributing information to all County Board members simultaneously.

The notification group can be utilized for both routine and emergency communications, ranging from meeting schedule changes and important county updates to time-sensitive notifications during major emergencies or disasters. During a significant incident, the system can also be used to quickly notify Board members of changing conditions, provide situational updates, or request an emergency meeting when immediate County Board action or authorization may be necessary. Establishing this communication capability strengthens coordination, improves information sharing, and helps ensure elected officials can be reached quickly when their involvement is needed.

MAJOR INCIDENT NOTIFICATION GROUP

On June 4, Emergency Management conducted a system test of the Major Incident Notification Group utilizing the IamResponding mass notification platform. The group is designed to provide timely situational awareness to key community leaders and partner agencies during significant emergencies or incidents affecting Barron County. Participants include county department directors, school administrators, business representatives, law enforcement, fire and EMS leadership, elected officials, hospital emergency department leadership, and other individuals whose organizations may be affected by or involved in the response to a major incident.

The test successfully verified the functionality of the notification system and provided an opportunity to validate participant contact information and distribution lists. Several minor updates were identified and completed following the test. Overall, the system performed as intended and demonstrated its ability to rapidly distribute critical incident information to key stakeholders throughout the county. Emergency Management will continue conducting semiannual tests each spring and fall to maintain system readiness and ensure contact information remains current.

The previous section outlined projects completed within the past 3 months.

The following section identifies initiatives in-progress over the next 3 months.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

UPDATE OF TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

Emergency Management is updating the inventory of transportation resources that could be activated during emergencies requiring the evacuation or relocation of residents. This planning effort places particular emphasis on vulnerable facilities, including assisted living facilities, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and other residential care facilities whose occupants may require specialized transportation or additional assistance during an evacuation. The resource list will identify available transportation capabilities throughout the county and surrounding areas, including resources capable of accommodating individuals with mobility limitations and other functional needs.

These resources may also be utilized during larger community evacuations resulting from structural fires, long term power outages, severe weather, hazardous materials incidents, infrastructure failures, or other emergencies that require the temporary relocation of residents. Maintaining an updated transportation resource inventory will improve coordination, reduce response time, and strengthen the county's ability to support evacuation operations.



WILDFIRE DETECTION CAMERAS

Emergency Management coordinating with a vendor to install a small number of Wildfire Detection Cameras in Barron County that stream back to the Barron County 911 Center. Two wildland fire cameras have been installed, one in Cumberland and the other in Barronett.

The cameras do not face traffic or populated areas; instead, they face large wooded areas and monitor vast landscapes. When a camera detects a wildfire, it sends alert notifications to the vendor's operations center, where a human representative assesses the validity of the fire report and provides a general location, in addition to an image from the camera showing the smoke column. This helps firefighters narrow down the exact location and dispatch the appropriate resources.

Barron County is working with the vendor to install additional cameras to increase detection and reduce emergency response times. Expanding the camera network will provide greater coverage of rural and heavily wooded areas where fires may otherwise go unnoticed for extended periods. Earlier detection can give fire departments valuable additional time to locate, assess, and contain emerging wildfires before they grow into larger and more difficult incidents.

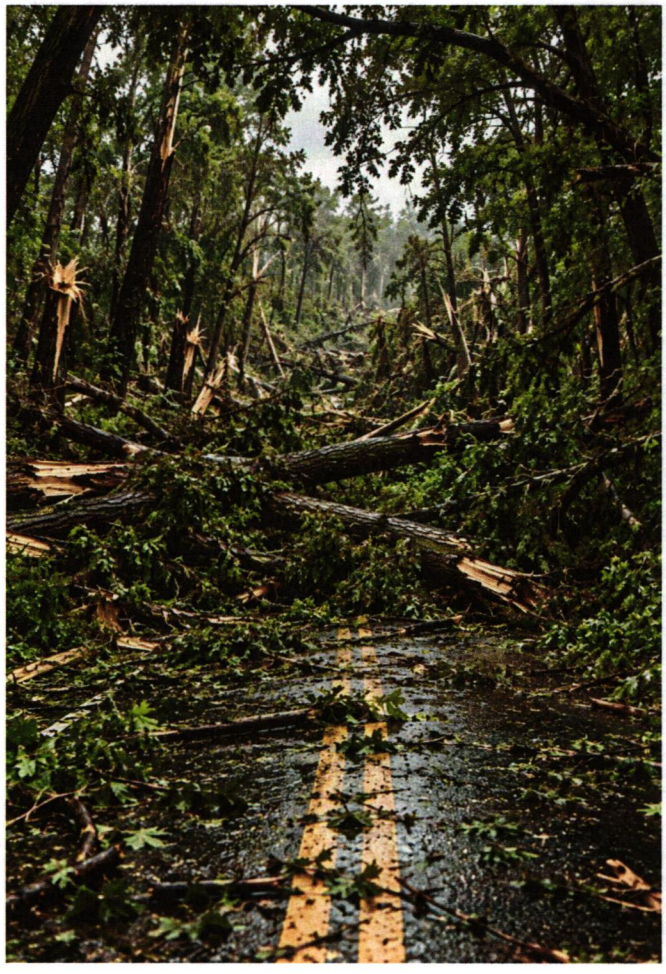
EMERGENCY SHELTER DIRECTORY

The county's Emergency Shelter Directory is currently being updated to ensure facility information, contact information, availability, and capabilities remain accurate and current. The directory identifies facilities throughout Barron County that have volunteered to serve as warming or cooling shelters during periods of extreme cold, excessive heat, extended power outages, and other emergency situations.

Each participating facility is also plotted within the county's emergency mapping system as a dedicated map layer, allowing Emergency Management to quickly identify the closest available shelter based on the location of an incident or affected population. The directory also helps responders determine appropriate shelter options and provides essential information needed to coordinate facility activation. Maintaining an accurate shelter directory reduces the time required to locate appropriate shelter resources, and strengthens the county's ability to provide residents with a safe location during severe weather and other emergencies.

CAMP PHILLIPS EMERGENCY ACCESS

Last year, potential emergency access vulnerability was identified at Camp Phillips Boy Scout Camp. The property is currently served by a single primary access road, creating a potential challenge during a significant emergency.



A severe windstorm, tornado, wildfire, or other incident resulting in fallen trees, debris, or damage to the roadway could easily restrict or completely prevent emergency vehicles from accessing the property. Such an occurrence could significantly delay access to injured campers, staff, and visitors and could complicate evacuation or other emergency response operations.

Over the past several months, Barron County Emergency Management has worked collaboratively with Camp Phillips and Barron County Forestry to evaluate options for establishing a secondary emergency access route. An existing Barron County-owned access road located near the south end of the property was initially identified as the most viable option. However, further evaluation determined that improvements needed to accommodate emergency vehicles, including the placement of gravel and other roadway enhancements, are restricted due to state wetland protections affecting portions of the proposed route.

Several alternative access routes have also been evaluated; however, each has encountered similar challenges due to the extensive wetlands surrounding the property. Despite these limitations, Emergency Management will continue working with Camp Phillips, Barron County Forestry, and other partners to identify a practical and environmentally compliant solution. Establishing reliable secondary emergency access remains an important preparedness objective that would improve responder access, provide an alternative evacuation route, and enhance the overall safety and resilience of the Camp Phillips property.

Future planning efforts will also consider alternatives that reduce the risks associated with having a single access point. These may include pre-identification of equipment capable of rapidly clearing fallen trees and debris, improved emergency communications, and development of contingency procedures for incidents that temporarily isolate the camp. Continued coordination with fire, EMS, law enforcement, forestry personnel, and camp leadership will help ensure response plans account for access limitations while a permanent secondary access solution continues to be evaluated.



COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)

Emergency Management is working toward the development of a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), an organized group of trained community volunteers who can support local emergency services before, during, and after disasters. Developed by FEMA, the CERT program serves as a force multiplier by providing additional personnel when emergency response resources are overwhelmed or committed to higher-priority operations.

Following a significant emergency or disaster, such as a tornado, flood, extended power outage, or other large-scale incident, CERT members may assist with neighborhood damage assessments, wellness checks, food and water distribution, shelter operations, volunteer reception centers, missing-person searches, public information distribution, sandbagging operations, and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) support.

CERT members do not replace firefighters, EMS, law enforcement, or other emergency responders. Instead, they perform lower-risk support functions, allowing emergency responders to remain focused on incidents requiring specialized skills, equipment, or authority. Establishing a CERT program will expand Barron County's volunteer capabilities while strengthening community preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

DISASTER RESPONSE – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

Emergency Management is developing a training program specifically for Town Boards and City Councils to strengthen their understanding of local government roles and responsibilities before, during, and following a disaster or large-scale emergency. The training will guide local officials through conducting a community hazard assessment, vulnerability analysis, and capabilities assessment to identify the risks facing their jurisdiction.

Participants will also receive an overview of local, county, state, and federal emergency resources, including how additional assistance and resources are requested during a major incident. The training will conclude with a tabletop exercise in which participants are presented with a simulated disaster affecting their own community and must work through the incident from a local leadership perspective. The exercise will require participants to make decisions, establish priorities, coordinate resources, address emerging problems, and manage the consequences of the incident as the scenario evolves. This hands-on approach is intended to help local officials better understand the complexities of disaster response while strengthening coordination and preparedness at the municipal level.

COMMUNITY-BASED CPR CLASSES

Community-based CPR/AED training is being offered throughout Barron County to increase the number of individuals who are prepared to respond during a cardiac emergency.

Coordination is currently underway with local businesses and organizations whose employees are interested in becoming certified in CPR and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), while additional training opportunities are being developed for members of the general public.

Several business and community classes are currently being scheduled at locations throughout the county to make this lifesaving training more accessible.

Increasing the number of CPR trained individuals within our communities strengthens the chain of survival by increasing the chance that immediate CPR and early defibrillation can begin before EMS arrives.



DRILLS & EXERCISES

TABLETOP EXERCISE IN RICE LAKE

In November, emergency management will be participating in a tabletop exercise in the City of Rice Lake designed to review the roles and responsibilities of executive level positions during the response and recovery phases of a disaster.

A disaster tabletop exercise is a discussion-based training activity that places participants in a realistic simulated emergency and requires them to work through decisions, responsibilities, resource needs, and coordination challenges as the scenario develops. For elected officials and emergency responders, tabletop exercises provide a low-risk environment to clarify roles, practice communication and decision-making, identify gaps in emergency plans and resources, and strengthen relationships between agencies before a real disaster occurs.

FULL-SCALE EXERCISE IN RICE LAKE

In December, emergency management will be participating in a full-scale emergency exercise in the City of Rice Lake. This exercise will include active participation from Law Enforcement, Fire, EMS, First Responders, Rescue Task Force, Hospitals, and Air Medical. The dates and details of are being withheld to protect the integrity and realism of the exercise.

DISASTER EXERCISES IN 2027

In 2027, emergency management will be coordinating with school resource officers to hold tabletop exercises and full-scale exercises for schools in Barron, Cameron, Prairie Farm, and Rice Lake. The dates and details are not being published to protect the integrity of the exercises. To promote realism, the scenario will follow realistic incidents such as natural disasters, man-made disasters, or terrorism-related incidents.

COMMUNICATIONS



AVIATION OBSTRUCTION LIGHTS

The aviation obstruction lights, commonly referred to as aircraft warning lights, located at the top of the Clinton and Dallas communications towers are currently in need of replacement. The maintenance project at the Clinton tower has been complicated by the presence of a large osprey nest located near the upper portion of the tower.

Following consultation with the tower maintenance crew, the decision was made to schedule the necessary tower work for October, when the likelihood of active osprey nesting is reduced due to seasonal migration. Delaying the work will help minimize disturbance to the birds while also reducing the potential safety hazard to tower technicians who could encounter protective or territorial behavior while working near the nesting area.

In the meantime, staff are continuing to evaluate the most appropriate long-term approach for addressing the osprey nest and reducing the likelihood of future conflicts with tower maintenance and communications infrastructure. Any actions involving the nest or birds will be coordinated with the appropriate agencies and conducted in accordance with applicable federal and state wildlife regulations. Once conditions allow, the aviation lighting repairs will be completed to restore the towers to normal operating condition.

911 DISPATCH

BACKUP 911 CENTER

Supported by a grant through the State of Wisconsin, the Barron County 911 Center is working to create a backup 911 Center. This backup is designed to operate at full capacity in the event that the primary 911 Center is out-of-service for any reason. Over the next several months, equipment will be installed and tested to ensure interoperability with the systems that makeup the backbone of our countywide public safety radio infrastructure.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH

Also supported by a grant through the State of Wiscosin, the Barron County 911 Center is working on the upgrade of its current Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) system to the ProQA platform developed by Priority Dispatch. ProQA is a computerized emergency call-taking and decision-support system that guides dispatchers through the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) medical protocols using a structured, interactive process.

During a medical 911 call, the software assists the dispatcher in identifying the nature and severity of the emergency, asking appropriate questions, determining the correct dispatch code, and providing standardized pre-arrival instructions while emergency responders are enroute. These instructions can include lifesaving interventions such as dispatcher-assisted CPR, bleeding control, childbirth assistance, and other immediate care.

The platform also includes specialized tools for situations such as suspected strokes and CPR monitoring and can integrate with Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems. Upgrading to ProQA would provide dispatchers with a more consistent and streamlined process for handling medical emergencies, improve documentation and quality-assurance capabilities, support ongoing training and performance review, and help ensure callers receive standardized instructions regardless of which dispatcher answers the call.

GRANTS

PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO GRANT

On May 7, Emergency Management applied for and was subsequently awarded a $42,492 grant through the Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC). The grant funding was secured to support the purchase of additional public safety communications radios for the Barron County Sheriff's Department, strengthening communications capabilities and supporting reliable interoperable communications during routine operations, major incidents, and emergency response activities.

The grant project is scheduled to be formally closed out in October. Upon completion of the required grant documentation and closeout process, Barron County is expected to receive reimbursement in the amount of $42,492. This funding represents a significant investment in the county's public safety communications infrastructure while reducing the financial impact of necessary equipment purchases on local taxpayers.

END OF REPORT



Mike Judy, Director of Emergency Services
Barron County Sheriff's Department
Michael.Judy@co.barron.wi.us

SHERIFF
BARRON COUNTY