

Somerset County LEPC Drill / Meeting

22nd July 2026

Attendees:

Chris Hopkins- EM office
Chris Osment- Health Dept.
Crystal Corbin-DSS
Danielle Weber- Health Dept.
Darlene Taylor – Mayor City Field
Diane Waller- Environ. Health
Joshua Taylor – Sanitary Dist
Lori Enge- DSS
Mark Konapelsky- Code Enforce
Mark Tyler- UMES
Mike Marvel-Roads Super.
Raymond Pettit-ECI
Michael Bowie-MSP
Yvette Cross- EM Office
Crystal Meadows- SCHD
Matt Munday – PRMC Life Safety Coord.
Will Cornish- P & Z
Kira Trejo- Detention Center
Cristobe Trejo- Main Dept.
Gary Kitching-Rds
Peter Hirschhoff- City of Crisfield
Bill & Liz Shaffer- CERT

- Asst. Director Christopher Hopkins reviewed previous meeting minutes, motion was made and 2nd to accept those minutes
- Old Business N/A
- New Business: Open House Aug.26th Wed. an invite will be sent out later today by Yvette.
- Wakefield Weather sent out emergency alerts warning for a tornado – They were sent to area phones that would be affected in those areas. If you did not get a alert message on your phone it means you were not in a impacted area.
- Also, a social media post went out on FB seeking information on damages that you might have had due to these storms. The reason for this was for us so we could put in a WEB EOC request for volunteers to come and help with tree removal. Send that information to damages@somersetmd.us
- Tier II reporting of Hazardous Materials: Somerset county has approx.40 sites in Somerset County. As of 2026 all but 1 site is compliant. We are working with that site to make sure they submit online to MDE.
- Everbridge System: New Emergency Notification System: We will begin registering for this service at the County Fair. To register you can scan with QR Code that is being circulated around the room today and or go onto the website. If you want it for work related info. you could put in your work address (if you don't live in the County). You can choose the alerts you wish to receive (they will be coming from the National Weather Service – Not us)
- The Weather Group – will still be getting the emails from us as before.
 - Danielle said she is signed up with the State could she still sign up for the county. It was discussed and decided that if you used a Different Email you

could but we do not suggest using your same email you used to sign up with the state.

- Oct. 28th 2026 Next meeting

Drill: “DISCONNECTED” (IT wasn’t able to be present)

Exercise type: Cyber Security, Critical Infrastructure and COOP (Continuity of Operation)

Expectations: (How would we communicate, what would do if we had to COOP if we didn’t have Internet due to a cyber incident- county level)

Chris presented:

Overview: 08:30 Tuesday morning in July employees at the county office bldg. began to notice intermittent internet outages, inability to access email, a slow county network performance. A severe weather event has occurred and a tornado has impacted the area of Wilson Landing; yesterday (Monday). Emergency Services, DSS, Health Dept., BOE and the Sheriffs Dept. is in day 2 of manning a Shelter at Washington HS.

911 Center and the Government Office bldg. is starting to recognize operating systems are not working correctly. (CAD lag and freezing) delayed mapping updating and loss of Internet based applications. Rapid SOS, Convey911 (Translation service, language service) not working correctly, Merits (which runs the wanted checks, drivers licenses and tags through).

County IT initially suspected Internet Provider outage; but unusual network traffic is identified between the 911 Center and the County Network.

At 9:05 AM (Tuesday) County employees report Citizens can’t access online payment options slow call processing internally. Shelter partners can’t connect with the EOC (internet based connection) CAD units not updating properly – so the times on officers responses are not recorded correctly. Citizens are complaining about not being able to reach county offices. Social Media is starting to post about “What is going on ..Why can’t I utilize what have been able to in the past”.

Then all of the sudden a ransom ware message is discovered on multiple county computers demanding payment in crypto currency. This exercise will focus on whether the 911 was compromised, if systems should be isolated from county government infrastructure and how will emergency communications continue during degraded operations and coordination between emergency services, IT, leadership, county departments and outside agencies. The effect could have the potential to be wide spread through our contacts with outside departments in towns, cities and states.

Objectives to maintain uninterrupted 911 activities, maintain communications with agencies and we would COOP our EOC here in this building and the 911 would go there back up. We would maintain continued support to the county citizens.

Cyber Security Objective: to Identify the size and scope of the cyber incident. Isolate the issue and preserve evidence for forensic investigation.

Leadership Objectives. To coordinate decision making between county leadership and emergency services, manage public messaging and media inquiries and that we are working on the issue. Determine emergency declarations, and mutual aid needs and how we are going to work around this right now.

Scenario:

- When county employees noticed issues who will they start reaching out to : County IT, Help desk,
- What other agency shares infrastructure with County Government: (Law Enforcement, 911 centers)

- When are back up procedures started with 911 – when they notice issues with CAD then they will go to paper / hand written (old school method)
- How are responders notified over radio or phone- How would the law enforcement agencies handle on their end?

9:05 AM IT discovers the Ransom Ware on the government computers. Emails are going out that we didn't send.

- 911 center is isolated immediately to paper cards.....
- You don't unhook your computer – unless directed to do so.
- Outside agencies has procedures to notify their IT
- Who would IT notify: FBI would get involved at some point.
- At Tidal Health they do have paper forms to use and they would contact their IT dept.

9:30 AM People are posting on FB – Comments are being posted

- What are we doing in the departments when aren't able to operate and citizens are upset: They would be directed to the County Administrators Office
- Who release information publicly, how will we address rumors, who will be your PIO?
- How do you operate without your phone service.- (It did happen for 24 hrs. we were unaware it was happening) Staff is on social media – we would probably made of aware soon enough
- Water and Sewer is monitored – through the internet and we would notice from an alert. We would do manual checks. If my phone is not working, I would get a call on my cell phone.
- Text messaging to Directors of every department from administration would go out to say how we should be responding to the outage.

10:00 AM Neighboring counties are saying they are getting suspicious emails from L Buck (She didn't send anything out) verified from UMES, MSP, SHA, Tidal Health, Town of Crisfield, Town of Princess Anne asking to verify this email by Clicking this link. –

- Does outside agencies practice NOT Clicking – Yes
- Inmates at the detention center and ECI are irate due to not having internet to use their tablets. When this happens, we say we are working on it.
- 911 center has now lost internet connectivity- they have a plan for that
Access to cloud base RMS- law effected
- All County has lost internet – How to contact IT dept. -outside of their email
 - Do you have a wireless network / Hotspot so when you COOP you can use that?
 - Do you have a backup email – like a google account (Gmail) to be able to use.
- Shelter Operations: communicate- since they don't have cell phone service because of the school – we would physically drive back to EOC for updates
 - UMES documents manually calls for service
 - In Tax office we could take payment and give them a handwritten receipt and they would enter when computers are back up.
 - Payroll for the county and bill pay wouldn't be affected by the company we use- because it's a cloud base resource.
- Which Systems are Mission Critical: Radio, Meters,
 - Dispatchers are trained for manual operations:
 - First Monday of each month the 911 dispatchers work out of the backup for 24hrs.
 - 1st Monday of every month at 10:00 AM portable radios are tested
Those departments tested (Health Dept., ECI, Dog Control, McCready and Coast Guard)

- What staffing adjustments do we need to think about if we are to go to a back up office – can you COOP for an extended period of time?
- PIO will release information and put out a unified message
- How to correct Mis Information? – Corrected message needs to say unless it comes from _____ office then it is not accurate.
- What role does monitor social media play? We can correct mis information-
- Expected actions: 911 prioritizing emergency calls,
- County IT: isolate systems, preserve logs and evidence, coordinate with cyber security partners,
- Admin. Leadership Activate the emergency management coordination, improve public messaging and State assistant requests (which have to flow through) Emergency Management.

Exercise Concludes When: Participants stabilize the emergency communication, establish COOP, coordinate external support, develop recovery priorities, Identify lessons learned and corrective actions, and correct poor cell coverage in Washington High school

Review Gaps: Vendor Reliance (Redundancy: cloud base etc.) communication, staff and training efficiencies.

Test portable radios the 1st Monday of the month at 10:00 AM - (add Roads dept. to the list for testing by 911).

Document times for IT (when issues occur concerning cybersecurity).

County Office Employees are not made aware when phones are not working.

Our next meeting is **Oct. 28, 2026 at 10 AM**

The meeting was adjourned

Submitted Respectfully,
Laraine Buck, Facilitator

