

# Emergency Management

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

EOC News

APRIL 16TH, 2024

### Cops, Kids, and Emergency Management

*Introducing children to the world of emergency response.*



The annual Cops & Kids day started out as a way to show kids the wide variety of career paths within the field of law enforcement. Since then, it has expanded to include a multitude of emergency response disciplines from a plethora of jurisdictions. This year was a resounding success with various county, state, and even federal agencies and private entities attending to put on a great show for the children of Franklin County Schools.

Franklin County Emergency Management has attended for the last several years, this year represented by Coordinator Amanda Anthony and SPN Coordinator Josh Preiser. Hundreds of kids from pre-school to fifth grade had a blast seeing the men and women - and loud vehicles - of the world of emergency response.

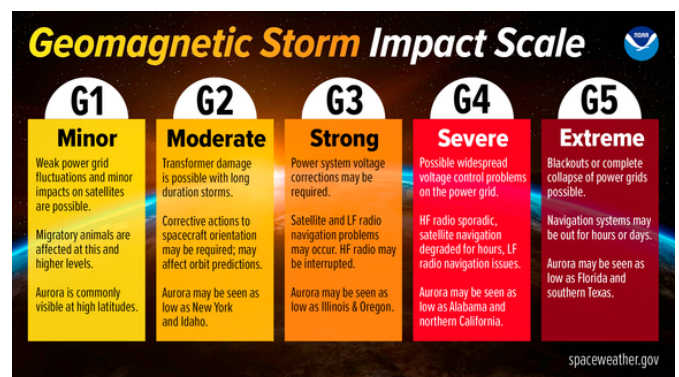
The EOC thanks Franklin County Sheriff A.J. Smith for his generous invitation to participate in the event. We look forward to attending next year as well.

### Under Threat From the Final Frontier

*There are more weather hazards than just the terrestrial*

In September of 1859 a solar storm struck the Earth. The atmosphere became so energized that telegraph operators in North America and Europe received electrical shocks while operating their equipment. In March of 1989 a solar storm hit the Earth, leaving more than 6 million Canadians without power. The storm was so intense that the aurora could be seen as far south as Florida.

Solar Storms are bursts of highly charged energy emitted during solar flares. While the magnetosphere protects us from most solar energy, it can occasionally be overwhelmed. When this happens the impacts can range from radio interference to blown fuses in electrical devices. In extreme examples, power systems can be overloaded leading to widespread blackouts. Satellites can also be disabled as their sensitive electrical components are overwhelmed by the massive amounts of electrical energy leaving systems like GPS inoperative, or cause them to reenter Earth's atmosphere and burn up. This happened in February of 2022 when 40 SpaceX Starlink satellites fell victim to a solar storm.



Do you have a plan in place for solar storms? Learn more about solar storms at <https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/noaa-scales-explanation>.

## **Emergency Management Staff, Volunteers, & Stakeholders**

*Shining a spotlight on the people who make this agency function.*



Sheriff A.J. "Tony" Smith is the elected law enforcement officer of Franklin County. He directs the county's law enforcement efforts to safeguard the people of Franklin County with dedication and determination.

During a disaster, he stations deputies and equipment throughout the county for various tasks, ranging from looter control to closing down roads as conditions demand. He also assigns a deputy to the backup dispatch station here at the EOC to ensure to continuation of 911 services should the primary site be rendered inoperable.

Franklin County Emergency Management is proud to work alongside him and looks forward to a continued atmosphere of cooperation and coordination between our agencies.

## **Eclipse Engenders Eye Enfeeblement**

*Are you experiencing eye pain after watching the eclipse?*

Millions of Americans watched the eclipse as it captivated the nation last week. Despite ample and widespread warning, some have chosen to view the eclipse without proper eye protection. If you are one of these people, then you should be on the lookout for the symptoms of Solar Retinopathy. These symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Loss of central vision
- Altered color vision
- Distorted vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Blurry vision
- Vision related headaches

If you experience any of these symptoms, then see your optometrist as soon as possible.

## **What To Do When Highway 98 Fails**

*Are you prepared for when it happens again?*

As residents of Franklin County know, at least part of Highway 98 washes out in just about every tropical event. This is not the fault of maintenance crews, but rather a curse of geography. As a road running parallel to the water, it is especially susceptible to storm surge and high water levels. When it is damaged, residents have to rely on alternate routes to travel across the county. Unless you have several hours to spare on that travel going up through Liberty County, you will need to drive through Tate's Hell.

Now is the time to familiarize yourself with these roads so you don't get lost when the time comes. Having a physical map marked ahead of time with a route is another good way to be prepared to navigate the mostly unmarked dirt roads of the forest.

The EOC has maps available with routes through Tate's Hell marked to help you find your way through.

## *See What We Are Up To*

*A glance at the projects that each staff member and prominent volunteer is undertaking.*

- Scott Bush (Quartermaster) is renovating the command trailer so that it is tailored to our needs.
- Rob Zingarelli (Lead Radio Operator) is leading a class to help our Technician level operators prepare for the FCC General license exam. He is also working on the wiring for radios in the command trailer.
- Patricia Bludworth (Inventory Manager) is moving equipment from around the EOC to the command trailer and its support trailer.
- Tim Keith-Lucas (Operations Chief) is working on our checklists that make sure that we don't forget some important step when a hurricane approaches.
- Jennifer Daniels is working to incorporate Florida's F-ROC program into Franklin County's procedures.
- Amanda Anthony is overhauling the FCEM website.
- Josh Preiser is working with local healthcare agencies to update their respective emergency management plans.
- We are all eagerly waiting for our new building plans to get past the state Office of Environmental and Historic Preservation.






## *Upcoming Events*

| <b>Event</b>                      | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Date</b>                                 | <b>Time</b> | <b>Location</b>                                 |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|-------------|---|
| Ham Radio General License Class   | Teaching what you need to know to attain the second level of Ham Radio licensure   | Every Tuesday and Thursday from 04Apr-02May | 1500 - 1700 | FCEM<br>28 Airport Rd<br>Apalachicola, FL 32320 |
| Local Mitigation Strategy Meeting | Discussing ongoing projects to mitigate the impact of disasters in Franklin County | 17Apr                                       | 1000        | FCEM<br>28 Airport Rd<br>Apalachicola, FL 32320 |

---

Weather Outlook

---

|                  | <u>Tue, 16 Apr</u>  | <u>Wed, 17 Apr</u>  | <u>Thu, 18 Apr</u>   | <u>Fri, 19 Apr</u>  | <u>Sat, 20 Apr</u>  |
|------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Weather</b>   |  |  |  |  |  |
|                  | Partly Cloudy   | Mostly Cloudy   | Mostly Cloudy  | Partly Cloudy   | Partly Cloudy   |
| <b>Temp. (F)</b> | 56 / 76   | 59 / 80   | 64 / 84  | 62 / 83   | 62 / 80   |

EOC Tip of the Week



*Post Storm Communication*

*Reliable communications cannot be guaranteed after a disaster*

- Avoid phone calls, video calls, and streaming.
  - Instead use text messages, emails, and limited social media.
    - These methods help reduce network congestion, thus have a better chance of success
- Conserve battery life by reducing device usage and screen brightness.
- Check on neighbors who may be especially vulnerable to communications outages.
- Have alternate communications strategies.
  - Radios can, with the proper licenses, provide a reliable communication method over long and short range.

Let Us Know What You Think

Address

28 Airport Road  
Apalachicola, FL 32320

Phone

(850) 653-8977

Email

[emfranklin@franklinemergencymanagement.com](mailto:emfranklin@franklinemergencymanagement.com)

Website

[www.franklinemergencymanagement.com](http://www.franklinemergencymanagement.com)

Social Media

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FranklinEOC>

Office Hours

Monday - Friday  
0830 - 1630

