President's Column:

This will be my last president's column. I have enjoyed the past two years as president. Ken Daniels, Public Works Director in Enfield, is the association’s next president. When, and if, you see Ken, please offer him congratulations, and more importantly, please offer him assistance.

I want to extend my appreciation to the outgoing Board of Directors. Many of them have been serving in various position for several years. Many activities in the last several years would not have occurred without their help.

The incoming board has a number of new members. I know they will bring excitement and enthusiasm.

I want to encourage the membership to continue involvement in the association and the many other groups that address public works issues. I know it is the people of public works that make things happen.

Upcoming events include, the Ken Ward Memorial Plow Rally on September 27, 2007; LGC Annual Conference on November 8, 2007; and many training courses. If something grabs your interest, please attend, and if possible, volunteer. Get out there and be involved! Have a great, and safe, summer, and if you are in or near Keene please stop by the Public Works Facility. We will give you a tour of Keene’s new two-lane roundabout.

Sincerely,

Kürt Bloomquist, DPW Director, Keene
Danger: Workzones

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that more than 1,000 people are killed annually in workzones.

To increase safety:
1. Maintain the posted speed limit. Many states have doubled the fine for speeding in workzones.
2. Concentrate on the road, not on the construction.
3. Do not turn your back on traffic.
4. Maintain three seconds of distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you. Rear-end collisions are the most common type of crash in a workzone.
5. Be patient, calm, and focused.

How to Carpool Correctly

The safety of everyone, depends on the individuals when there are several people to be picked up for the drive to work. Here are some tips to increase safety:
1. Exchange contact information with each other before the scheduled day in case of illness or emergency.
2. The driver should decide in advance whether smoking, food, or drink will be allowed and inform the passengers.
3. Everyone should be on time. It’s frustrating to everyone if someone is late because you will adversely affect everyone.
4. Know that there will be no stopping for personal reasons, such as the grocery store or bank.
5. Take a vote on what type of entertainment there will be: music, news, conversation, or nothing.
Working with FEMA after an Emergency

Submitted by: Kürt Bloomquist, DPW Director, Keene

Since October 2005 I have learned more than I care to about working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). There is a misconception that after a Federal disaster is declared that requesting federal funds is a simple process. In this article, I will discuss my experiences and lessons learned while working with FEMA.

One of the first things to be expected when working with any federal agency is a lot of paper work. During a single city disaster we were assigned four different FEMA managers and it took over two years to close out the financial paperwork. So what can we do?

1. Financial Tracking

Meet with the financial people as soon as possible after an emergency. In the heat of an emergency this may not seem important, but it is critical. It will assist to meet federal requirements and save a lot of time.

Establish a system to track workers hours (regular and overtime), physical locations, materials and equipment used, volunteers, contracts, and contractor assistance. We have set-up processes to track information day-to-day.

2. Damage Assessment

After the initial response phase, there is a desire to start “fixing” things. People call elected officials and ask when roads will be opened. Federal agencies require that all damage is documented. You have to prove that it happened. Establish a damage assessment process. The assessment has to be done before beginning any type of repairs. Prior to an emergency, identify how to record the damage, what information will be recorded, and who will do it. This is important because unrecorded information will result in a debate with a FEMA representative about extent of storm damage.

Remember, federal funds are meant to restore an item to pre-emergency condition. In Keene we purchased several digital cameras for documenting conditions. The City Engineer Division along with field divisions is designated to assess and record damage.

Create a damage assessment kit. Develop a form that someone can fill out that describes the length, width, and dept of holes, or how much of a building or structure is damaged, and how much material will be needed to amend the repairs. This information is critical when filing the FEMA project worksheets that typically can occur several days to several weeks after the emergency. Damage assistance is also possible from the Public Works Mutual Aid system.

3. Appoint a Primary Contact

There is a lot of paperwork to track, coordination between groups, and information to gather. Having a single point of contact will make these jobs easier. This person can be on the phone tracking with FEMA or following up on their request as you run the response and recovery efforts.

Incorporating these three items into your emergency response and recovery planning will be worth it. It will save time and aggravation for you and your community.
Join NHPWA

Name: ______________________________________

Title: _______________________________________

Employer: ____________________________________

Street Address: _______________________________

Mailing Address: _______________________________

City, State, Zip: ________________________________

Phone: ___________________ Fax: _______________

E-mail: ________________________________

Optional Information:

Home Phone: ________________________________

Pager: ______________________________________

Cellular: ______________________________________

Individual Membership $25.00

Group Membership $100.00


Detach and mail this form along with payment to:

NHPWA
c/o LGC
PO Box 617
Concord, NH 03302-0617

CALENDAR

►Snow Plow Rally: 9/27, 2007
  •Hopkinton Fair Grounds

►Alternative Fuel Phone-In: 10/26, 9AM
  •Roundtable discussion on alternative fuels. Contact Kathy DesRoches, 603-862-2826, for more information.

►LGC Annual Meeting: 11/7-9, 2007
  •11/1/07: Ashelot River Project
  •11/8/07: Municipal Bridges, Stormwater, & NHDOT Municipally Managed Projects

This is a quarterly publication. For submissions, contact:

Kathryn Myers
UNH Technology Transfer Center
33 College Road
Durham NH 03824
(603) 862-1362
kclaytor@unh.edu

NHPWA Public Works Association