The first quarter of any year is challenging in Dallas. Weather is a constant challenge. This year, February broke rain fall records by nearly four inches. These conditions contributed to an unprecedented event in Northwest Dallas. A house explosion led to the discovery of multiple gas leaks. This event caused Atmos to move quickly to repair and replace pipes in the area. The Office of Emergency Management has worked tirelessly with Atmos to ensure the residents have everything they need during the outage.

OEM also conducted two significant exercises this quarter. The first was a patient tracking tabletop which included several agencies and hospital partners to test and identify a system to take a patient from the scene of an incident through to the hospital. The second was a Mass Casualty Incident full-scale exercise at the Majestic Theatre which tested not only the theatre’s ability to evacuate in case of emergency, but also how the city would respond to a mass casualty incident, like a stage collapse. This exercise included over 25 partnering agencies, several hundred volunteers, and a lot of planning. These exercises allow us to practice and improve skills as well as identify strengths and gaps.

OEM also hosted it’s annual Public-Private Partnership Symposium which brings together city, state, along with federal and private partners to discuss public-safety topics and create an environment to network and build relationships that strengthen our ability to work together to provide a whole community approach to emergency response and recovery.

We also work diligently to continue training residents and organizations in basic emergency preparedness by conducting classes and attending events. We’re currently planning future trainings, exercises, and preparing for severe weather season.

Special points of interest

- Want to know more about what OEM does and who we are? This issue shows you more.
- Severe Weather season is starting. Make sure you have your emergency kit and plans in place!

Publication FY17-18 #87
Dallas OEM conducted the largest Mass Casualty Incident full-scale exercise in the state on Sunday, March 19th at the Majestic Theatre in downtown Dallas. This exercise involved about 25 partner agencies and several hundred volunteers. This exercise was designed to accomplish two goals, provide the Majestic Theatre the opportunity to conduct an evacuation drill of its facility; and to test triage, transport, and family reunification in a mass casualty event.

This exercise ran 8 a.m. to Noon with volunteers arriving before 6 a.m. to have wounds assigned and applied for many and others to check in. We ran the evacuation portion first before simulating a stage collapse. Volunteers had wounds triaged, tagged, and were transported to one of five area participating hospitals by Dallas Fire-Rescue. BioTel, a EMS service that helps first responders and hospitals, coordinated patient transport and other services. The volunteers were also put into the patient tracking system tested in February and used to help test the family reunification portion of the test. Hospitals participating were Baylor, Scott and White; UT Southwestern; Texas Health Presbyterian; Veterans Administration Medical Center, Dallas; Medical City Dallas; Methodist Dallas Medical Center; and Children’s Medical Center.

This exercise and others like it allow first responders and partners to work together in non-emergency settings to hone skills, identify gaps, and make improvements. This is just one of many exercises planned for the upcoming year. Contact Tiffany Reid at tiffany.reid@dallascityhall.com for more information on future training and exercise opportunities.

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“Training proves to be the key ingredient to handling any disaster.”

Walter Maddox, Mayor of Tuscaloosa, AL

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The Office of Emergency Management conducted a patient tracking tabletop exercise on Thursday, February 15, 2018. This exercise allowed city, regional, and hospital partners to identify and test a system to follow an incident victim from site of the incident through the hospital system to family reunification.

This particular exercise was to work with a system currently available to the region to identify strengths and areas for improvement and to work with a wide range of partners to coordinate both communication and the ability to work through a scenario.

This exercise was a precursor to the March 18th Mass Casualty Incident exercise to make sure there was a patient tracking system available and in place before the full-scale exercise. It allowed all stakeholders to work with the system in a more controlled setting before using in a field scenario.

Partners came together for several hours to work with the system, identify gaps that need addressing, and practicing. This is the main focus of training and exercise. To give our first responders and partners more opportunity to work together and figure out how best to serve our residents and guests.

This exercise focused on a weather-related event. Future exercises will address plans to handle other types of events that may be applicable to our area. For more information on future exercises contact our training and exercise coordinator, Tiffany Reid at tiffany.reid@dallascityhall.com.
Severe Weather Safety

Texas weather is ever-changing. We can go from hot to cold and calm to severe weather. Be prepared for any type of weather.

- Have an updated, stocked emergency kit.
- Have a way to contact family members.
- Identify your safe areas—basements, interior rooms, bathrooms, or hallways.
- NOAA weather radio
- Charged cellphone
- Flashlights
- Pillows/mattresses to

Atmos Gas Outage

On Friday, February 23, 2018 OEM responded to a house explosion incident in Northwest Dallas. OEM goes to all scenes larger than four alarms to assist with resources, potential shelter needs, etc. This incident, which resulted in one death and several injuries led to a much larger scenario, including evacuating several blocks. We worked with Dallas Fire Rescue and other agencies to set up Walnut Hill Recreation Center as a “respite” center for families to meet and figure out what they needed.

We worked with Dallas Fire Rescue, Atmos Energy, and residents over the weekend and into the following week to evaluate and work with the neighborhood, including participating in a Town Hall Meeting on Tuesday, February 27th. On February 28th the Emergency Operations Center was activated to work with Atmos Energy and other agencies as Atmos began a planned outage of the Walnut Hill and Marsh and the Midway Hollow neighborhoods.

Atmos turned off all gas supplies and has been working to replace all service lines, lines to homes, and meters in these affected neighborhoods. They also conducted leak surveys in the surrounding areas, repairing many and evaluating others as they went. OEM worked with them to set up information centers at Walnut Hill Recreation Center and Bachman Lake Recreation Center to provide financial assistance and answers to questions for the first weeks of the event. OEM provided food for residents waiting in line the first evening the information centers opened.

OEM continues to work with Atmos to provide timely information and updates to city leaders and residents by pushing updates through targeted social media and other communications channels. We are also using this opportunity to refine financial recovery procedures throughout city departments, as well as continuing to ensure Dallas residents continue to have the services and programs they need to be safe and secure in their homes. We will use this opportunity to learn and evolve our plans and procedures to address incidents like this and beyond in the future.

This incident has also solidified a growing, working partnership with Atmos Energy on many levels that bolsters our commitment to public-private partnerships.
2018 Public-Private Partnership Symposium

This year’s Public-Private Partnership Symposium was held on March 30th at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. This year’s program ran 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a wide rage of speakers and discussions.

Topics this year included a panel discussion on law enforcement jurisdictions with Dallas Police and Dallas County Sheriff’s Department; the Financial System during Disasters with Federal Reserve Bank representatives; Pre-incident Planning and Recovery topics including a demonstration of Digital Sandbox, and so much more. This year’s programming included key note speaker, David Park, senior vice president of Atmos Energy.

We thank all our partners who joined us for this event and participated in the discussions. We look forward to working with all our partners in the future.

Warning Systems

Spring is prime Severe Weather season. March through May are when tornadoes are most common in North Texas—though severe weather can happen at any time. Our first line of defense is the Outdoor Warning System. These are not meant to be heard indoors, but rather to indicate danger in the area and to go inside for information.

If you are on the road and see or hear a warning, through a siren or billboard, turn on the radio for information and get off the road when it’s safe to do so and get inside.

There are many ways to be notified of an emergency situation—broadcast media, internet, wireless emergency alerts, phone calls, texts, and email. Dallas has an opt-in system for notifications called Dallas Alert for residents to select the types of communication they prefer to receive.

OEM recommends you have multiple ways to be notified to make sure the most people get the most information. Go to www.DallasAlert.com to sign up today.