



# Alert

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## EMAP assessment results in success

### *Accreditation review graded at 61/64*

Dozens of meetings, hundreds of documents and thousands of hours will likely soon equal one accreditation.

Assessors with Emergency Management Accreditation Program visited ADEM for a week, reviewing plans, procedures and documentation to ensure compliance with 64 standards, encompassing 105 components. At the end of their work,

***“I will honestly tell you the three standards that are left are so easy to fix. It’s not even going to be an issue.”***

***—Mark Howard,  
team chief***

... I will honestly tell you the three standards that are left are so easy to fix. It’s not even going to be an issue,” explained Mark Howard, team leader.

The non-compliant standards involved maintenance of the agency’s financial plan, documentation for stakeholder involvement and documentation of procedures on accomplishing emergency operations plan priorities.

The next step of the process is allowing ADEM staff to rebut the deficiencies. Larry Pullon, executive officer and EMAP point person, said that satisfying the requirements of those standards will be simple.

“Two of the three they said we were lacking, we already had” by the time of the exit interview, he noted.

“One of them was related to our financial guide, which is not a guide that we develop. It is based on the law, and laws don’t require plan maintenance because they are not plans. Had we been given the opportunity, that would not have been non-compliant to begin with.”

Once the team reviews the additional documents, the group will compile a report, which will go to the EMAP Program Review Committee. That panel will allow ADEM staff to comment on the report, making the case for accreditation. Ultimately, the EMAP Commission will render judgment on whether to grant the five-year accreditation.

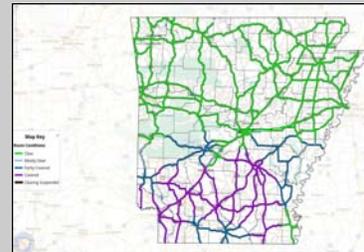
Howard praised the agency’s staff and advance work.

“Your folks have been outstanding. They have helped us anytime we needed anything,” he commented. “To hit all of those on this go-round is no feat to be taken lightly. ... To be this accurate and have this much ready is kudos on your program and on your staff.”

Pullon agreed.

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### *In this issue*



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Late arriving snow and ice events wreak havoc across the state. **Page 4**



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Yell County event to identify top Search and Rescue teams. **Page 6**

***Have an idea to improve the newsletter? Take our survey [here](#).***

## EMAP

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“My biggest hope was to be compliant in 50 areas. I dared not think we would do better than that. These aren’t easy,” he said.

Pullon noted that the accrediting process has evolved within the agency.

“The first time they came here, we only had a handful of documents that were digital. ... This time, everything was digital,” he said.

The “EMAP way” has become part of ADEM’s culture.

“The areas such as the way plans are developed and the requirements for planning, the plan maintenance are integrated into our programs. They are in our corporate memories. They are the way we do business. Those areas, we were compliant with flying colors,” Pullon noted. “The point is that we do the same thing that agencies with 100 times more financial input, and we can meet the same standards. That’s the real something about accreditation.”



ADEM Director David Maxwell speaks with Jeff Maslan, EMAP accreditation assessor, after the team’s exit meeting with agency staff. Team members praised ADEM staff for their advance efforts that resulted in meeting 61 of 64 standards.

# Accreditation not just for state agencies

Although the Emergency Management Accreditation Program requires an investment of time and resources typically reserved for agencies with the wherewithal to see through the task, the program is not just for large organizations.

County governments, municipalities, even individual emergency management organizations such as fire departments can pursue accreditation.

“There is nothing in the process that would be bad for a county or a city to do,” explained Larry Pullon, Executive Officer and EMAP liaison for ADEM. “All of these plans would be good to have. Take continuity of operations — that is a good plan to have. It’s more than just if your county judge gets taken out. It spells out how you will continue to operate in the event of a dire situation.”

Pullon noted that especially in sparsely populated states such as Arkansas few organizations below state-level agencies even begin to undertake a process such as EMAP accreditation. He said that the time commitment is a major factor.

“Not many people want to start something that won’t be finished for five or seven years down the road. The person in charge might not even be around then,” he explained.

Officials who want to at least investigate whether accreditation may be a goal to pursue should start by visiting the EMAP [website](#) to look at the requirements.

“That will give you an idea if it’s something you really want to do and can do. It’s a big undertaking, no doubt,” Pullon acknowledged.



ADEM Alert is an unofficial publication of Arkansas Department of Emergency Management Public Affairs.

publicaffairs@adem.arkansas.gov  
501.683.6700

Rick Fahr, PIO • Krista Guthrie, Deputy PIO

## Calendar of Events

### March

#### General Events

- 4** — Weather spotter training in Benton County.  
**5** — Animal Euthanasia Certification Course in Jonesboro.  
**10** — ACEM Testing at Mid-Year Conference in Little Rock.  
**10-11** — Mid-Year Conference in Little Rock.

#### HazMat Training

- 3-5** — HazMat Awareness Course in St. Francis County.  
**9-20** — HazMat Technician Course in Pulaski County.  
**14** — HazMat Awareness Course in White County.  
**14** — HazMat Operations Course in Searcy County.  
**17-21** — HazMat Operations Course in St. Francis County.  
**19-21** — HazMat Awareness Course in Baxter County.  
**25-26** — Terrorism Awareness Course in Faulkner County.  
**28-29** — HazMat Operations Course in White County.  
**28-29** — HazMat Operations Course in Carroll County.

- 30-31** — Terrorism Awareness Course in Miller County.  
**30-31** — HazMat ICS Course in Sebastian County.

#### EM Training

- 2-4** — Mission Specific Operations Chief Course in Benton County.  
**7-8** — ICS 300 in Washington County.  
**9** — G358 Evacuation & Re-Entry Planning Course in Little Rock (during Mid-Year Conference).  
**12** — FEMA P767: Earthquake Mitigation for Hospitals Course in Craighead County.  
**20** — ATC 20 Post Earthquake Building Inspection Course in Pulaski County.  
**21-22** — ICS 400 in Washington County.  
**23-25** — Mission Specific Planning Chief Course in Garland County.  
**28-29** — ICS 300 in Chicot County.



#### Exercises

- 5** — March Madness EMAC Exercise at Sherwood Forest. POC is [Carol Walton](#).  
**21** — ADEM State Emergency Operations Center Exercise.

### April

#### HazMat Training

- 6-7** — HazMat Awareness Course in Craighead County.  
**6, 7 & 8** — Rad/Nuc Awareness Course in Crittenden County.  
**11** — Meth Lab Awareness Course in White County.  
**11** — BioDiesel Course in White County.  
**11** — HazMat Awareness Course in Crawford County.  
**13-24** — HazMat Technician Course in White County.  
**13-16** — HazMat Operations Course in Craighead County.  
**27-29** — Basic Air Monitoring Course in Benton County.

- 30** — Advanced Air Monitoring Course in Benton County.

#### EM Training

- 6-7** — ICS 200 in Washington County.  
**6-7** — ICS 300 in Faulkner County.  
**8-9** — ICS 400 in Faulkner County.  
**11-12** — ICS 400 in Chicot County.  
**20-21** — ICS 300 in Washington County.  
**22-23** — ICS 400 in Washington County.

#### Exercises

- 1** — NW Arkansas Regional Pandemic Influenza Scenario. POC is [Steve Oler](#).  
**15** — ADEM State Emergency Operations Center Exercise.

# Winter weather wreaks havoc

Though the winter of 2014-2015 began mildly and looked to end that way, the state's weather fortunes changed in mid-February and remained unsettled for the remainder of the month.

Several winter weather events struck all parts of the state, leaving behind ice and snow, with a healthy dose of sand on top.

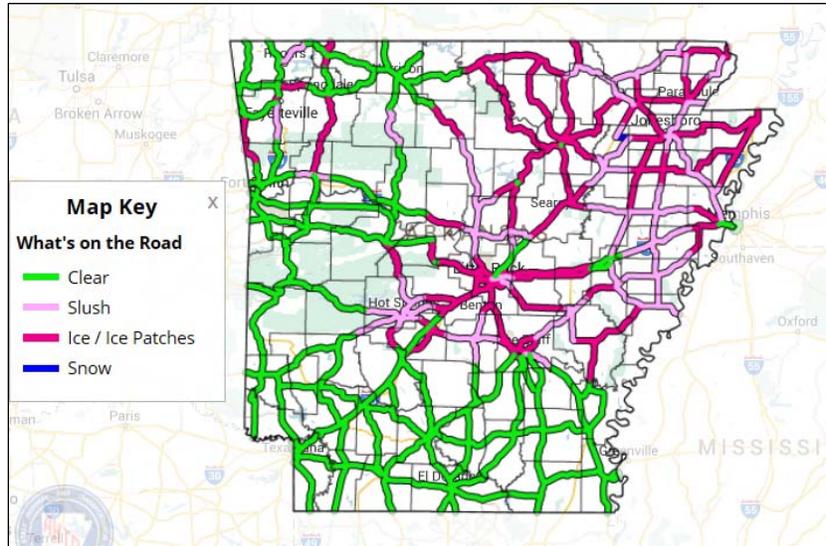
Winter weather started on Feb. 15 and impacted 25 counties, with Crittenden and Clark counties declaring for damages and help with debris removal. Forecasters had predicted the round of wintry weather for several days, and by the time the front rolled across the state late on a Sunday evening, few were caught off guard.

The nasty weather knocked out power for more than 30,000 residents but by the following evening fewer than 12,000 remained without electricity and most had their service restored by Tuesday evening.

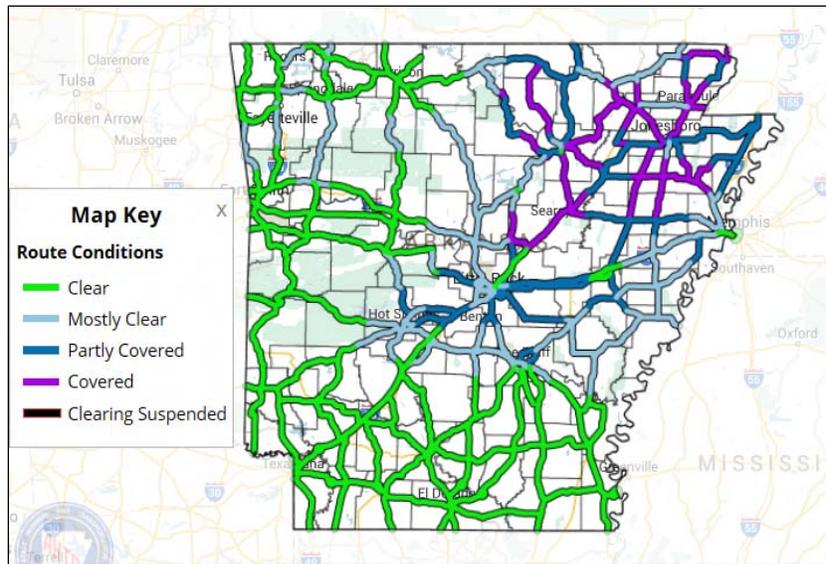
The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) was activated Sunday afternoon with a limited staff, and the group worked until Monday evening. It was a fairly quiet activation, as far as activations go, and Scott Bass, Disaster Management Division Director, said that a lot of the requests were proof of lessons learned from the last bad winter incident in March of 2014.

That storm, which brought traffic along interstates 30 and 40 to a halt for a full day, caused much consternation between motorists and those trying to help them.

In the recent event, officials began taking action before the roads turned treacherous. Arkansas National Guard units were put on standby to assist any and all State Police Troops with military vehicles capable



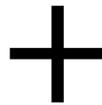
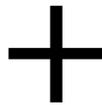
These road conditions images show winter weather impacting travel in the first hours of the Feb. 15 event and then how conditions had somewhat improved by Feb. 16.



of traversing the icy roads. National Guard military ambulances and drivers were also made available for civilian ambulance services to call

upon. Convoys of work-trucks for the

See **WINTER** on page 5



**Follow ADEM on social media for real-time news and information!**



Jordan Abshire, Operations Planner, works on a course of action during the most recent activation of the State Emergency Operations Center in response to winter weather. The event of Feb. 25-26 affected the southern half of the state, with most areas reporting mostly snow, instead of freezing rain or sleet accumulations.

## WINTER

Continued from page 4

many electric companies could be seen moving across the state highways on Sunday to pre-stage before the bad weather arrived.

Volunteers prepared to open shelters, warming centers or fill feeding requests.

Highway and Transportation Department crews pre-treated roads, worked to clear them of snow and ice during the weather and afterward.

Looking at what went wrong in March of 2014 significantly impacted the response to this year's first winter weather event.

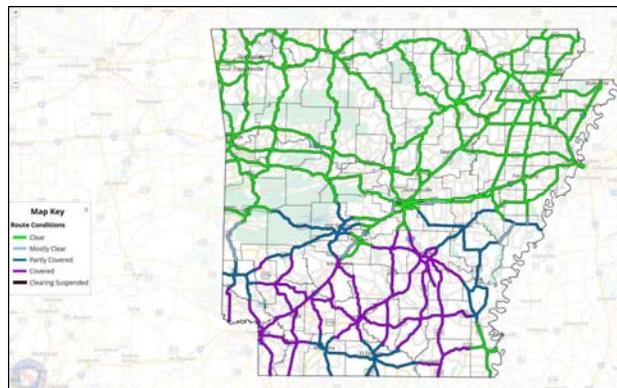
Exercises where new tactics were tested and further review of procedures led to this successful response where damages and losses were kept to a minimum.

Toward the end of the month (Feb. 25-26), another winter weather event rolled across the state.

This storm affected the southern half of the state and fortunately featured mostly snow, as opposed to significant accumulations of freezing rain or sleet.

The storm began in the morning hours. By mid-afternoon snow had blanketed most portions of the southern counties from west to east.

ADEM again activated the State Emergency Operations Center on a limited basis, mainly in anticipation of requests for assistance and to accommodate the few



At the height of the Feb. 25-26 winter weather event, roads across the southern half of the state were most covered with a mixture of snow and slush. However, interstates 30 and 40 were not as heavily impacted as in past events.

National Guard troops who had been situated around the region to assist with traffic control and assist motorists.

By the morning of Feb. 26, most roads in the region were passable, and the event faded into memory.

In the weather forecast for upcoming days after the last snowflakes fell — severe thunderstorms.

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## Around Arkansas

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### Storm spotters

Benton County Emergency Management Agency will host a weather spotter training on March 4, at 6:30 p.m.

The class will be held at the Northwest Arkansas Community College Shewmaker Center in the Walmart Auditorium.

The training is free and open to the public.

A meteorologist from National Weather Service in Tulsa will provide the training.

The goal of the training is not just to recognize severe weather that affects our area but also to have an understanding of storm structure, which in turn better prepares the spotter for the extreme and unusual circumstances.

Other topics covered in the class will include an update on the latest NWS technology and procedures as well as important safety considerations for when severe weather approaches.

### SAR Wars

Does your search and rescue team have skills? Want to put them to the test?

Yell County Office of Emergency Management will host Search and Rescue (SAR) Wars on March 28 at the Yell County Fairgrounds in Danville.

Teams of four will compete for prizes in each event:

- Washer Search — whichever team finds the most washers in one sweep wins.
- Find the GPS Point — Use a GPS device to find the point in a wooded location.
- Pick your SAR Equipment — teams will select 10 SAR equipment items from a pool of equipment to be graded.
- Search for the Missing Person — use clues to find a person in a wooded location.

Registration deadline is March 24. Events on the day of the event will begin at 9 a.m.

There is no cost to enter. Lunch

and door prizes will be provided free.

For more information, contact OEM Director Jeff Gilkey (479) 495-0036 or yellcooem@arkwest.com.

### Euthanasia course

Jonesboro Police Department's Animal Control Division will host a Euthanasia Certification course on March 5.

The course will be taught by Sgt. Larry Rogers, CCB,CE and Dr. John Huff, DVM.

The state certification course will begin at 8 a.m. and end at noon at Jonesboro Animal Control, 6119 East Highland.

Topics to cover will include euthanasia method, documentation, records-keeping, a practicum and a hands-on test.

There is no cost for law enforcement and animal control agency personnel.

This is not a course for private sector representatives.

For more information, call (870) 935-3920.

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### The Boss

Gov. Asa Hutchinson shakes hands with Disaster Management Division Director Scott Bass during a recent visit with ADEM staff. Hutchinson toured the facility, offering words of thanks and encouragement to the staff.



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## Administration

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# FEMA visit confirms good practices for management

FEMA Region VI officials recently spent several days at ADEM to monitor administrative functions and procedures.

Bobbi Ann Merkel, Administration Division Director, said the group was satisfied with the agency's processes and that the monitoring provided a good opportunity to review how the agency manages its programs.

"It was a good monitoring. They were happy with what we're doing. Of course, there are always things we can look at to improve, but they were satisfied with how we do things. So, that's good," Merkel said.

The monitoring visit is a routine activity and occurs on a regular basis.



Gregory Eaton, Recovery Division Director for FEMA Region VI, was part of a team visiting ADEM recently to monitor various administration and recovery functions.



### **Community outreach**

ADEM staffers pose for a photo after completing a radio interview at the KABF studio. Participating in the interview were (from left) Kendall Snyder, Fire Services Coordinator; Stephen Gimbert, host of the Morning Brew show; Katie Belknap, Earthquake Program Manager and Natural Hazards Planner; and Krista Guthrie, Deputy Public Information Officer. Gimbert asked the ADEM staffers to talk on air about preparedness for bad weather, how to help first-responders and Earthquake Awareness Week.

**Have news to share?  
Contact ADEM PIO  
[publicaffairs@adem.arkansas.gov](mailto:publicaffairs@adem.arkansas.gov)**

## Federal Surplus Property

# FSP furnishings save big bucks

### Agency provides solution for \$225,000 less

One state agency helping another. And saving huge dollars in the process.

That's exactly what happened recently when officials with Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI), one of the largest organizations of its kind in the country, was able to work with Federal Surplus Property to replace all its dorm room furnishings for pennies on the dollar.

The wooden furnishings at ACTI's Hot Springs campus presented several concerns, and when officials began looking for metal replacements, they found that outfitting their roughly 300 beds and room combos would cost well more than \$225,000.

[Federal Surplus Property](#) was able to put together a package for each room that consists of an entertainment center, night stand, dresser, student desk and bed for a total charge of \$30,000.

Jonathan Bibb, administrator, said



The wooden dorm room furnishings at Arkansas Career Training Institute were causing several issues, including pest control. Replacing the furnishings with metal components came with a huge cost savings — roughly \$200,000 over the original estimate.

that not only will the metal furnishings solve the environmental concerns but that because the beds will come as bunk beds, ACTI will be able to in-

crease its student capacity.

The first of the furnishings have arrived at ACTI and the rest continue to arrive by the truckload.



A dorm room furnishings package facilitated by Federal Surplus Property will not only serve Arkansas Career Training Institute's needs but save the organization nearly a quarter-million dollars in the process.

**Dorm room furnishings provided through Federal Surplus Property will not only meet the environmental needs of Arkansas Career Training Institute but also save the organization several hundred thousand dollars while also expanding housing capacity.**



# CHILI COOKOFF WARMS STAFF

A late-February chili cookoff provided a spicy lunch and fellowship for ADEM staff. Those participating in the cookoff were (at right, from left) Clay Bewley, honorable mention; LeeAnn Smith, second place; Larry Pullon, third place; Kendell Snyder, first place; and Barbara Hager, honorable mention.



Pamela Burton, Individual Assistance Officer, chooses which chili she will sample, as Mary Jane Butler (at right, left), Fiscal Support Analyst, and Jennifer Oakley, PDM Grant Coordinator, do the same.



Judges for the chili cookoff were (from left) Col. Damon Cluck, 1st Sgt. Adam Stricklin and Staff Sgt. Ron Pointer. The judges could only settle first and second place, and ADEM Director David Maxwell stepped in to choose among the entries.

# NAME THAT ADEM MOVIE

See if you can name these (in)famous ADEM-flavored movies. Answers at bottom of page.



From top:  
Reavis and Butthead  
Fifty Shades of Trey  
Annable

## Public Affairs

# Sharing your message your way

By Rick Fahr  
ADEM PIO

There is a time during an emergency event when the emergency is top-of-mind.

When the tornado is within earshot, living for the next few seconds is the goal. When ice knocks out the power, staying warm is job No. 1.

But before that moment and immediately after it, the one thing people want is information. They want to know what's about to happen or what did happen, and they want to know what to do about it. Knowledge is power, and people like feeling powerful, not weak. They like being a decision-maker, not a victim.

And so it is that a big part of our job as emergency managers is sharing information with our constituents.

We can do this in many ways, obviously. We can rely on word of mouth through our surrogates. We can use traditional media. We can also use social media.

That's the issue we want to talk about today.

It's easy sometimes to dismiss social media as a place where

time goes to die a public death. Social media platforms can read like gossip town squares. No doubt, anytime you give anyone and everyone a megaphone, you're gonna have to take the bad with the good.

When used for a greater good, however, social media platforms such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) can help an emergency manager spread a message far beyond existing audiences. Consider ADEM's social media efforts.

In the recent winter weather of Feb. 15-16, we posted 38 pieces of information to Facebook.

The audience for those 38 posts was 137,649 account-holders. If the majority of those accounts belong to a husband or a wife or a parent, multiply that number by 2 or 3 to get a better idea of how many people the information directly reached.

Beyond that, though, those 38 posts were liked, shared and/or commented on 3,483 times.

It's impossible to know how many more people saw those posts based on those actions, but the audience may have grown exponentially.

Many of ADEM's Twitter follow-

ers were retweeting our weather updates, and **for a time on Feb. 16, the ADEM Twitter account was more popular than 99.78 percent of all Twitter accounts in the world (there are about 650 million regular-use accounts, by the way).**

It would be accurate and notable to say that our social media platforms allowed us to put our message in front of hundreds of thousands of Arkansans in a timely manner and in a way that was compelling and valuable.

So, the next time you, as an emergency manager, need to share information, consider using your own social media platforms. You will have the ability to control your message, put it out exactly when you want and gauge the success/audience.

If you're not familiar with using social media, give us a call. We would be more than happy to help you set up accounts and show you ways to monitor your audience and tweak your messages to reach the most people possible.

Oh, and follow our accounts ADEM on Facebook and @AR\_Emergencies on Twitter.

## **ADEM Alert user's guide**

### **Content**

Each month's newsletter will contain information about ADEM personnel, programs and activities; news from coordinators around the state; and updates on legislative, policy and other important matters.

### **Hyperlinks**

Throughout each issue, embedded "hyperlinks" will allow users to click on an image, graphic or [blue text](#) to view additional information on an external website, such as Facebook or [www.ready.arkansas.gov](#).

These hyperlinks will include links to photo galleries, video interviews, more information about a given subject and/or other types of multimedia content.

Many smartphone operating systems are not set up to properly follow hyperlinks. Therefore, this newsletter is best viewed on a desktop, laptop or tablet device.

### **Submissions**

To submit information to ADEM public affairs or request public affairs support, call 501-683-6700 or email [publicaffairs@adem.arkansas.gov](mailto:publicaffairs@adem.arkansas.gov).