



Together, working to improve outcomes.



## Message From the Director:

Preeti Emrick, JD, CHEC

Dear Residents of  
Anne Arundel County,

As we close out the year and step into the heart of the winter season, I want to extend our appreciation to every resident, partner, and community organization who has worked alongside us over the past year. Your engagement, preparedness, and willingness to look out for one another continues to strengthen our county's resilience.



This season has presented a unique mix of challenges and opportunities. We helped support residents navigating food insecurity, including those affected by the recent Federal shutdown and by delays in food assistance and benefits. We advanced preparedness initiatives across neighborhoods, businesses, and schools, and we continued our mission to ensure that every family has the tools necessary to stay safe during evolving hazards. Additionally, we held the "Defending the Faith" Seminar, a collaborative effort between the County Hate Crimes Prevention Program, Office of Emergency Management, and the Police Department.

It's important to recognize that every season, including winter, brings its own set of risks, including extreme cold, unsafe travel, and increased demand on community resources. Our team has been working proactively with county departments and regional partners to prepare for severe weather, coordinate warming resources, and enhance information-sharing systems.

We encourage all residents to take winter readiness seriously: review family emergency plans, prepare vehicles for winter conditions, check on older adults and neighbors with access or functional needs, and sign up for free emergency alerts by texting AAAlert to #38276.

Our office remains committed to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement. In 2026, we will focus on strengthening our hazard mitigation efforts, updating long-range planning documents, and delivering new opportunities for volunteers, partners, and county personnel. These investments will ensure that Anne Arundel County is ready for whatever comes our way.

Thank you for staying informed, staying engaged, and staying ready. Your participation makes our community stronger each day. We look forward to working with you in the new year to build a safer, more resilient Anne Arundel County.

Stay safe and be ready,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Preeti Emrick".

Cape St. Claire after a snowfall.  
Photo Source: Reddit





# Helping Hands

## ***Anne Arundel County Works to Assist those in Need***

By Jacob S. Richardson, OEM Public Information Officer

Throughout November and into the New Year, Anne Arundel County has mobilized a network of partners and resources to keep food on the table for in-need residents, including those affected by the recent federal government shutdown and delays in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

On November 4, 2025, County Executive Steuart Pittman announced \$500,000 in emergency funding for the Anne Arundel County Food Bank. The money, drawn from the county's \$10 million federal disaster response fund in the FY26 budget, is dedicated to expanding food distributions for residents directly affected by the shutdown and the uncertainty around SNAP.

The need is significant. In Anne Arundel County, nearly 42,000 residents rely on SNAP benefits: more than 22,000 households, including roughly 17,000 children and over 5,000 seniors. When federal funding was paused, and payment timelines became unclear, those families suddenly faced the possibility of empty refrigerators. At the same time, federal workers and contractors across the region began missing paychecks.

During a press briefing, County Executive Pittman explained how the County's Federal Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Workgroup, overseen by Preeti Emrick and the Office of Emergency Management, worked with County agencies and other local partners to organize the food distribution effort.

"The increased demand from our pantries, our food bank, and the entire food distribution system has been growing and continues to grow," said Pittman. "Anne Arundel County and our partners will continue to do what we have always done: fill in the gap and protect our people."

At the state level, Governor Wes Moore declared a state of emergency ahead of the anticipated lapse in SNAP funds, directing \$10 million to food banks and partner organizations across the state to help manage the surge in demand. Maryland also committed \$62 million to cover the portion of November SNAP benefits not funded by the federal government, ensuring continuation of assistance while local providers scaled up emergency food operations.

Anne Arundel County has positioned itself as a bridge between those state and federal actions and the residents who need immediate help. The \$500,000 allocation to the Anne Arundel County Food Bank has enabled expanded food distributions, hosted at senior centers, community centers, and other accessible locations across the county.



“Anne Arundel County takes care of our people. We held funds in reserve in this year's budget so that we could continue to provide the support our residents depend on, no matter what was going on with the federal government,” said County Council Chair Julie Hummer. “I’m very happy that our foresight is helping to ensure that our people are not going to go hungry.”

The county’s strategy goes beyond one-time events. Through the Anne Arundel County Food Bank’s network of pantries, soup kitchens, and mobile food pantries, residents can access ongoing support closer to home. The food bank maintains an up-to-date pantry and resource list in both English and Spanish, connecting people with neighborhood-level providers that offer groceries, prepared meals, and related support services.

To make that system easier to navigate, Anne Arundel County operates a Food Access Warm Line at 410-222-FOOD (3663). Residents can call or email to be matched with the closest food distribution site, pantry, or community program based on their address, transportation options, and household needs. The county has also published a “Support for Residents Navigating Recent Federal Changes” webpage that consolidates information on emergency food distributions, financial assistance, and other shutdown-related resources.



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM

These efforts are coordinated with a broad coalition that includes the Anne Arundel County Office of Emergency Management, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Aging and Disabilities, the Department of Health, the Food Council, and nonprofit partners such as the Anne Arundel County Food Bank and local community organizations. Together, they are working to prevent food insecurity from becoming a secondary crisis layered on top of the shutdown itself.

“This has been a team effort throughout the county, from the dedicated volunteers of the Anne Arundel Food Bank and Anne Arundel – Annapolis Community Emergency Response Team to everyday employees who are giving their time to assist us and provide food to the community,” said Preeti Emrick, Anne Arundel County OEM Director. “This event is one more example of the importance of whole-community preparedness and developing our abilities to work together, from county and state agencies, to individual families and households.

As we enter the new year, Anne Arundel County is dedicated to fully utilizing local emergency funds, state assistance, and community partnerships to keep residents fed while federal systems stabilize. As the situation evolves, Anne Arundel County’s expanded food distributions, strengthened pantry network, and centralized warm line are intended to ensure that at-need residents have a reliable place to turn for help.

If you or someone you know is experiencing food insecurity, please contact the Food Access Warm Line at 410-222-FOOD (3663).





# Winter and Cold Weather Readiness in Anne Arundel County

*By Jacob S. Richardson, OEM Public Information Officer*

Each winter season inevitably brings its own set of unique challenges. For residents of Anne Arundel County, those challenges usually include cold temperatures, winter storms, icy roadways, and the possibility of power outages. These hazardous conditions place residents, especially older adults, individuals with medical needs, young children, those experiencing homelessness, as well as low-income households at increased risk. Anne Arundel County and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) work year-round to help the community prepare for these seasonal threats, ensuring that residents have the knowledge, tools, and support they need to stay safe throughout the winter months.

Extreme cold can lead to frostbite and hypothermia in a matter of minutes, particularly for those without adequate heating or insulation. The combination of cold, wind, and wet can be deadly to those unprepared. Winter storms can freeze roadways, delay emergency response, damage infrastructure, and strain utility systems. Ice accumulation on sidewalks and driveways creates fall hazards, while frozen pipes can cause costly damage to homes. Prolonged power outages, which can occur from heavy snow or downed tree limbs, are particularly dangerous for residents who rely on electrically powered medical equipment or who lack alternative heating sources. For many in at-risk groups, these impacts can escalate quickly without proper preparation.

“Winter weather does not have to put a damper on your holiday season, nor should we let it endanger ourselves or loved ones,” said Preeti Emrick, Anne Arundel County OEM Director. “We encourage every household to take simple steps now to stay safe and ask that you check on your neighbors and family. Remember that services are available to those in need or at risk during inclement weather conditions.”



Proactive readiness is the most effective way to reduce winter-related hazards. For homeowners, check for missing or inadequate insulation on pipes, door and window seals, heating systems, and ensure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are operational. Creating a three-day emergency supply that includes warm clothing, blankets, non-perishable food, water, flashlights, medications, and battery-powered chargers is an important step for all households. Families should also build a communication plan to identify how to connect during an emergency if phone service becomes unreliable.





Snow covers streets during “snowmageddon” 2018.  
Photo Source: The Baltimore Sun

For older adults and residents with disabilities or access and functional needs, winter preparedness should include verifying that medical devices have backup power options, ensuring the availability of necessary prescriptions, checking supplies of supplemental oxygen, and confirming that caretakers or family contacts are aware of any additional support requirements during storms.

Transportation also becomes more hazardous in winter, and residents should prepare their vehicles by checking tire tread, testing windshield wiper fluid and blades, topping off antifreeze, maintaining a full fuel tank, and storing emergency supplies such as blankets, jumper cables, water, and a first-aid kit. Avoid driving during severe weather when possible and closely monitor local forecasts and alert systems.

Anne Arundel County provides several key resources and assistance programs to support residents throughout the winter season. During periods of extreme cold, the county activates Centers for Warming Relief at designated public buildings where residents can access heated indoor spaces. Visit [www.aacounty.org/warm](http://www.aacounty.org/warm) for more information.



Photo Source: The Baltimore Sun

The county’s Non-Emergency Crisis Warmline is available 24/7 at 410-768-5522 and assists residents in identifying available services, including shelter referrals, transportation assistance, and other contacts. Through the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities, vulnerable adults can access home-delivered meals, in-home support, caregiver resources, and wellness checks, which are especially critical when weather conditions limit mobility. Call 410-222-4257 for more information.

Staying informed is essential. Residents can follow Anne Arundel County OEM on social media and visit the website for updates, guidance, and educational materials year-round. Winter weather may be unavoidable, but preparation and awareness can significantly reduce its impact. Through a combination of county resources, community partnerships, and individual readiness, Anne Arundel County continues its commitment to ensuring that every resident, especially the most vulnerable, has the support needed to stay safe during winter’s most challenging conditions.



Photo Source: The Baltimore Banner



# BE INFORMED. BE PREPARED. BE SAFE.

**WWW.**



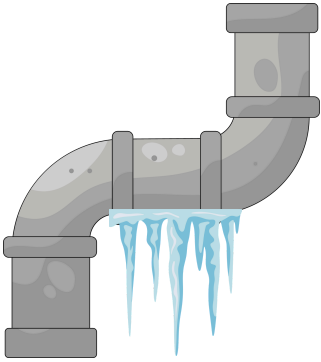
## KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

The Anne Arundel County Crisis Warmline is available 24/7 to support you. Call 410-768-5522.



## SIGN UP FOR ALERTS

Enroll in Alert Anne Arundel. Text **AAAlert** to #38276 to receive real-time emergency notifications, including winter storms and warnings, evacuation orders, and shelter locations.



## WINTERIZE YOUR PROPERTY

Seal drafts around doors and windows, service your heating system, insulate pipes to prevent freezing, reverse ceiling fans, clean gutters, and have your fireplace cleaned and inspected. Addressing these areas will help improve energy efficiency and prevent costly damage during the colder months.



## READY YOUR CAR FOR WINTER

Check your tires (including pressure and tread), ensure all fluids like antifreeze are topped off, and check your brakes and wipers. It's also wise to prepare a winter emergency kit for your vehicle that include blankets, water, and other essentials in the event of becoming stranded.



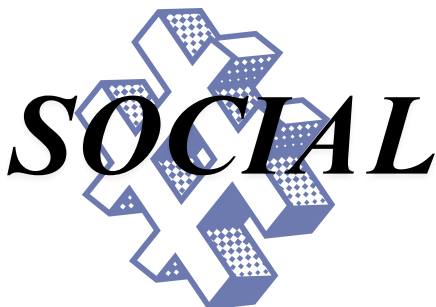
## CREATE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

Know your hazards, keep important documents in a secure container, have emergency communication plan with your family, and prepare an emergency kit and supplies with essentials (medications, batteries, food, water, flashlights, etc.).

## YOUR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM IS HERE TO HELP

The Anne Arundel County OEM team works year-round to plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters, including severe weather events. We also collaborate with state and federal agencies, local municipalities, and community partners to ensure residents have the tools they need to stay safe.

Stay connected with us on social media, attend community preparedness events, or reach out directly to learn more about how we can help you prepare your home or neighborhood.



**WEBSITE:** [HTTPS://WWW.AACOUNTY.ORG/EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT](https://www.aacounty.org/emergency-management)

**FACEBOOK:** [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AACOOEM](https://www.facebook.com/AACOOEM)

**TWITTER/X:** [HTTPS://X.COM/AACO\\_OEM](https://x.com/AACO_OEM)

**EMAIL:** [OEMOUTREACH@AACOUNTY.ORG](mailto:OEMOUTREACH@AACOUNTY.ORG)



## Krampusnacht Emergency Management Exercise



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM

The Krampusnacht exercise was a scenario-based emergency management training designed to test winter storm preparedness, interagency coordination, and communication under extreme conditions. Framed around a fictional winter storm, the exercise used a narrative-driven approach to simulate rapid-onset hazards, including heavy snow, ice accumulation, power outages, hazardous travel conditions, and increased demand for emergency services.

The intent was to practice our current abilities in activating emergency operations center (EOC) functions, coordinating with public works, utilities, and community services, and managing evolving operational priorities. Emphasis was placed on situational awareness, decision-making under time pressure, and maintaining the operational picture as conditions deteriorated.

A key component of the exercise focused on public information and emergency communication, requiring the development and dissemination of timely, clear, and coordinated messaging to address public safety concerns and needs, adapting messaging as conditions worsened and public concern increased.

The Krampusnacht exercise provided a low-risk environment to identify gaps in winter readiness plans, resource allocation, and communication protocols. Lessons learned will inform updates to winter storm annexes, training programs, and public outreach efforts, strengthening overall preparedness for real-world severe winter weather events.

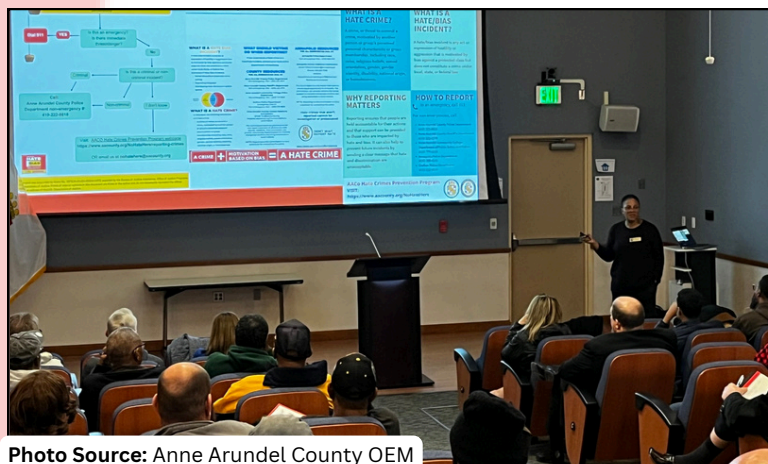


Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM

## PROTECTING OUR HOUSES OF WORSHIP

On November 18, the Office of Emergency Management hosted a successful Defending the Faith Seminar, focused on discussing the impacts and mitigation of hate crimes on houses of worship.

The timely event was attended by 54 representatives from various faith communities. The seminar was sponsored by Dr. Nicola Smith-Kea ("Dr. Nikki") from the County Office of Hate Crime Prevention, who led a discussion on recognizing, responding to, and reducing hate crimes. OEM provided a session on all-hazards emergency planning for faith-based organizations.

The event concluded with training on Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) presented by our County Police Department. This event serves as a prelude to the OEM 2026 Protecting Our Houses of Worship Seminar, a four-month series open to all faiths, which will offer an in-depth look at emergency preparedness, physical security, and cyber security.

We encourage our County's houses of worship to be prepared for all types of emergencies and disasters to not only protect their facilities, but to help protect their congregations as well. Houses of worship can start by following the four steps of emergency preparedness including Be Informed, Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and Getting Involved.

For more information on the hate crime prevention program, please visit: <https://www.aacounty.org/NoHateHere>. To learn more about emergency planning for faith-based organizations, please visit the [OEM website](#).



# Community EVENTS

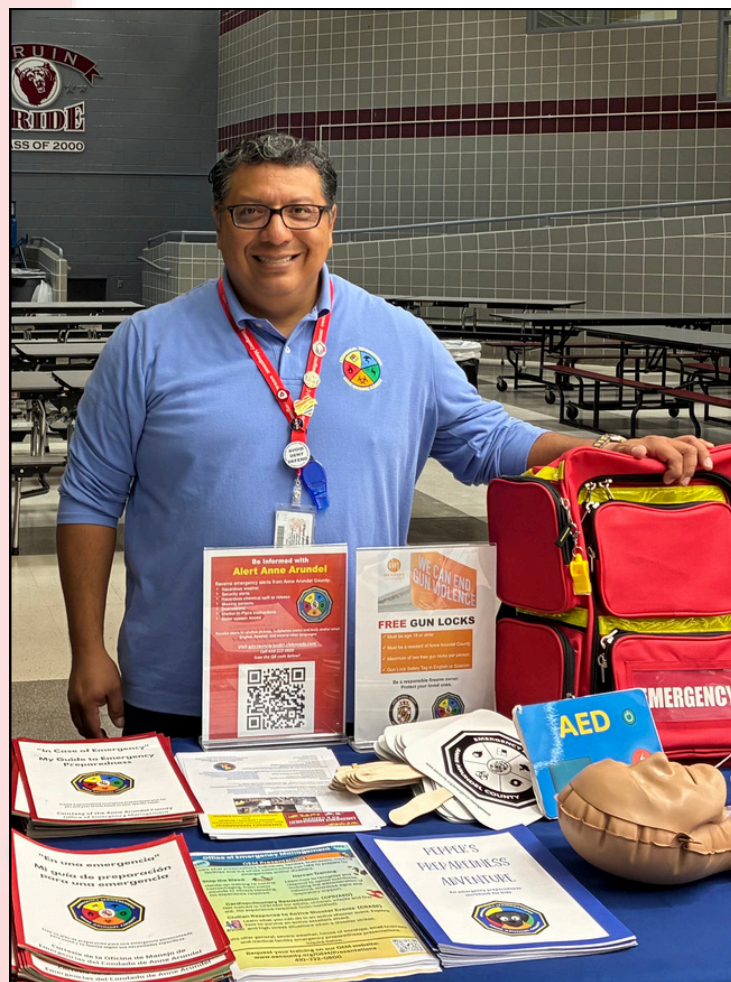


Western District Trunk-or-Treat

Annapolis Pride Parade and Festival



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM

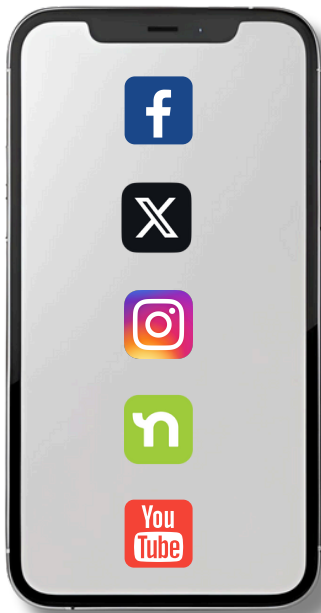


Hispanic Heritage Festival

Cox Creek DMCF Open House







Anne Arundel County Office of  
Emergency Management

[aaco\\_oem](#)

[annearundel\\_oem](#)

Anne Arundel County Office of  
Emergency Management

Anne Arundel County Office of  
Emergency Management

7480 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Phone: 410-222-0600

Email: [oemoutreach@aacounty.org](mailto:oemoutreach@aacounty.org)

[https://www.aacounty.org/  
emergency-management](https://www.aacounty.org/emergency-management)

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

ALL EMERGENCIES: CALL 9-1-1

POLICE (NON-EMERGENCY)  
410-222-8050

FIRE (NON-EMERGENCY)  
410-222-8300

BGE POWER OUTAGES  
877-778-2222

AGING & DISABILITIES  
410-222-4257

ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL  
410-222-8900

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
& CONSTITUENT SERVICES  
410-222-1785

CRISIS WARM LINE  
410-768-5522

HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
410-222-7095

INSPECTIONS & PERMITS  
410-222-7790

OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION  
410-222-0022

PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
410-222-5000

PUBLIC WORKS (UTILITIES)  
410-222-8400

PUBLIC WORKS (ROADS)  
410-222-6120

SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
410-222-1571

SOCIAL SERVICES  
410-269-8400

Sign up for emergency  
notifications by texting  
**AAAlert** to #38276



**ANNE  
ARUNDEL  
COUNTY**

**OFFICE OF  
EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT**