



Together, working to improve outcomes.



**Message From the Director:**

*Preeti Emrick, JD, CHEC*

Dear Residents of Anne Arundel County,



Over the last six months, Anne Arundel County has seen firsthand how quickly seasonal hazards can shift and how important it is for our community to stay informed, connected, and prepared. From winter weather to the start of spring storm season, our Office of Emergency Management has continued working alongside county departments, first responders, utility providers, and community organizations to strengthen readiness and support our residents.

This past November, Anne Arundel County announced warming relief resources to help residents during prolonged cold weather, including access to police district station lobbies. Those measures reflect a simple but important truth: preparedness is not only about major disasters. It is also about making sure people have safe, accessible options during everyday emergencies.

During the late January snow event, our county received almost a foot of snow, sleet, and freezing rain, which created "Snowcrete." Events such as this serve as a reminder that snow and ice can seriously disrupt travel, delay services, strain road operations, and create dangerous conditions.

As we move into spring and summer, our focus shifts to a different but equally important set of threats. Warmer months in Anne Arundel County bring the potential for severe thunderstorms, damaging winds, lightning, flooding, and extreme heat.

That means now is the time for residents to review emergency plans, restock disaster supply kits, and think ahead about the months to come. Households should make sure they can receive emergency alerts by texting AAAalert to #38276, know multiple ways to get weather information, and have a plan for power outages, road closures, and evacuation if conditions require it. As temperatures rise, families should also begin preparing for heat emergencies by checking on neighbors, reviewing cooling options, and paying close attention to children, older adults, and pets during extreme heat.

Preparedness is most effective when it becomes part of everyday life rather than a reaction to the next headline. Over the coming months, our office will continue public outreach, planning, coordination, and readiness efforts to help ensure Anne Arundel County is ready for spring storms, summer heat, and the start of hurricane season. We encourage every resident, neighborhood, house of worship, and business to take small steps now that can make a major difference later.

Thank you for helping us build a safer, stronger, and more resilient Anne Arundel County. Stay safe and be ready.

# Winter Storm Fern



Photo Source: RealPasadenaMD

By Jacob S. Richardson, OEM Public Information Officer

A large and impactful winter storm, unofficially referred to as Winter Storm Fern, steadily moved eastwards across the Central United States in late January 2026. By January 25th, the system had moved into the Northeast, where it began to transition into a nor'easter.

State officials and local agencies had already signaled that this would be a serious storm. In anticipation of the storm, Maryland Governor Wes Moore declared a statewide State of Preparedness due to the risks of snow, ice, power outages, and extreme cold. Anne Arundel County also moved into emergency posture as officials warned residents to prepare for hazardous travel and difficult conditions.

As the first snow began falling across Anne Arundel County, many residents likely expected a typical winter routine: plows on the roads, salt on the pavement, and conditions gradually improving once the storm passed. Instead, Winter Storm Fern became the kind of event that lingered well beyond the last snowfall, leaving crews to battle not just snow, but hardened ice, dangerous refreezing, and a prolonged stretch of bitter cold that hindered recovery across the County.

What made this storm different from a more typical snow event was the combination of impacts. Widespread snowfall totals across Anne Arundel County ranged from 6 to 12 inches. In Annapolis, officials reported more than 8 inches of winter precipitation, but the greater challenge was that the storm left behind snow that was difficult to plow. It created a stubborn mix of snow and ice that became compacted on roads, sidewalks, and neighborhood streets. Once traffic pressed that accumulation down and temperatures remained below freezing, it bonded to surfaces and became significantly harder to remove.



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM





Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM



The weather after the storm was a major reason removal operations took so long. Rather than seeing a thaw that would help crews clear the remaining accumulation, the region entered a stretch of persistent cold, with the warmest day of the coming week reaching only 29 degrees, followed by overnight lows in the single digits and continued freezing conditions. This resulted in little natural melting and repeated refreezing.

Those conditions complicated operations well beyond the main roads. Even after primary routes became more passable, neighborhood streets, cul-de-sacs, sidewalks, and low-traffic areas remained slick and difficult to fully clear. In tighter communities, narrow roadways and parked vehicles created additional obstacles for snow equipment. Local officials noted that these conditions made neighborhood plowing and ice removal especially slow and labor-intensive.



For residents, the county's message moving forward is rooted in safety and preparedness. Officials recommend avoiding unnecessary travel during and after winter storms. Residents should clear sidewalks and walkways as soon as conditions allow, watch for refreezing at night, and check on neighbors who may be older, isolated, or in need of assistance. Drivers should reduce speed, increase following distance, and keep emergency supplies in their vehicles during extended winter weather.

Winter Storm Fern showed that the toughest part of a winter storm is not always the snowfall itself. In Anne Arundel County, it was the ice, the prolonged freeze, and the slow grind of recovery that turned an ordinary snow response into a sustained public safety effort.



# Spring Storm Season Brings Heightened Risk of Severe Weather

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

For Anne Arundel County residents, storm season is not just a change in the forecast. It is a reminder that severe weather can quickly become a life-safety problem. One warning can mean a tree through a roof, a road underwater, a power outage that lasts for hours, or a family suddenly cut off from the rest of the county. That is why now, before the next storm arrives, is the time to prepare.

Spring and summer brings some of the most unpredictable and dangerous weather of the year to Anne Arundel County. Severe thunderstorms can develop quickly, bringing damaging winds, lightning, torrential rain, hail, and dangerous driving conditions. Even storms that seem routine can down trees and power lines, block roads, and interrupt daily life across the county.

Residents do not have to look far for examples. In September 2021, the remnants of Hurricane Ida produced a powerful tornado in Anne Arundel County, one of two confirmed tornadoes in central Maryland that day. It left a path of serious damage and showed just how fast conditions can change in our area.

Flooding is also one of the most real and recurring threats for Anne Arundel County, especially in waterfront and low-lying communities. Heavy rain, tidal influences, storm surge, and poor drainage can combine to make roads unsafe or completely impassable. In some parts of the county, flooding is more than an inconvenience. It can cut off access to neighborhoods and peninsulas, delaying travel, emergency response, and everyday routines.

That is why preparedness in Anne Arundel County has to be personal. Residents should know whether their home, commute, school route, or neighborhood road is vulnerable to flooding. They should know where to shelter during a tornado warning, avoid driving through flooded roadways, and have more than one way to receive emergency information.

One of the easiest steps residents can take right now is to sign up for Alert Anne Arundel. The county uses this system to send emergency notifications by phone, text, and email, including hazardous weather alerts and other urgent protective information. Having those warnings delivered directly can make a critical difference when minutes matter.



 **annearundel\_oem** 9w  
 📢 Public Request: Share Your Flooding Photos!

As we monitor the impacts of recent heavy rains, we're asking for your assistance in documenting flooding in our area. If you encounter any flooding and can do so safely, please take a moment to snap a photo and share it

[View insights](#) [Boost post](#)

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October 30, 2025

Preparedness is also part of a bigger countywide effort. Anne Arundel County’s Hazard Mitigation Plan, updated and adopted every five years, identifies hazards, assesses risk, and helps guide long-term projects that reduce threats to lives, property, and infrastructure. In other words, the county is not just preparing to respond to disasters. It is working to lessen future impacts before they happen. But mitigation works best when government action is matched by resident action at home.

The bottom line is simple: severe weather in Anne Arundel County is not hypothetical. We have seen tornado damage. We have seen roads flood. We have seen communities temporarily cut off. The next storm may not affect the whole county equally, but it could affect your block, your route home, or your family. Signing up for Alert Anne Arundel, understanding your risks, and taking a few steps now can help protect what matters most before the skies turn dark.



# BE INFORMED. BE PREPARED. BE SAFE.

WWW.



## KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

Do not wait until a warning is issued to figure out your plan. Talk now about where your family will shelter, how you will communicate if cell service is limited, and what you will do if flooding cuts off your neighborhood or peninsula. Anne Arundel County provides preparedness guidance through its emergency planning and disaster preparedness resources to help residents build a plan before an emergency happens.

<https://www.aacounty.org/emergency-management/disaster-preparedness>

## READY YOUR HOME

Protect your property before the next storm by clearing gutters and drains, securing outdoor items, and checking whether your home sits in a flood-prone area. OEM website offers disaster preparedness resources for residents, and the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan helps identify the risks that affect residents.

<https://www.aacounty.org/emergency-management/hazard-mitigation-plan-2025-update>



## SIGN UP FOR ALERTS

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

<https://www.aacounty.org/emergency-management/emergency-notifications>

## TRAVELING DURING A STORM?

Never drive through flooded roadways, and check conditions before heading out during severe weather. Even familiar routes can become dangerous quickly, especially in low-lying areas and along roads vulnerable to standing water. Anne Arundel County's County Operations page provides road closures, weather information, and emergency updates residents can use before traveling.

<https://www.aacounty.org/county-operations>



## CREATE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

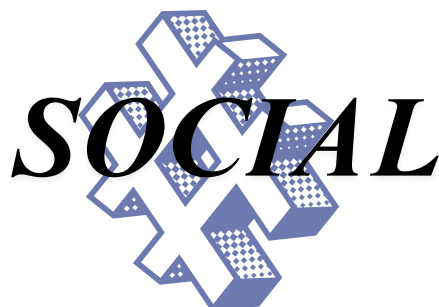
Make sure everyone in your household can receive warnings and knows what to do if severe weather hits while family members are at home, work, school, or on the road.

<https://www.aacounty.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/my-guide-emergency-preparedness.pdf>

## 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:** AACOOEM

**X:** AACO\_OEM

**BLUSKY:** AACO-OEM.BSKY.SOCIAL

**EMAIL:** OEMOUTREACH@AACOUNTY.ORG

# Why Public Safety Must Start Sitting at Cyber Tables



*By Cassandra Laningham, Anne Arundel County OEM*

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When an Anne Arundel County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) representative attended the 3rd Annual Billington State and Local Cybersecurity Summit at the National Harbor (March 9–11, 2026)—an event where the County Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) was also in attendance and presenting—the expectation was a room full of cybersecurity professionals and other partners.

What was unanticipated, however, was the realization that there was only a single emergency management representative from any state or local government in attendance.

A severe cyber disruption is more than just an inconvenience; it can be a complex public safety challenge. The absence of emergency management personnel at these critical summits highlights a silo that must be broken down. OEM has and will continue to take a proactive response to cyber incident planning. Over the past year, recent initiatives include hosting cyber incident communication and preparedness seminars for county leadership and communications staff. OEM also facilitated workshops and led strategic discussions across multiple county departments to actively build robust, cross-agency response capabilities. Treating cyber as a siloed IT issue simply isn't an option.

The convergence of these disciplines was a central theme at the summit. During the highly anticipated subsession, "Cybersecurity as a Public Safety and Emergency Management Function," the dialogue reinforced what those bridging the gap already know: cyber resilience and public safety are inextricably linked.

The Anne Arundel County OEM representative had the opportunity to take this conversation further by leading an informal, highly collaborative discussion with many state and local representatives, to include State and Local Cybersecurity Directors and Chief Information Security Officers. The group dug into the operational realities of treating cyber incidents as multi-agency emergencies, the importance of unified command during cyber disruptions, and how to effectively align IT security strategies with physical continuity of operations.

Driving this convergence often requires stepping outside traditional emergency management backgrounds. Moving forward, the emergency management community must be a highly visible part of that coalition. Emergency managers exceed at consequence management, incident command, and community resilience. It is time for public safety to pull up a chair at the cyber table. Anne Arundel County OEM looks forward to continuing these vital conversations with IT and security partners—and next year, hopes to see a robust presence of emergency managers in the room.

# Community Outreach



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM

## Classrooms to Crisis Response: Developing the Next Generation of Public Servants

Building a resilient Anne Arundel County starts long before an emergency occurs. It begins in classrooms, career fairs, community programs and conversations with students who may one day serve their neighbors in public safety.

For years, OEM has participated in Integrated Community Stakeholder Teams at Crofton, Glen Burnie and Meade high schools, working alongside school leaders, local government representatives and business partners to help students connect classroom learning with real-world career pathways.

That work has grown through a strong partnership with the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, which places professional career counselors within schools to help middle and high school students explore future opportunities. Through this partnership, OEM staff support classroom discussions, career fairs, schoolwide panels and informal student engagement events such as “Pretzels with Professionals.” These conversations give students a direct look at the emergency management profession and the many ways public service can become a career.

One of the most important messages OEM staff share is that there is no single path into emergency management. The field depends on people with a wide range of experience, education, and skills. OEM team members have backgrounds in numerous disciplines. Some professionals enter the field after years in public safety or government service, while others come directly from college programs in emergency management, homeland security, or related fields.

That variety is one of emergency management’s greatest strengths. Disasters affect every part of a community, so preparing for and responding to them requires people who understand operations, communications, planning, logistics, technology, infrastructure, public health, and community needs. When students hear directly from OEM staff, they see how their own interests – whether in science, communications, computers, skilled trades, public safety, or service – can contribute to protecting lives and strengthening communities.

OEM’s outreach also emphasizes that public service is not limited to full-time government employment. Volunteers and community partners play essential roles before, during, and after disasters. Every skill set has a place in building a more prepared county.

By working with our public school system and the workforce development corporation, OEM is helping students understand both the depth of the emergency management field and the broader value of service. These efforts are not only about introducing students to future careers. They are about building a culture of readiness, leadership, and community responsibility.

Today’s students are tomorrow’s responders, planners, communicators, analysts, volunteers, and public servants. By investing in them now, Anne Arundel County is investing in a safer, stronger and more resilient future.

# Community Outreach



Photo Source: Anne Arundel County OEM

## OEM and Health Department Partner to Train Community Ambassadors

Trusted community voices are essential before, during, and after an emergency. When residents receive preparedness information from people they already know, trust, and see in their neighborhoods, that information can travel farther, faster, and with greater impact.

To strengthen that connection, the Office of Emergency Management recently partnered with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health to provide an all-day training intensive for more than 20 members of the Community Health Ambassador Program.

The training was designed to expand the ambassadors' preparedness knowledge and provide practical, lifesaving skills they can use in their homes, neighborhoods, houses of worship, and community spaces. Throughout the day, participants received instruction in several key areas, including Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events, Stop the Bleed, CPR/AED awareness and emergency preparedness for community resilience.

Each course focused on practical steps people can take when seconds matter. The Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events training provided strategies for personal safety during high-stress active assailant situations.

Stop the Bleed introduced basic hemorrhage control techniques that can help stabilize an injured person before professional responders arrive. CPR/AED instruction gave participants hands-on awareness of cardiac emergency response. The emergency preparedness session helped ambassadors better understand local hazards, individual readiness, family preparedness and the importance of recovery planning.

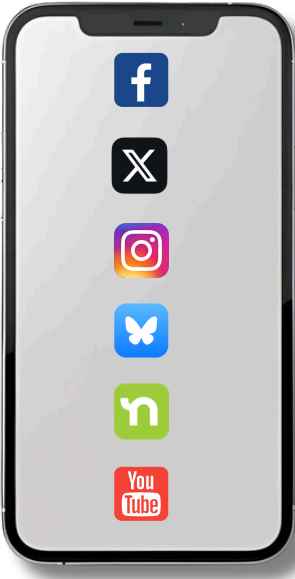
For OEM, the partnership reflects a central principle of emergency management: preparedness works best when it is rooted in community relationships. Community Health Ambassadors are especially well-positioned to serve in that role because of their established relationships and their ability to reach residents who may face barriers to accessing timely information or services.

A prepared ambassador can help a family build an emergency kit, encourage a neighbor to sign up for alerts, explain how to respond during a dangerous situation or connect residents with county resources after an incident.

The partnership between OEM and the Department of Health also highlights the connection between public health, emergency management and community resilience. Disasters do not affect every resident in the same way. Language access, transportation, disability, age, income, housing stability and access to trusted information can all shape how people experience emergencies. Training trusted community ambassadors helps close those gaps and supports a more inclusive approach to preparedness.

The Office of Emergency Management offers preparedness presentations and skills-based training to community groups free of charge. Organizations, houses of worship, businesses, neighborhood associations and other groups interested in hosting a session can contact [oemoutreach@aacounty.org](mailto:oemoutreach@aacounty.org) to learn more or schedule training.

**CONNECT WITH US**



Anne Arundel County Office of  
Emergency Management

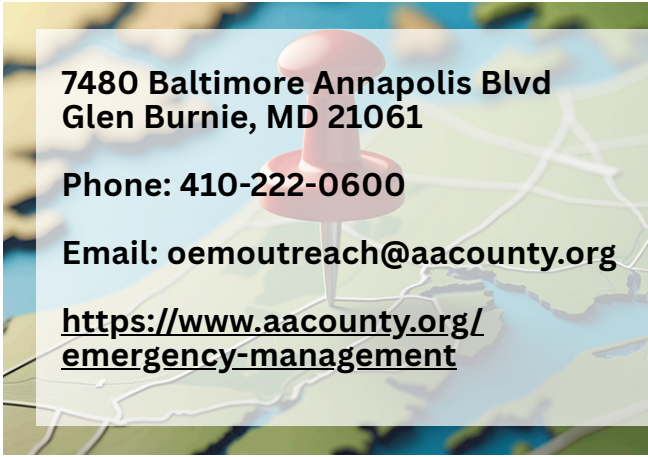
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Anne Arundel County Office of  
Emergency Management

Anne Arundel County Office of  
Emergency Management



**7480 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd  
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**[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



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