

# Quarterly Report

## Emergency Management



Town Council Meeting Date: May 12, 2026

Third Quarter: January, February, March

Please accept this as the quarterly report for the Office of Emergency Management

### Department Introduction:

The Warrenton Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is dedicated to safeguarding our community by preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies. We work tirelessly to mitigate risks, coordinate resources, and ensure the well-being of our residents during times of crisis.

- Our mission is to build a resilient community through effective emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. We achieve this by:
- Developing and maintaining comprehensive emergency plans
- Conducting regular training exercises and drills
- Establishing strong partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies
- Providing timely and accurate information to the public
- Promoting individual and community preparedness

We are committed to serving our community and will continue working diligently to make Warrenton safer for all.

### Commendable Achievements:



The Town of Warrenton's Emergency Management program has received significant external recognition this quarter, reflecting the program's continued growth and the strength of its regional partnerships.

At the Virginia Emergency Management Association's (VEMA) 2026 Annual Symposium, Warrenton Emergency Management Coordinator Johnny Switzer was named the 2026 New Emergency Management Professional of the Year, one of the most prestigious honors presented to emerging leaders in the Commonwealth's emergency management community. This recognition reflects not only Mr. Switzer's individual professional excellence, but also the collective work of Warrenton's leadership, staff, and regional partners who have invested in building a capable and credible local program.

Additionally, Mr. Switzer was invited to present at the symposium on the topic of "Building Resilience From the Ground Up: Warrenton's New Emergency Management Agency," positioning the Town as a model for other localities pursuing independent emergency management designation.

This recognition comes at a meaningful time. Next month marks the first anniversary of the Town of Warrenton achieving independent designation as a separate emergency management jurisdiction in the Commonwealth of Virginia, a process that began in 2020 and required sustained coordination led by Mr. Switzer alongside the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), VDEM Region II, and numerous local, state, federal, private, and volunteer partners.

Over the past year, the program has been tested by real incidents and emergencies, each of which was met with a coordinated and effective response by Town leadership, staff, and community partners under Mr. Switzer's coordination. The program continues to mature in its capabilities, its relationships, and its readiness to serve the Warrenton community.

The Town Council is encouraged to recognize this milestone as a reflection of Warrenton's ongoing commitment to public safety, community resilience, and professional excellence in emergency preparedness.

### **Commendable Achievements Continued:**

This quarter saw two significant milestones for the Town's emergency preparedness program. AlertWarrenton! – our new geographically targeted notification system – officially launched and replaces the previous alert platform, delivering emergency and community advisories via text, email, and automated calls. The launch campaign kicked off during the Main Street Events, and residents are encouraged to register. Separately, on January 22, Interim Town Manager Martino declared a Local State of Emergency ahead of Winter Storm Fern, which brought 3.5–4 inches of snow, 5–6 inches of sleet, and a 150-hour subfreezing stretch to the Warrenton area. Town departments ran 24-hour staffing rotations through January 28 before transitioning to 12-hour recovery shifts, maintaining utility service throughout and operating warming centers at Town Hall and the WARF. The FY26 Wheel Loader proved essential in breaking through ice conditions that standard plows could not manage.

A formal After Action Review held March 2 at the PATH Foundation identified inter-agency communication as the standout success of the storm response, with improvements needed in equipment redundancy, secondary road clearance, EMA staffing, and reimbursement documentation – the Town is eligible for 60–75% cost-sharing on an estimated \$50,000 in storm expenses. Corrective actions are underway across all four areas, with target completion dates ranging from Winter 2026 through Q3 FY27. None of this would have been possible without the dedication of every Town department, our Fauquier County partners, and the community organizations – Christ In Action, Team Rubicon, The Bridge Canteen Unit, Columbia Gas, Dominion Energy, the National Weather Service, VDEM, and the Warrenton Training Center – who stepped up when it counted. Thank you to each and every person who played a role this quarter.

### **Staff Training & Certifications:**

Emergency Management Coordinator Johnny Switzer has earned the designation of **Professional Emergency Manager (PEM)** through the Virginia Emergency Management Certification Program, a cooperative credentialing effort administered jointly by the Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA) and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM). The PEM designation represents one of the highest levels of professional certification available to emergency management practitioners in the Commonwealth, requiring candidates to demonstrate sustained competency across multiple disciplines, including planning, operations, training, exercise, and community engagement. This achievement further strengthens Warrenton's emergency management program and its standing among peer localities and regional partners, ensuring the program is led by a professionally certified practitioner recognized by the Commonwealth's foremost emergency management authorities.

## Project Progress:

- A. **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)** – The town adopted an EOP in 2022, and its next update is due in 2026. The EMC continues to review the EOP as part of our annual review to ensure it is up to date. The next adoption cycle is July 2026.
- B. **Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)** – The EMC attended four meetings with the RRRRC regarding the HMP 2024 update. One of these meetings was an open public forum at the Culpeper County Fieldhouse. The HMP is in the final stages of review with FEMA. Once this is complete it will be brought back to the localities for adoption at the local level.
- C. **Dam Planning** – The EMC is continuing to review the Dam EOP in preparation for a tabletop exercise. This exercise is required to obtain our full operator's permit. An application to VDEM for technical assistance will be submitted in the next reporting cycle.
- D. **Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)** – The EMC has met monthly with our VDEM state partners and continues to build a collaborative EM program with the state partners
- E. **Town / County Emergency Management** – The town and county EM's met eight (8) times to discuss topics between agencies.