



BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

Year end, 2024 Newsletter

BEAVER COUNTY IS WHAT3WORDS ENABLED

Brian Murray

Did you know that Beaver County 911 is what3words enabled? What3words is an easy way to identify precise locations, enabling people and emergency responders to share exactly where help is needed, saving precious time.

How does it work?

What3words has divided the world into 10ft squares and given each square a unique 3-word identifier. In what3words, addresses are easier for callers to say over the phone or radio than GPS coordinates and less prone to human error. The system converts GPS coordinates into 3 words, providing a simpler format for communication with the same level of accuracy.



Who uses what3words?

The public, businesses and emergency services all benefit from what3words.

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BEAVER COUNTY IS WHAT3WORDS ENABLED, cont.



The public

People use what3words every day to meet up easily and share exact locations like delivery spots and viewpoints.

How is it used in an Emergency?

Step 1: Sourcing a what3words address

If the caller has the what3words app, the caller opens it, presses the location icon and reads out the what3words address for their current location.

The app works offline, even in areas with no internet access by using the device's GPS signal.

The RapidSOS portal also automatically displays the what3words of 911 callers.



Businesses

Companies are adding what3words to their apps, software and platforms across a range of industries, from logistics tools to in-car navigation systems, to improve efficiency and user experience.



Emergency services

Emergency services in the UK, US, Canada, Australia, and Europe, including coastguards, search and rescue and partner agencies, have adopted what3words to complement existing methods of validating caller locations.



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BEAVER COUNTY IS WHAT3WORDS ENABLED, cont.

Step 2: Verification and sharing

The telecommunicator enters the caller's current what3words address into the online map or their CAD and uses several quick verification methods. What3words' Autosuggest feature will also help dispatchers to spot human-errors and miscommunications. In rare cases where similar- sounding word combinations are close together, and/or where there are homophones or near-homophones, Autosuggest will provide multiple options so the users can clarify. They recommend referring to their GPS and address verification guidelines which can be found [here](#). Once verified, the location is shared with first responders who can use the what3words app to plot the location. The what3words address can also be converted to grid references, coordinates, and other formats, or entered into a CAD system.

Put what3words to the test

You'll need the free app, download it by scanning the QR Code.



Navigate to a what3words address

You've been given the what3words location `///visual.mash.green` and need to navigate there.

1. Open the app, enter the 3 words into the search bar at the top of the screen, or tap Speech and say them.
2. Select the correct what3words address from the AutoSuggest results displayed.
3. Tap Navigate and choose Compass or your preferred navigation app to get directions.

Find and share your current what3words address

1. Open the app and wait a few seconds for the blue dot to settle in one place (note that the GPS location is more accurate outdoors).
2. Tap on iPhone or on Android. The 3 words for your location will be displayed at the top of the screen.
3. Say the 3 words over the phone or tap Share and select your preferred messaging app.

How to convert a what3words address to coordinates

If you prefer using coordinates to navigate to an incident, it's easy to convert what3words addresses to your preferred format.

Step 1. Open the app, then tap Menu, Settings then Share Settings.

Step 2. Choose the relevant coordinate formats.

Step 3. Enter a what3words address or select a square.

Step 4. Tap Share then Copy to paste the what3words address elsewhere, or choose a messaging app.

On the desktop map (what3words.com), click Share then Customize share settings.

More information and support can be found by contacting support@what3words.com.

DRONES ADDED TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM

Ben Oaks

This year, Beaver County Emergency Services added two new drones to serve Beaver County's First Responders with their operations. We have purchased and put into service a Fotokite Sigma Tethered drone as well as a DJI Matrice 30 T.



The Fotokite Sigma Tethered drone features an advanced Camera with both zoom and thermal imaging. You are able to view both thermal and standard camera views simultaneously, which can give responders a better overall view of the scene they are operating on. This drone can be deployed anywhere there is a power source and can fly for over 24 hours at a time without having to land. The Sigma can fly at altitudes up to 150 feet and can be operated both wired and wirelessly to allow for use in most situations. It works well for situational awareness as it can be deployed at the edge of a scene and fly in the safe zone to give an overview of all operations that are currently happening. Video from the drone can be livestreamed off site through an app to allow command to see what is occurring at the incident without having to be in the hot zone.

The second drone we have is the DJI Matrice 30 T. The Matrice 30 T adds to the capability of the county to assist in not only Search and Rescue calls, but ESU and Hazmat Calls as well. With the Matrice drone, we now have the ability to fly over wooded areas and valleys that may be tough to access and use Infrared technology to try to locate missing or injured subjects. For Hazmat calls, this drone allows the ability to fly into a "hot" zone to potentially see what chemical or other substance has caused the hazmat incident without having to put responders in danger by having to get near the site to view the substance in person or with binoculars. This drone can also livestream the camera to give off site responders and command the ability to have eyes on the incident.

To add to the drones capabilities, we also have a Searchlight with broadcasting system that can allow the drone to illuminate objects better in dark conditions. The broadcasting system gives first responders the ability to call out to missing persons over a larger area. This system can also be used to assist ESU with contacting a subject when traditional methods aren't available. In addition to the Searchlight and Broadcast system, we have also added a Payload Drop System. The drop system can carry up to 8 pounds per flight. With this system, we can drop supplies or other items needed in remote areas to the responders faster than it would take to walk. This can also be used in situations to keep first responders safe.

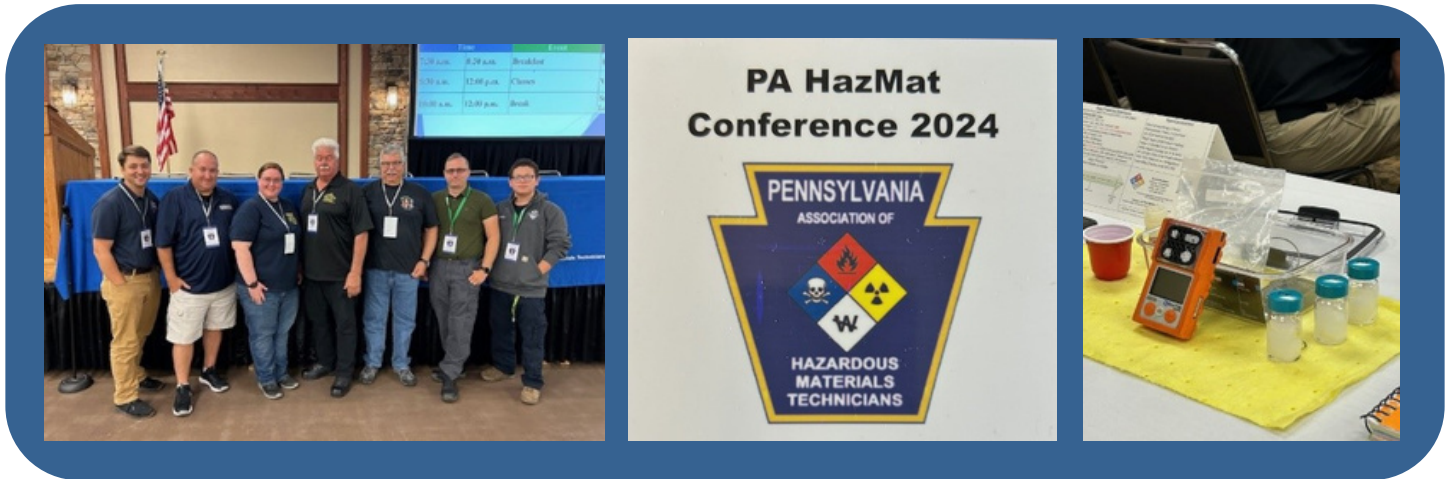
We are in the process of certifying staff and training on each of the drones. We hope to have them fully in service within the next few weeks.

HAZMAT PROGRAM UPDATE

Jason Gallagher

Beaver County's Hazmat Team 700 has been busy with trainings & learning new equipment since the last newsletter. Here are some details:

In August, we were able to send 8 team members to the PA Hazmat Technicians Conference that offered 35+ classes, a variety of demos & numerous vendors. The conference committee is already planning for next year, and the team members are eager to see what they can be educated on & be trained for in preparation for the next emergency response.



Recently we received 2 grants – 1 from Norfolk Southern & the other from Transcaer. Those grants made it possible to purchase a few Magna-Seals & an ERK Kit. Magna-Seal is a unique, patented, magnetic urethane sheet that is redefining the way first responders, hazmat technicians, and other industry professionals handle leaks of hazardous materials. The ERK Kit is designed to contain leaks on a variety of tank cars, trucks and tanks, including chlorine. Thank you to Norfolk Southern & Transcaer for the funding that we have put to good use!



HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING UPDATE

Kevin Whipple

FEMA requires state and local governments to approve and adopt hazard mitigation plans to be eligible for certain non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for mitigation projects. Jurisdictions must update their hazard mitigation plans and resubmit them for FEMA approval every five years to remain eligible.

We have contracted MCM Consulting to assist the County and Municipalities in conducting a yearly review of our plan, which expires in 2026. We need everyone's feedback and support to accomplish this.

Hazard mitigation planning reduces loss of life and property by minimizing the impact of disasters. It begins with state and local governments identifying natural disaster risks and vulnerabilities that are common in their area. After identifying these risks, they develop long-term strategies for protecting people and property from similar events. Mitigation plans are key to breaking the cycle of disaster damage and reconstruction.

As of June 30, 2024, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five territories including American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands have approved mitigation plans. A total of over 24,800 local governments and 230 tribal governments have approved or approvable-pending-adoption mitigation plans. We currently have four municipalities in Beaver County that have not adopted our county plan, and we would like to get that number to 100%.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Kathryn Schotsch

You may have seen our EMA staff out and about at one of the many community events that we attended this year. At the Elder Vogel Senior Expo at The Dome at CCBC, we handed out Ready PA pamphlets for older Americans and explained to them how they could get prepared during an emergency. We also handed out and helped individuals sign up for the Rave Alerts through Beaver County for emergency notifications. At Darlington Township Volunteer Fire Department's Public Safety Day, we brought Mobile Command with us so that the public was able to tour the vehicle. We were happy to answer questions about the types of responses Mobile Command is used for and the equipment and technology on the vehicle. We also handed out Rave Alerts for the public and helped them sign up for emergency notifications. Additionally, we handed out preparedness information for all emergencies. There were also coloring books for kids that explained what 911 is all about and how to respond to various events including weather emergencies, medical emergencies, fire emergencies, etc.



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Eric Brewer, Emergency Services Director

The **Keystone Emergency Management Association (KEMA)** is an organization that was established in 1977 in Pennsylvania, originally as Pennsylvania Civil Defense Association, to provide a platform for individuals and organizations involved in emergency management, emergency preparedness, and homeland security to exchange ideas, share best practices, and collaborate in order to enhance the overall emergency preparedness in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. KEMA members include emergency preparedness and management professionals, government agencies, private sector organizations, Healthcare, and other stakeholders involved in emergency preparedness, management, and homeland security.

The MISSION of KEMA is to advance and strengthen the capabilities and expertise of emergency management professionals and volunteers throughout Pennsylvania. Through proactive collaboration and the sharing of vital information, They are committed to safeguarding lives and protecting property from the impact of natural and man-made disasters. The core values are rooted in education, cooperation, and the establishment of strategic partnerships with emergency response organizations, all aimed at achieving our overarching goal.

The 7th Annual Pennsylvania Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security Conference was held in October, sponsored by the Keystone Emergency Management Association. This year's theme was "Breakthrough to Excellence, Beyond all Limits,". At the conference, I was honored to receive the Paul Beatty award for cooperation and collaboration in emergency management. Individuals are nominated for this award by their peers across the Commonwealth in recognition of exemplary performance in the spirit of partnership, collaboration and cooperation. I also presented at the KEMA conference on Beaver County's Emergency Management actions involving the East Palestine Train Derailment. Additionally during the conference, I was elected as the Vice President of KEMA for the next two years. If you are involved or interested in Emergency Management, I encourage you to go to the KEMA website to find out more about this organization and the annual KEMA Conference.

Interested in joining the Keystone Emergency Management Association? Navigate to <http://kema-pa.com>



RADIOLOGICAL PROGRAM UPDATES

Madyson Knox-Bennett

Our annual siren test was this past September, and we are happy to say that all active sirens in the 10-mile emergency planning zone are in working order, and the test was successful. We want to thank our partners for making the necessary preparations to help keep the public informed and secure. Your help is crucial.

The radiological planners and trainers at Beaver County Emergency Services have kept busy even after the preparation and successful execution of our Nuclear Drill at the Beaver Valley Power Station in June of this year. After one drill ends, preparation for the next immediately begins. Despite our next drill being in 2026, a lot of planning, training, and preparations are being made a year and a half out to be able to provide the public with safety and security, as a nuclear power plant is sitting in their backyard.

Beaver County Emergency Services Radiological Planner & Trainers are reaching out, creating relationships, scheduling training, and reviewing plans in preparation for 2026. For example, meeting with our law enforcement partners, fire department partners, and emergency worker decontamination stations are just a few of the items on our training agenda for what we like to call the "off year." Jason Chappell will talk more about ongoing Transportation and Emergency Medical Services training. Please continue reading to learn how you can sign up for EMS Regional Radiological Training to earn Continuing Education hours for attending.

Members of the EMA and Radiological staff attended the 2024 FEMA Region 3 Radiological Emergency Preparedness Stakeholders Workshop in West Virginia this November where we were able to connect, learn, and ask questions from our peers across the region. We were also lucky to attend the Keystone Emergency Management Association Conference in October where we also learned from not only our peers but the veterans of Emergency Management.

Looking forward, we are excited to reconnect with our first responder partners in training sessions which start at the beginning of the 2025. If you are looking to attend any of our regional radiological trainings, please feel free to reach out to either myself or Jason, and we would be happy to send you the information and have you in training.

With that, I wish you all Happy Holidays and safe travels.

RADIOLOGICAL PROGRAM UPDATES, *continued*

Jason Chappell

Beaver County Emergency Services completed its yearly Radiation Detection Meter Calibration in October. This was completed in support of the Beaver Valley Power Station.

Upcoming Radiological Preparedness Training for EMS providers is scheduled for the new year. This training coincides with the biannual Beaver Valley Power Station drill that is required for Beaver County by FEMA to stay in compliance with the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program across the nation. The next drill will be held in 2026. The courses are being offered to the in-county EMS agencies as well surrounding support agency EMS services. The courses will provide EMS responders with the knowledge of the following:

- What to do in the event of a radiological incident at the Beaver Valley Power Station.
- Protocols and procedures for entering the Beaver Valley Power Station during a radiation incident.
- Procedures for handling radiation patients vs. trauma patients.
- How to keep yourself safe in a radiation incident.

These courses are being held at the Beaver County 911 Center in Ambridge and will be held on 3 different dates and times. The course is also confirmed for 2.5 hours of con-ed for EMS providers. If you are interested in registering for one of these sessions, you may register through the link provided here: <https://forms.office.com/g/fpq3YKnugY?origin=lpLink> or use the QR code on the training flyer included later in this newsletter

As Madyson mentioned, we also offer trainings to our transportation companies within the county. These courses are to ensure that the staff and drivers have the knowledge of what would be expected of them if the county would ever need to evacuate the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone surrounding BVPS. The course can be provided via a “Read and Sign” packet, or it can be completed as an in-person presentation where the participants can ask further questions. If any transportation company is interested in the in-person presentation, please reach out to either Madyson or myself at Beaver County Emergency Services, 724-775-1700.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season, and we will see you all next year.

NEWS & NOTES

- Radio Project Update:** All radio equipment has been distributed and installed, with the exception of a few base stations. If you experience any radio issues, please contact Bearcom directly at 1-800-999-3723. Work is ongoing to upgrade equipment at all tower sites and to bring four new sites online in the following locations: Darlington Township, Economy Borough, Independence Township, and North Sewickley Township. We are on track to transition to the new digital system in 2025.
- For over a year, Emergency Services has been utilizing **Caltopo**, a software program that allows for personnel and inventory tracking and collaborative search and rescue operations. WPXI recently featured Director Brewer in a segment about this software, which can be viewed here: [Beaver County Emergency Services using new software to help find missing people. Here's how it works - WPXI](#)
- Since the last newsletter issue, Grady Gill & John Hartman were hired as **new full time Telecommunicators** at Emergency Services. Welcome aboard! If you are interested in becoming a 911 dispatcher, or know someone who is, we're hiring:

BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

NOW HIRING FULL-TIME TELECOMMUNICATORS



All Training
Provided





Full-Time Wage
\$28.08/HR

Minimum Qualifications:

- High School Diploma or equivalent
- At least 18 years old
- Clean Criminal History
- Valid Driver's License
- Strong Communications Skills
- Ability to multi-task under stress
- Able to work nights, weekends, and holidays

Benefits:

- Highly Competitive Salary
- Shift Differential Pay
- Paid Time Off vacation, sick, personal
- Medical, Dental, Prescription Benefits
- County Pension

Now Accepting Applications

Visit www.beavercountypa.gov and navigate to employment opportunities under quick links to submit an application.
Contact Human Resources at 724 770-4417 with application questions

Dispatch and Public Safety Experience Preferred

BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

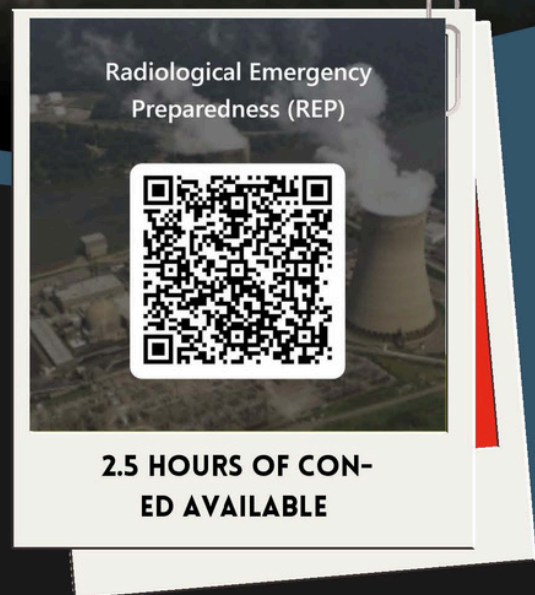


EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES RESPONSE » TO RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES AT THE BEAVER VALLEY POWER STATION (BVPS)

SCAN THE QR CODE
TO REGISTER FOR
TRAINING »

DO YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?

- DO YOU KNOW WHAT EMS WOULD BE ASKED TO DO IN A RADIATION ACCIDENT AT THE BEAVER VALLEY POWER STATION (BVPS)?
- DO YOU KNOW HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE IN A RADIATION EVENT?
- DO YOU KNOW PROTOCOLS FOR ENTERING THE BEAVER VALLEY POWER STATION (BVPS) IN A RADIATION ACCIDENT?
- DO YOU KNOW PROCEDURES FOR RADIATION PATIENTS VS. TRAUMA PATIENTS?



REGIONAL TRAINING DATES



BEAVER COUNTY
EMERGENCY SERVICES

JANUARY 28TH, 2025 | 6:30 PM

FEBRUARY 8TH, 2025 | 3:00 PM

FEBRUARY 13, 2024 | 9:00 AM



Wishing
you a very
Merry
Christmas
and a
safe &
happy
New Year!

From
Eric Brewer
and the
staff of
Beaver County
Emergency
Services



EMERGENCY SERVICES

351 14th Street
Ambridge, PA 15003
724-775-1700

BEAVER COUNTY
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Beaver County Courthouse • 810 Third Street • Beaver, PA 15009
724-728-3934 • www.beavercountypa.gov

The Beaver County Emergency Services Newsletter
is created and published by the Beaver County
Emergency Services center.

Beaver County Emergency Services is a division of Beaver County government, under the authority of the Beaver County Board of Commissioners. Emergency Services manages the county's 9-1-1 dispatch operations center and also serves as the county's Emergency Management office, working under the direction of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) on emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery.

The Emergency Services center is also the home of the county's Hazardous Materials Response Team, the Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) and is the contact point for many other public safety organizations, including EMS, Fire, Police, and Municipal EMA services. Emergency Services works in conjunction with a number of county and offsite agencies to provide comprehensive public safety guidance and emergency support to Beaver County.

Want to contribute?

E-mail the editor,
Schuyler Mu , at
smu@beavercountypa.gov