



Cuyahoga County
Local Emergency Planning Committee
March 2, 2026, Meeting Minutes



1. **Roll Call** – Scott Broski conducted roll call and led the meeting.
 - **LEPC Members in Attendance:** Wade Balsler, Justin Bechtel, Johnny Brewington, Scott Broski, Robert Butler (Mike Murphy, proxy), Ellen Dempsey, Richelle Gibson, Piet Hagenaars, Jacqueline Jackson, Bryan Kloss (Emily Smith-Sherlock, proxy), Sheldon Lustig, Troy Onesti (Don Appelgate, proxy), Tracy Pate, Matt Schneider, Fred Szabo, Dave Telban, Mark Vedder, Jay Womack
 - **Non-Voting Members in Attendance:** Greg Laurenson – CCOEM, John Rhoades – NEORS (Spills Subcommittee), Michelle Sowers – Ohio EMA
 - **Guests in Attendance:** Mark Christie – CCOEM, Ed Earley – TRANSFLO/SAVAGE, Greg Fondran – USCG, Omari Mays – CCOEM, Amador Molina – SAVAGE, Michael Stewart – CCPO

2. **LEPC Member Spotlight Series:** Mark Vedder – Chagrin/SE Hazmat
 - Mark Vedder provided a presentation regarding a unique Hazmat Event that occurred in November 2025.
 - Incident occurred in a chemical lab where the chemists got an unexpected chemical reaction resulting in elemental potassium and potassium peroxide. The chemists were flooding the reaction with argon gas to prevent a reaction from continuing, but only had about 4 hours of argon gas left before the site could potentially become unstable.
 - This unique situation with a fixed timeline led the Hazmat Team and facility representatives to partner with other resources to brainstorm ideas and control the situation. The final plan was to attempt to control the reaction by purposefully destabilizing the reaction with a hard projectile immediately followed by a water projectile. It was determined that this method could result in damage to the facility, which was discussed and agreed by all parties to still be the safest method for terminating the incident. Once the hard projectile and water projectile were fired, the reaction destabilized and the materials burned up but did not detonate. This was a preferred outcome for all involved due to the overall lack of damage and cascading effects.
 - The LEPC would like to thank Chief Vedder for his time and willingness to provide this presentation for the group.

3. **January Meeting Minutes Approval** – Scott Broski asked for a motion to approve the January 12, 2026, minutes. Dave Telban made a motion, Johnny Brewington seconded. Minutes approved.

4. **Financial Report:** Greg Laurenson provided the financial report for February 2026 on behalf of Nancy Veley.
 - Two changes since the January meeting. The LEPC paid \$6,320.00 from FY26 SERC Grant to the Chagrin/SE Council of Government to reimburse hazmat team members that attended the 2025 Hazmat Conference. The LEPC paid \$3,500 from FY26 SERC Grant to CSUTest.com to renew accounts for Continuing Education for hazmat team members. SERC fund balance is \$358,846.03 and Discretionary fund balance is \$84,900.85.

***7) EXECUTIVE SESSION MAY BE HELD PURSUANT TO OHIO REVISED CODE (ORC) 121.22(G)**

ORC 121.22(G)(5), a public body may hold an executive session to consider "matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or regulations or state statutes."

ORC 121.22(G)(6) provides that consideration of "[d]etails relative to the security arrangements and emergency response protocols for a public body or a public office, if disclosure of the matters discussed could reasonably be expected to jeopardize the security of the public body or a public office." Under this exception, both conditions must be met:

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5. Resolutions:

- Approved:
 - #03022026-1 Accept & File Financial Report Period ending February 28, 2026
 - Sheldon Lustig made a motion, Dave Telban seconded. Resolution approved.
 - #03022026-2 Approving Local Match for Commodity Flow Study
 - Justin Bechtel made a motion, Johnny Brewington seconded. Resolution approved.
 - #03022026-3 RCRA Hazmat Training Course FY26 SERC
 - Dave Telban made a motion, Jacqueline Jackson seconded. Resolution approved.
 - #03022026-4 NASTTPO April 2026 Conf
 - Justin Bechtel made a motion, Tracy Pate seconded. Resolution approved.
 - #03022026-6 PEAC WMD Hazmat Software
 - Matt Schneider made a motion, Justin Bechtel seconded. Resolution approved.
 - #03022026-7 Worst Case Hazard Analysis of Tier II Facilities
 - Matt Schneider made a motion, Johnny Brewington seconded. Resolution approved.
- Withdrawn:
 - #03022026-5 Food for SERT Homemade Explosives Class FY26 SERC
 - This resolution was withdrawn due to course cancellation by FEMA.

6. Subcommittee Reports:

- Management- Scott Broski
 - Met on February 23, 2026.
 - Discussed membership approvals for Deirdre Jones (CGRTA) and Richelle Gibson (MP Biomedicals).
 - Spotlight Series presentations have been scheduled for the remainder of year, but we are able to have multiple at one meeting if the presentations aren't too long. Please contact Scott Broski or Greg Laurenson if you would like to present at an upcoming LEPC meeting.
 - Bylaws are currently on hold while awaiting SERC approval for their updated LEPC Handbook. The revised bylaws will likely be presented to the committee in the summer.
- Facilities- Ellen Dempsey
 - Looking to bring in a RCRA training class in the spring (resolution approved). This class has been sent out to bid and we are awaiting proposals.
 - Discussed classes that were included on the FY27 SERC grant. If any industry partners would like to suggest additional training, please contact Ellen Dempsey.
- Transportation- Sheldon Lustig
 - Discussed TRANSCAER/Norfolk Southern upcoming Hazmat training session being held in April. Once the details and flyer are finalized, information will be sent to the committee.

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- Youngstown State University is partnering to fund a Hazmat training facility as a result of the East Palestine derailment.
- Spills- John Rhoades & Dave Telban
 - Met on March 2, 2026, immediately preceding the main LEPC meeting.
 - Four outstanding spills from 2023/2024 and have been referred to the prosecutor.
 - Two outstanding spills from November/December 2025.
 - One outstanding spill is due a 90-day letter this week.
 - One outstanding spill is due a 90-day letter later this month, pending amendment to a rejected spill report.
 - 11 reported spills from January/February 2026.
 - Six are not reportable.
 - Three are reportable and we have received completed spill reports.
 - Two are reportable with 30-day letters due this month.
- Training and Exercises- Alan Finkelstein & Richard Nickerson
 - Scott Broski stated that Richard Nickerson has taken a new role within CFD and is unlikely to continue to assist the Training and Exercises subcommittee. Information on a possible replacement will be communicated when possible.
 - Greg Laurenson provided an update for Training and Exercises.
 - The annual LEPC exercise is scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2026, in partnership with the SERT Hazmat team.
 - The next planning meeting for this exercise is schedule for Monday, March 30, 2026.

7. Office of Emergency Management Report

- Greg Laurenson provided the Office of Emergency Management Report.
 - 30 public records requests since the last meeting. 30 total for 2026.
 - The Tier II reporting window has officially closed. Omari and Greg are working to review and file these reports. We have roughly 300 reports reviewed and filed and are expecting between 900-1000 total reports to be reviewed and filed.
 - CCOEM assisted CCBH with a TTX on February 23, 2026.
 - ReadyEx Prep workshops and TTXs are still being provided to both public and private partners in the county.
 - EMAP materials have been finalized and submitted ahead of our reaccreditation in mid-March. Assessors will be on site for one week in March to review all materials.
 - The National Disaster Medical System and Forward Movement of Patients exercise will take place on August 11 at Cleveland Hopkins Airports and area hospitals.
 - There is a County-wide Primary Election on May 5, 2026, in which our EOC will be partially activated.
 - Upcoming Trainings:
 - Skywarn Training – 3/18
 - COOP L1301 – 3/24-3/25

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- COOP L1302 – 3/26-3/27
- OH-606 Recovery from Disaster Workshop – 4/22
- PIO Basics L105 – 4/27-4/29
- G-197 Integrating Access and Functional Needs into Emergency Management – 5/12-5/13
- Mark Christie stated that CCOEM will be conducting a five-year update to the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan. This is a federal requirement to continue eligibility for grant funding.
- Mark Christie stated that FirstEnergy will be partnering with CCOEM to provide a training course centered around safety near their infrastructure and response to incidents such as downed power lines. This is tentatively scheduled for June 2, 2026, in the morning for 3-4 hours.
- Emily Smith-Sherlock stated that March 15-21 is Ohio Severe Weather Awareness Week and that Ohio EMA has materials regarding safety during severe weather incidents on their website.
 - The Ohio statewide tornado drill is Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 9:50am.

8. New Business

- No update.

9. Next Meeting: May 4, 2026

Chair Scott Broski asked for a motion to adjourn. Justin Bechtel motioned, Dave Telban seconded. Meeting adjourned.

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