



## Winter Conference

The 2023 EMAO Winter Conference was held at Salt Fork State Park Lodge December 7th & 8th. This cozy setting set the stage for some truly enlightening presentations given by our speakers. This conference is an incredible opportunity to interact with your emergency management peers and to learn from their experiences. With the diverse makeup of communities across Ohio, it is invaluable to hear how EMs at the local level have encountered obstacles in their paths and how they have navigated around or through them. Some of the presentations given were:

- 50 Years Since the Super Outbreak- A Look Back and a Look Ahead (Tom Johnstone, Ethan Raby)
- Emerging Trends in HazMat Planning and Training (Nick Zamiska)
- Multi-County Collaboration (multiple county EMAs)
- GIS and Data Driven Applications (Shawn Dysert)
- Grassroots Approach to Vulnerable Populations (Tony Edwards, Jane Marie, Jason York)
- Anatomy of a Train Derailment (Ed Bohn)
- East Palestine Derailment Lessons Learned (Peggy Clark)
- Utility Collaboration (Helen Norris, Lisa D'Allessandris)

*Thank you so much to our speakers for sharing your experiences and lessons with us.*



## Good Luck!



Congratulations to Rita Spicer on her retirement!

Rita served as the Director of Perry County Emergency Management Agency from 2002 to 2023! In her first year as Director, Rita worked through 5 declarations!

When asked what Rita believed was one of her biggest accomplishments of her career, she said securing the grant funding for the construction of an emergency operations center and bringing Perry County to the 21st century along with a new 9-1-1 Center.

Rita stated that the most important part of being the Director of the Emergency Management Agency was serving her county in the times of disasters. Additionally, Rita served as the EMAO Awards Committee Chair for many years. Rita says she has enjoyed with all the Directors. She will miss everybody and wishes everyone well.

From all of us at EMAO, we thank you, Rita, for all of your contributions to the emergency management community and we wish you a happy and healthy retirement!





## IAEM Annual Conference Long Beach, CA

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) hosted their annual conference this past November in Long Beach, California, and multiple EMAO members were in attendance! This year the conference had over 2,000 attendees from 20 different countries. All levels of private and public sector emergency managers were represented, making it a great opportunity to network with those with a variety of experiences and backgrounds.

In addition to the networking opportunities, the conference program was jam packed with many fantastic speakers covering lessons learned, current events, available programs and tools to aid emergency managers, and so much more. For example: tips for animal disaster planning were discussed, severe weather best practices for schools to implement during dismal times were reviewed, and COOP templates and forms for mass casualty events were shared.

IAEM also hosts a vendor show throughout the conference. Lots of high-quality swag is given out and it is a great time to shop around to see what tools are on the market. While funding is often a concern with different vendors, there are plenty of ideas to take away and implement in-house. Each year this conference takes place in a different location in hopes of reducing travel burdens (at least for that year). Looking forward the conference is scheduled to be in Colorado Springs, CO in 2024 and Louisville, KY in 2025!

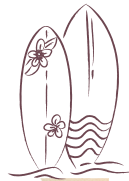


### 2024 SAVE THE DATES

**EMAO SPRING CONFERENCE AND VENDOR SHOW**  
**APRIL 16 -17, 2024**  
**REGISTRATION MATERIALS WILL BE SENT SOON.**

**EMAO FUNDAMENTALS COURSE**  
**JUNE 14, 2024**

**EMAO WINTER CONFERENCE**  
**DECEMBER 5-6, 2024**  
**SALT FORK STATE LODGE AND CONFERENCE CENTER**



# Welcome

*Thomas Smoot, EMAO President*



County: Summit

EMAO Sector: Northeast

Experience: Thomas M. Smoot brings over nineteen years of expertise in emergency management, public safety, and homeland security. Currently serving as the Emergency Management Agency Director for Summit County, Ohio, he leads the countywide emergency management and homeland security program. Mr. Smoot is adept at managing and coordinating various boards, committees, and federal, state, and regional grant programs. With a proven track record, he has contributed to seven FEMA major disaster declarations for Summit County. Passionate and innovative, Mr. Smoot holds the Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) designation from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and is an Ohio Certified Emergency Manager (OCEM). He has been an active Emergency Management Association of Ohio (EMAO) member since 2009.

#### Term Goals:

1. Foster a Thriving Emergency Management Community.
2. Elevate the Structure and Authority of local Emergency Management.
3. Lead the Creation of a Future-Ready Emergency Management Association.