



# EMAO NEWSLETTER

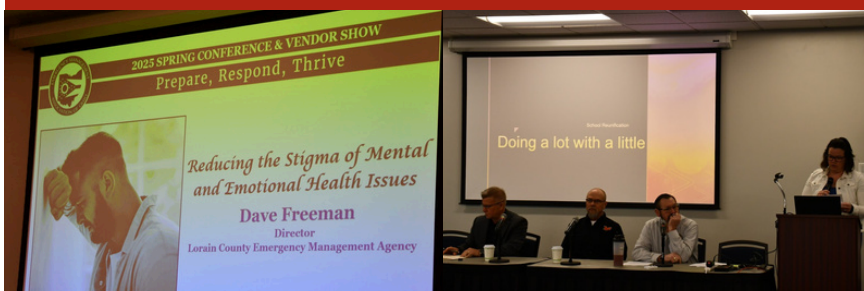


EMAO strives to advance public safety for Ohioans through effective collaborations with local, state, and federal partners.

## EMAO SPRING CONFERENCE

On April 2, the 2025 EMAO Spring Conference kicked off. The first presentation was delivered by **Dave Freeman, Director of Lorain County EMA**. The presentation was something we have highlighted in a past edition- Reducing the Stigma of Mental/Emotional Health Issues. It was a timely, relevant, and captivating presentation. As emergency managers, we are so used to taking care of and worrying about everyone else.

This was a reminder that we also need to rank ourselves high on the priority list.



The next presentation was delivered by **Amy Seward, Deputy Director of Knox County EMA**. The presentation was titled: Doing A Lot With A Little In School Reunification. This was a very informative and interactive presentation and involved a knowledgeable panel. Thank you to both Deputy Director Seward, and the panel members for sharing their evolving best practices and expertise. OCEM initial and re-certifications were also awarded after the presentations as pictured below.



Congrats Union County!



We are proud to announce that the Union County Emergency Management Agency has officially been confirmed as an EMAP-Accredited Program!

Union County began the accreditation process by completing the baseline assessment and presenting their program to a team of 8 evaluators in August 2024. These evaluators spent five days in Union County reviewing every aspect of the program. In March, Union County appeared before the EMAP Program Review Committee to provide additional details and answer questions about the review. The committee then presented their findings to the EMAP Commission, which voted to grant the accreditation.

The Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), established in 1997, is a rigorous process that evaluates emergency management programs across the U.S. Out of 3,243 counties and county equivalents nationwide, Union County is now one of just 25 currently accredited programs to achieve this prestigious distinction. They join a select group that includes:

- ✓ 25 counties
- ✓ 15 cities
- ✓ 30 state-level programs
- ✓ 7 institutions of higher education

Union County is also proud to be the smallest county in the U.S. to receive this accreditation. The next smallest accredited county is Flagler County, FL, with a population of 132,000. Union County is the second smallest jurisdiction overall, behind Hilton Head Island, SC (population 40,000), whose population swells to over 150,000 during the summer months.

This significant achievement highlights the dedication and hard work of the Union County Emergency Management Team and the collaboration of all the partners involved. We are excited to be recognized for our commitment to preparedness and resilience.

## JOINT SECTOR MEETING

On March 13th, the EMAO Western and Southwest sectors hosted a joint-sector meeting at the Montgomery County EOC. The idea for this meeting came from conversations at the EMAO Winter Conference, where individuals from the different sectors discussed current projects and shared available resources to help each other out, and also mentioned that it would be nice to get together more than 1-2x a year (outside of conferences), and to continue to build relationships in the event we would need to call upon each other during an activation. It was also noted that while they were in different EMAO sectors, they all fell under the Ohio EMA southwest region.

At the joint meeting, county's representatives from the two EMAO sectors as well as the Southwest Ohio EMA Regional Operations Staff were in attendance. There were tons of great conversations about current projects and challenges individual counties were facing, and other counties were able to share resources or feedback to assist. The Ohio EMA staff also got a chance to share important, state and regional-specific updates to the group. And, the group was able to discuss current legislative issues in emergency management. After the official portion of the meeting was over, many counties then got lunch together.

Between building new relationships or developing already established relationships, discussing regional projects and issues as a whole region, helping each other out with projects or upcoming events, or addressing legislative issues, it was a great meeting.



## Ohio EMA SPRING CONFERENCE

Held April 2-3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 following the EMAO conference was the Ohio EMA Spring Conference. This two-day event had a variety of captivating material presented to the attendees.

### Some of the topics covered included:

- Weather Technology
- DMORT/OMORT
- NATO Assembly
- Drones
- Debris Management
- Risk and Resilience
- County Roundtable
- Public and Private Collaboration



Sima Merick, Executive Director Ohio EMA delivers conference opening remarks.





SECTOR  
UPDATES



Scan to submit a  
sector update for  
the next newsletter

Central Sector	Following their formal meeting on 4/14 they played the Cyber Ready Game which explores the dynamics of cyber preparedness and the impacts an attack can have on community partners. The board game is available to rent from Ohio EMA Training & Exercise Branch.
Northeast Sector	No update provided
North Central Sector	Discussed an upcoming exercise with the US Coast Guard as part of the federal National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program. Their next meeting will be July 18 <sup>th</sup> on Put In Bay - all are welcome to attend and learn about the unique planning needed for an island. Reach out to Director Kuelling for more info.
Northwest Sector	Met on 3/19 in Van Wert County. Hosted a presentation on how CERT programs were developed, funding, and their response capabilities.
Southeast Sector	Met on 2/18 in Pickaway County. A representative from Senator Bernie Moreno’s office was present to increase awareness and collaboration.
Southwest Sector	See the article on page two highlighting the joint sector meeting.
Western Sector	See the article on page two highlighting the joint sector meeting.