A group of Owls is called a parliament. Preparing our "Parliament of Owls" to survive emergencies and disasters is the main priority of The Office of Emergency Management. We invite you to review our "Prepare the Parliament" newsletter.

"Preparing the Parliament" is a monthly production of the KSU Department of Public Safety, Office of Emergency Management. This new publication is provided to prepare students, faculty and staff to be ready and respond to potential emergencies and disasters which may occur on our campuses. We invite you to provide suggestions to improve this publication to Wayne Randle, Editor, Email: rrandle@kennesaw.edu.
As 2022 comes to a close, I want to reflect on what has been a tremendous year for Kennesaw State University. We have a new President. We have a new Provost. We are moving up to Conference USA in our Athletics programs. All of these are major events that will shape the future of our beloved University.

2022 has been a big year in the Office of Emergency Management, as well. We have finally exited the fog of the COVID-19 Pandemic (and into an Endemic stage). We had the return of our Campus Safety Days this September as part of our National Preparedness Month activities. We presented at conferences, hosted the Metro Atlanta Higher Ed Emergency Managers meeting for the first time, and navigated several campus emergencies. We did over 40 presentations and classes in 2022 with over 900 people in attendance. We distributed countless numbers of personal protective equipment and hundreds of gallons of disinfectant and hand sanitizer to the campus community. We also saw the retirement of our original Office of Emergency Management Director – Andy Altizer – in June and the revamping of this newsletter in September. It has been quite the busy year.

I am excited for what 2023 will hold for both this University and for the Office of Emergency Management. We are expanding our CPR/AED training program, rebooting the CERT Program after a COVID-induced hiatus, and working to build stronger bonds across the University – particularly with the academic community. Working to make greater connections with our students are a key priority for the new year.

Our campuses continue to grow. Our population continues to grow. We have new buildings, new programs, and a larger footprint. As the University’s emergency managers, we must continue to grow, continue to change as well. We must rise to the ever-changing challenges in front of us. This is our ultimate goal – to rise to new challenges in 2023 to keep our students, faculty, and staff safer and more prepared for whatever may occur.
“The Most Wonderful Time of The Year” is upon us! From a fire service perspective this is our busy time of the year as well. Unfortunately, the number of house fires and fire related incidents trend up due to the cold weather and the higher electrical, and fuel load associated with the season. Electrical, heating, and candle fires are some of the top causes of fires during the holiday season.

Electrical fires happen daily in the United States, below are tips for safe electrical use:

- Only use one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) plugged into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use. Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don’t have to use extension cords.
- Never plug space heaters into power strips.

Space heaters specifically pose a high fire risk. Some tips for safe heating include:

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

Candles provide that warm holiday smell; however, they also provide another frequent cause of structure fires. Some tips for candle safety are:

- Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where people may fall asleep.
- Keep candles at least 1 foot away from anything that can burn.
- Don’t burn a candle all the way down — put it out before it gets too close to the holder or container.

A special fire hazard that occurs during the holidays are Christmas trees. If real (traditional) trees are not watered correctly, they will dry quickly and can be a major fuel for fire. Artificial trees also pose a risk but have a higher fire point than a traditional dry Christmas tree. For more information on fire safety refer to https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education or contact our wonderful Fire and Life Safety Division here at KSU.
The University of Virginia bus had just returned to Charlottesville from a field trip. When it was over, three members of the football team were dead and two others were wounded. This at the hand of another team member who had faced disciplinary action for something which had happened a year earlier and totally unrelated to the victims.

School assaults happen. The first recorded campus shooting in Higher Education was in 1840 when a student shot his professor. The deadliest school shooting is US history occurred in 2007 when 32 people were killed on the campus of Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. This year, there have been 15 on campuses of higher education.

At KSU, we prepare for active shooter events. There are plans in place to immediately notify everyone on campus of an event which requires a secure in place. KSU Police can respond within minutes. KSU OEM and Police work closely with local fire and medical units to constantly be at the ready.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, you have a 1 in 614,000,000 chance of being shot on a college campus. For perspective, you have a 1 in 6,368 chance of dying from a sunstroke…So why does KSU Public Safety and Police go to extremes to prepare, notify students, and respond quickly on campus when the odds are so low? Why do we go through so much preparation for active shooters? The simple answer is the impact such an event would have would be significant. The simpler answer is it “could” happen to us. The most important reason is the loss of one KSU student, staff or faculty is unacceptable.

Until the odds go from “rare” to “zero” your Department of Public Safety will be planning, preparing, and exercising to respond to an active shooter. If your plans are disrupted with a “secure in place” notice, remember, while odds are very low you will be a victim, they are not zero. Your role is to seek shelter knowing that KSU Police and the Office of Emergency Management are responding and implementing plans and procedures to keep you safe.

It’s why we prepare…
How long have you served KSU? Almost 23 years full time. I was a part time lab instructor for 4 years, and a student before that.

When and why did you become a Crisis Coordinator? When the program started. I was originally “volun-told” I would be a Crisis Coordinator but embraced it once I learned about it.

What interested you in the program? I am in safety as part of my profession, it is just another aspect of it. It is another way of helping keep people safe. I went on and became a Certified Emergency Manager from GEMA because of my initial training and experience as a Crisis Coordinator.

What is your most memorable moment as a CC? The most memorable was the escape convict event. “Little Houdini” escaped the sheriff that was transporting him back to Kentucky when they stopped at Waffle House. It was a long day and night as the Science building was searched several times by Cobb police with dogs.

How has your training as a CC helped you in your position at KSU? The initial training gave me different perspective on the day-to-day operations here from the emergency side. The experience helped with my other safety certifications as well. Those first couple of years of the CC program were right after the 9/11 attacks and the Virginia Tech shooting was around that time as well. A lot of the focus was anti-terrorism, bombings, and active shooters. Being a CC is now integral in my position as a safety professional with the overall aspect of keeping our faculty, staff, students, and visitors safe here on campus. I have added a lot more to that CC training from outside sources.

Why should one consider becoming a Crisis Coordinator? I think it gives you an additional role that bears different responsibility here on campus. The training adds knowledge and confidence as to what to do in case of an emergency. One thing I have always liked about being involved in the CC program is you get to know what is happening on the other side of the yellow caution tape. In addition, as with all safety training you learn things that can apply to your life away from work to keep your family safe, too.
As we move into December, it is time to start to consider what this winter may look like. Will there be snow? Lots of snow? Are we looking at a cold, miserable winter the Starks of Winterfell might enjoy? As it turns out . . . it doesn’t look like it. We are, once again, in a La Niña weather pattern. This means the temperature of the water in the eastern Pacific Ocean are cooler than normal. This fact lends itself to a warmer and drier winter for our area as the polar jet stream tends to stay stuck farther north, which keeps the really cold air up in Canada. However, this is a 3-month general trend is not indicative of what we can expect every day. 14-day weather patterns, such as a low-pressure system or a Polar High, can still bring us wet, cold, wintry precipitation throughout the winter months. We can just expect that the general trend will be for “milder and drier” on average.
One thing La Niña weather patterns do lend themselves to is Polar vortex “spillover” events. These are events where the frigid high-pressure system in northern Canada wanders down into the United States, bringing very cold temperatures with it. These systems can even dive into Georgia, as happened a few years ago when we had wind chills around -10 degrees one early morning on campus. So, as always, we must remain vigilant and ready for whatever may come our way this winter.
The Kennesaw State University Office of Emergency Management offers preparedness and response training to the Campus Community year-round. Our courses include topics such as Classroom Preparedness, Preparing for the Unexpected, Basics of Emergency Management, Bomb Threats, Response to Active Shooter, CPR/AED, Basic Life Support, Weather Preparedness, and more. OEM works with groups, classes, and programs to schedule courses around group availability. Interested in emergency and disaster training? Contact us at OEM@kennesaw.edu

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT AND PSYCHOLOGY
Wednesday December 7 at 2pm until 3pm
Marietta Campus Norton Hall Police Precinct Conference Room (Police entrance on ground floor). Register by sending an email to rrandle@kennesaw.edu
Presents an overview of the psychology of critical incidents, addresses stress management techniques, how to work with survivor's trauma, and outlines the importance of a well-rounded approach to stress management before, during, and after a critical incident.

WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS:
December 8 from 10am until 11am
Marietta Campus Norton Hall Police Precinct Conference Room (Police entrance on ground floor). Register by sending an email to rrandle@kennesaw.edu
Georgia has its share of winter weather (remember Snowmageddon)? Learn the difference between different types of winter storms and how to protect you and your family.

Check out Environmental Health and Safety’s “Hoot about Safety” video about HOLIDAY SAFETY! Video: https://youtu.be/jTUrRupxliY
“What is your biggest concern about the holidays from an emergency management perspective?”

"My biggest concern is people’s lack of general situational awareness during the holidays. This includes when traveling, shopping, putting up decorations, or any other time during the holidays. We are all in such a rush and get hyper-focused on what is immediately in front of us that we oftentimes fail to pay attention to everything else around us. This can lead us vulnerable to incidents such as crime (robbed while crossing the parking lot with an armload of gifts) or injury (falling off the roof when trying to get that string of lights just right).”

James Westbrook
Acting Director
jwestbr9@jennesaw.edu

"My biggest concern during the holidays is theft. So many people do online shopping and thieves target houses with boxes on their front porch. For my online shopping through Amazon, I utilize "Key Delivery", where the delivery driver can securely open my garage door with an access code that is given to them after they scan my packages. I get an alert that my garage has been opened! They leave the packages and the garage door closes in which I get another alert! It's safe and effective and I don't have to worry about anyone taking them! Best of all, it's free."

Christy Hendricks
Emergency Management Coordinator
Kennesaw Campus
dhendr16@kennesaw.edu
“Travelers who don’t prepare for winter travel. The U.S. Insurance Forum reports annually a 1,000 people die in ice and snow accidents. This doesn’t include the illness and fatalities resulting of having to wait hours for a wreck to be removed. Make a travel kit: Ice scraper, water, blankets, flashlights, chemical hand warming pads, toilet paper, portable shovel, booster cables, first aid kit, cell phone charger, raincoat, boots, and pop tarts (they last forever and need no prep.”

R. Wayne Randle
Emergency Management Coordinator
Marietta Campus
rrandle@kennesaw.edu

“My biggest concern during the holiday season is increased fire danger. As a full-time firefighter, this is our busy season. Due to the increased use of candles, heaters, and dirty chimneys, the fire load increases this time of year. Ensuring your smoke detectors are in working condition and you have an escape plan is good practice. Be sure to water Christmas trees and not overload the power strips.”

Cody Doyle
Emergency Management Specialist
cdoyle13@kennesaw.edu
Protecting the Parliament is published monthly by the Office of Emergency Management at Kennesaw State University. Have a question or comment? Want to request a copy of a previous month’s newsletter? Feel free to submit comments, requests, and questions via email to: OEM@kennesaw.edu