



## Meeting Minutes

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) District VII  
 Bennington County, Vermont  
**November 7, 2019 from 6:00 to 7:30PM**  
 Bennington Project Independence  
 614 Harwood Hill Rd.  
 Bennington, VT 05201

| Attendees      |                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Name           | Affiliation                   |
| Dee Myrvang    | VT Department of Health       |
| Craig O'Dell   | Pownal EMD                    |
| Keith Squires  | LEPC Chair/Arlington EMD      |
| Allison Strohl | BCRC                          |
| Ken Couture    | Speaker, Green Mountain Power |
| Suzy DePeyster | Sandgate Select Board Chair   |
| Mary Morrissey | State Rep. Bennington 2-2     |
| Seth Loomis    | State Police                  |
| Luke Hall      | State Police                  |
| Dan Zimmer     | Fire Training Instructor      |
| Nanci Gordon   | VT 211                        |
| Steve McCay    | Pownal EMC                    |

**Introductions:** Keith Squires started the meeting with introductions.

**Meeting Minutes:** Keith asked if there were any edits/comments for the August meeting minutes. No one had any. Dan Zimmer made motion to accept the minutes, Nanci Gordon seconded. All were in favor.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasures Report has not changed since the last meeting. The balance is \$9,669.48. Keith did not call for a motion to accept since there are no changes.

### **Presentation:**

Speaker: Ken Couture, Leader of Grid Resiliency with Green Mountain Power

Some notes from the presentation:

- GMP has 12,500 miles of power lines
- They follow ICS structure
- Ken talked about all the information GMP uses to predict weather
- Control rooms are set up for full redundancy (Rutland and Colchester)
- 200,000 smart meters – talked about smart meters and gatekeepers and how they work
- Talked about how they can turn off power in emergency situations
- Talked about the GMP website and how to see the outage map
- Ken mentioned how sensitive populations can make themselves “critical customers” and GMP will call and check on them during outages and discuss how long power will be out
  - To sign up, call the 1-800 number

- Nanci Gordon mentioned the CARE program and Ken Couture mentioned that they recently found out about that program and are in the process of reaching out to those involved in the CARE program
- Trends in weather and extreme weather increasing in frequency and severity – Major storms are becoming more frequent and are a major event for GMP and cause more damage
- Ken talked about the Halloween wind storm
  - It was a big-cross state event
    - Made it almost impossible to share resources (crews) because surrounding states and eastern Canada was also severely hit by the storm
    - 1.4 million outages, 160 extra crews available
    - Took almost 4 days to get all power restored
    - Ken talked about how they handle the major events and how they respond
- Suzy asked about the emerald ash borer. Ken said almost 100% death rate of ash trees. When ash trees die, they fall down easily, even taking down another tree can cause an ash tree to fall down near it, just from the vibrations. GMP is dealing with the issue but have a hard time identifying healthy vs dead ash trees in winter time. They also look at mapped EAB areas.
- Keith asked if there is a number road crews should call in the early hours, Ken will give Keith that number. Keith also asked who they could call to make sure lines are dead. Ken said that they can never guarantee that a line is dead and to treat every line like it's live.
- Dan asked about any incentives or reimbursements for firefighters that are also out there helping in the middle of the night. Ken said he was not aware of anything.

**Agency Reports:**

- Nanci: As of October 21, 211 is not 24/7. They are working on getting back to 24/7. Current hours M-F 8am-8pm.
- VSP: still dealing with low staffing and low enrollment of new officers

**Adjourn:** Meeting ended at 7:30PM

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, **January 30th**, 2019. Location TBD.

LEPC 7 meeting minutes, agendas, and scheduled meetings can be found at:  
<http://www.bcrcvt.org/local-emergency-planning-committee.html>