

**Statement for the**  
**Senate Veterans Affair & Emergency Preparedness Committee**  
**Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee**  
**October 18, 2011**

**PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

**Timothy Baughman, Deputy Director for Operations**

Chairwoman Baker, Chairman Solobay, Chairman Tomlinson, Chairwoman Boscola and Members of the Committee, I am Tim Baughman, Deputy Director for Operations for the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA). Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the recent floods and the power outage and water treatment issues that occurred as a result of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.

I serve as PEMA's Deputy Director for Operations and it is my responsibility to oversee PEMA's emergency operations for the entire Commonwealth. PEMA is a small agency with a very large mission. We currently have approximately 160 employees and have three Area Offices (Eastern, Central and Western). PEMA has a unique role to play in coordinating the resources of state agencies in times of disaster or emergency. PEMA's prime responsibility is to support county emergency managers and their organizations.

In Pennsylvania, the Emergency Management Services Code (commonly known as Title 35) provides the framework regarding how state, county and local governments prepare for and respond to disasters. As is the case throughout the United States, in Pennsylvania, responses to disasters and emergencies are managed at the local level. In the event local municipalities have resource needs in responding to the disaster or emergency, they contact their county emergency management agency. If the county is unable to provide the needed resources, the county then contacts PEMA's State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). The SEOC is a technologically advanced facility staffed around the clock -- 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year -- by highly trained personnel. During emergencies personnel from just about every state agency, including the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), are at the SEOC. Having these agency personnel at the SEOC ensures that each of their agencies is fully engaged in the response to the emergency, that they keep their agencies abreast of situational awareness during the emergency, and that they keep PEMA informed of matters that relate to their agency.

PEMA's Area Offices are responsible for the field support operations to the counties. The offices provide direct coordination support of state and federal resources in conjunction with the SEOC to each county via the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and county 911 Center depending on level of activation and need. In some instances, depending upon availability of resources, PEMA staff from the Area

Offices (referred to as a Liaison Officer "LO") are deployed to the affected EOC and, if needed, to the disaster site itself. The primary goal of the LO is to provide direct support to the county Emergency Management Agency (EMA) staff and elected officials in resource coordination to address identified, but unmet, needs. In addition, the LO provides situational awareness and communication to the Area Offices and the SEOC. At a strategic level, the Area Offices provide direction and guidance when state resources are assigned to address unmet needs at the county or local level. This process follows the all hazards approach to integrated emergency management as practiced throughout the United States.

On August 22, PEMA, other state agencies, and county and local emergency management agencies began preparing for Hurricane Irene. On August 25, the SEOC elevated from Level 4 (normal activity state of readiness) and remained at elevated levels, through Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, until the third week of September. For several days, the SEOC was at Level 1 (the highest level) for the first time since September 11, 2001.

On August 27, Hurricane Irene hit the Commonwealth on August 27. Tropical Storm Lee then hit the Commonwealth on September 7. Throughout the period of time that the SEOC was elevated, numerous state agency personnel were present in the SEOC, including PUC and DEP personnel. In addition, PEMA's Eastern Area Office and PEMA's Central Area Office were fully engaged with county EMAs for the duration and aftermath of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. During the

storms, as is always the practice during a weather-related emergency, the PUC provided PEMA with the number and location of power outages throughout the state. The PUC provided regular updates and projections as to when each utility anticipated resolving the power outages. PEMA, the Eastern Area Office and the Central Area Office actively monitored the power outage situation, responded to any unmet county needs that related to life safety matters from the power outages, provided regular status updates to the Members of the General Assembly regarding the storms, and responded to any inquiries related to the power outages. In short -- PEMA was fully aware of the power outage situation and was fully engaged in coordinating resources for unmet, outage related, needs. However, providing and restoring power to customers is the responsibility of each utility company, not PEMA.

With regards to water treatment facility issues that arose from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, DEP was in the SEOC and provided situational awareness to PEMA. PEMA was fully engaged in monitoring the situation and again worked with counties regarding any unmet needs they had. For example, in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), over \_\_\_\_\_ bottles of water were delivered to affected communities. The delivery and continued replenishment of water to communities was one of the top priorities for PEMA in the aftermath of each storm.

PEMA is keenly aware that weather-related emergencies can pose life threatening situations to our citizens. As a result, the Commonwealth, supported by PEMA, launched possibly one of the most important statewide campaigns ever. It is called "ReadyPA." You probably have seen Governor Tom Corbett on television or heard him on the radio doing highly important Public Service Announcements about ReadyPA. The purpose of ReadyPA is to motivate Pennsylvanians to take action to prepare for a disaster. ReadyPA encourages all Pennsylvanians to: Be Informed, Be Prepared and Be Involved. Nationwide experience has shown that, in major emergencies or disasters, people need to be prepared to make it on their own for a period of time. Local officials and emergency relief workers will respond after a disaster, but they may not be able to reach everyone right away. In addition – as we saw with Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee -- it may take significant time after an emergency for things such as power or water to be fully restored. That's why it is critical for everyone to be prepared to survive on his or her own for a period of time in the event of an emergency. The on-going purpose of ReadyPA is to make our citizens fully aware of this reality and have them fully prepared if such a situation occurs. The ReadyPA web site can be found at: [www.ReadyPA.org](http://www.ReadyPA.org).

Members of the Committee, even though PEMA's role in power outage restoration and water restoration matters is very, very limited, we truly appreciate the concern both of the Committees have for the citizens in Pennsylvania who were so adversely affected because their power was out for a long period of time or the time it took to have potable water restored. At the state level, Governor Corbett took a hands-

on approach regarding the disasters and committed all necessary state resources. Governor Corbett, his Executive Staff, Lieutenant Governor Cawley, and Cabinet Secretaries were camped out at PEMA during these storms and actively involved in the operations. I think we may have set a record for Cabinet meetings held at an agency during a one week time period.

We at PEMA thank everyone involved -- in the preparation for, the response to, and the recovery from these storms -- for the tremendous effort and work that has been done to protect and help the citizens and communities that have been so adversely affected. Our first responders and rescue teams were heroes who went beyond the call of duty to save lives. Additionally, the cooperation and coordination among state, county, local, and federal entities truly has been remarkable.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify here today and I will try to answer any questions you might have.