

Maine HCC Downeast Chapter

WILDFIRE *Tabletop Exercise* *October 28, 2025* *1:00 – 3:00 pm*



EXERCISE PLAN

Location:

Eagle Hill Institute
59 Eagle Hill Road
Steuben, Maine 04680

Wildfire Tabletop Exercise

PREFACE

This group tabletop exercise will be moderated by the Maine HCC Downeast Chapter. This exercise follows the guidance set forth in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). This Table Top Exercise (TTX) and supporting materials is UNCLASSIFIED.

This brochure provides all participants with the information necessary to participate in the exercise; it should be reviewed by all participants prior to the TTX.

The TTX is comprised of an expanding wildfire near healthcare facilities that results in shelter in place and/or evacuation consequences with several scenario inject modules relating to communication, response, rescue, recovery, triage, transport, and other likely “real world” circumstances following such an incident.

EXERCISE GUIDELINES

This is an open, low-stress, no-fault environment. Varying viewpoints or differences of opinion are expected and are essential to the process and success of the training exercise. All

voices and points of view are to be equally considered.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this exercise is to provide both public and private sector participants with an opportunity to consider, test, and evaluate the implementation and execution of local/regional capabilities in the aftermath of a multi-day wildfire incident. Exercise players will utilize the National Incident Command System, local emergency responder command, control and coordination, critical decision making, notifications, and the integration of assets and resources. The role of public information strategies and coordination with public and private sector partners will also be discussed.

- As the exercise and scenario unfolds, you will be given time-advanced scenario injects and questions or topics to discuss related to the evolving situation. These injects will allow you to participate in a discussion concerning the issues raised. As a group, you will identify any questions that should be addressed at that point in the scenario.
- Please participate and contribute based on your knowledge of current plans, present capabilities, and in-place agreements only. You are wholly encouraged to make use of any training or “real world” experiences you possess.

- Decisions of the exercise are not precedent setting and may not reflect your agency’s final position on a given issue. This is an opportunity to discuss and present multiple options and possible solutions.

EXERCISE OBJECTIVES

Exercise objectives are focused upon improving understanding of response and recovery concepts, identifying problems or opportunities for improvement, and/or providing opportunity for discussions and communication amongst elected/appointed officials. The exercise will focus on the following Core Capabilities:

- ***Emergency Response to a wildfire incident.*** Delivery of a coordinated, prompt, reliable, appropriate, and actionable response to the emergency event.
- ***Testing the communications, public/private response protocols, mutual aid integration, and realities-based capabilities.*** Determine the nature of the response and recovery resources and capabilities, as they presently exist. Identify critical issues and potential solutions.
- ***Integrating the roles of elected/appointed officials with the Private Sector and Other Parties following an incident.*** Determine needs and expectations during and

following this event with critical infrastructure consequences.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BEGINNING THE EXERCISE

Each participant is requested to represent his/ her individual and/or agency roles in relation to the scenario. TTX play is to last approximately 90-minutes, followed immediately by a 30-minute “After Action Review”.

PARTICIPANTS

Players respond to the situation presented based on expert knowledge of both response/recovery procedures and insights derived from training. Players include but are not limited to: Municipal officials, Local, County, State and Federal agency partners, Public Health Sector, including area hospitals, Private sector partners, NGO’s, CERT members, Media members and interested parties.

Moderators support the group in developing responses to the situation during the discussion.

ASSUMPTIONS AND ARTIFICIALITIES

In any exercise, a number of assumptions and artificialities may be necessary to complete play in the time allotted. During this exercise, the following apply:

- Care has been taken to present a plausible scenario; events occur as they are presented. Participants are asked to “work” the scenario as presented and be accepting of the assumptions

and artificialities to help facilitate exercise play.

- There is no “hidden agenda”, nor are any responses to be deemed incorrect answers.
- All players act in their typical position/role and will have reviewed this information prior to the TTX.



EXERCISE SCENARIO

It is 1430, Friday, August 22nd, with clear skies and a temperature of 80 degrees. The relative humidity is around 30% and winds are moderate, SW<15mph. An unstable low-pressure system is coming in, and the forecast calls for the winds to increase and out of the NE, gusting to 40 mph; most of Central and Downeast Maine are in a severe drought and the daily fire danger rating for the area is “very high.” The National Weather Service has issued a “Red Flag Warning” for Washington County between noon and midnight. There is no precipitation in the forecast for at least a week.

The wildfire has been burning in the town of Northfield, off Route 192, near Smith Landing and Great Falls Road since early this morning. At 0930 hrs, an amateur pilot saw the smoke and estimated the size to be ten acres. Forest Ranger 4116 arrived on scene at 0945 and described the fire was burning in logging slash with occasional torching of softwoods. It was headed towards the Machias River

Public Reserved Lands, which is about eight miles away from Machias. Several local Fire Departments have responded to the fire and are doing initial attack and structure protection along Route 192.

Around 1630, the wind shifted and is now pushing the fire southeast towards Machias. The intensity of the fire has increased significantly, and it is burning parallel with Route 192 in Whitneyville. An MFS helicopter is on its way, but there are also other fires in the region and resources are stretched thin.

The wind is driving the fire and igniting slash and pockets of softwood trees, creating several crown fires. More firefighting resources have been called in but are delayed due to the heavy smoke and panicked residents in vehicles trying to leave the area. Other than the 50-foot-wide Marshfield Flats Road, the fire has a straight shot of dry, volatile forest to the Down East Community Hospital campus. By 1730 hrs, residents on Marshfield Flats Road can see elements of the fire and are preparing to evacuate. Lots of embers from trees are flying through the air, landing near structures and igniting small needles and leaves. Due to the heavy smoke and low water levels, the MFS helicopter is getting water for bucket drops from Hadley Lake to the northeast. The fire has jumped Great Brook and Canal Road and is threatening houses along Marshfield Flats Road. A 30’ wide dozer line is being created off the Pumpkin Ridge Road to try and create a firebreak to protect the hospital, which is about 1.5 miles further Southeast.

EXERCISE QUESTIONS:

Communication

- How will you be notified of the wildfire risk?
- How will you be notified of the messaging being provided to the public? What is the public’s expectation?
- How will you be notified of the actions to be taken? (shelter in place, evacuation, safe to return, etc.)
- Who are you responsible for notifying and updating? By what means (and back up) will you do so?

Response

- How do you balance managing the facility with patient care?
- What alternate sites do you have for operating services?
- How are records managed at alternate sites?

Recovery

- When will the situation for your organization return to normal? What is the timeline in the event of wildfire?
- How will your organization be made whole financially? What programs will provide financial relief? What documentation will be necessary?

AFTER ACTION REVIEW

Please share your immediate lessons learned.

EXERCISE POINTS OF CONTACT

Maine HCC Downeast Chapter

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.