

# Butler County EMA

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MONTHLY



### BUTLER COUNTY IMT RETURNS AFTER SUPPORTING HURRICANE MICHAEL RECOVERY EFFORTS

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#### Training Opportunities:

- November 2-4—G428 CERT Train-the-Trainer
- November 5-9—L388 Advanced PIO
- November 14-15—G108 Community Mass Care and Emergency Assistance
- December 3-5—ICS 300 Intermediate ICS
- December 4—OH202 Debris Management Workshop
- December 6-7—ICS 400 Advanced ICS

Information for registering for any of the above courses can be obtained on our website at [butlercountyohio.org/ema](http://butlercountyohio.org/ema)

#### Butler County EMA

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#### Butler County EMA Mission Statement

Coordinating people and resources to protect the lives and property within Butler County by working together to achieve one goal for Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery for Disasters and Emergencies

The Butler County Incident Management Team has returned home after a two week mission to Bay County Florida in the wake of the category 4 hurricane Michael.

The team, which consisted of 11 members from ten different agencies, was deployed October 10th and faced challenges right out of the gate. The team had to divert to Jacksonville due to the storm's projected path before ultimately heading to Panama City and Mexico Beach, two of the hardest hit areas.

According to Matt Haverkos, the devastation was catastrophic: "The way I describe it is like 1,000 tornadoes going through Butler County at the same time. We would literally drive for an hour and there was constant trees down, all the utilities were



The Butler County IMT poses for a photo with Bay County Sheriff Tommy Ford prior to departing Florida. The Butler County IMT worked with first responders from throughout the country to support Hurricane Michael relief efforts.



A church in Bay County after Hurricane Michael. Hurricane Michael made landfall in Mexico Beach, Florida as a strong Category 4 Hurricane. Wind gusts of up to 139 mph were recorded as the storm made landfall.

down, over 90 percent of the utilities were out."

Once they arrived, the team worked 16 hour shifts to coordinate assistance for the residents affected by the storm. This included assigning search and rescue teams, recon of the surrounding areas to find suitable locations for resource distribution warehouses and shelters, and then managing those shelters, volunteers, and donations.

The team worked with additional teams from Oregon, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Idaho, New York, Lee County Florida, Florida Forest Service, and the North East Florida Team.

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## BUTLER COUNTY IMT RETURNS AFTER SUPPORTING HURRICANE MICHAEL RECOVERY EFFORTS (CONT.)



A tire store is left in ruins after Hurricane Michael made landfall. Hurricane Michael impacted the Florida Panhandle and caused massive power and communications outages in the state.

Ross Township Chief Steve Miller, who served as Incident Commander said, "It was refreshing to see the collaboration amongst so many local agencies including the Bay County Sheriff's Office and other emergency services."

The team learned several lessons that they plan to bring back to Butler County in preparation of a potential disaster in our own area. During the deployment, the teams faced mul-

multiple days of connectivity and cell phone issues due to downed power lines, rendering some of their equipment unusable. "I would call it like a time warp when we went back to before cellphones," Deerfield Township Battalion Chief Doug Wehmeyer recalled.

The team intends to begin looking into establishing plans for when technology is not able to be utilized to its potential. In addition, they plan on looking

into restocking weather radios and preemptively stocking schools to become shelters in the time of need.

"Events such as Hurricane Michael provide us with an opportunity to learn which plans are effective and which plans need some modifications.," Director

Haverkos said. "Our team will look back at this mission and identify what changes we need to make to improve our emergency management program here at home and what we can do to ensure Butler County is a safer place to live, work and play." ■ For more information, go to the Butler County EMA website at <http://butlercountyohio.org/ema/>



Several homes destroyed as a result of flooding, winds and storm surges associated with Hurricane Michael. The Butler County IMT worked with local officials to assist these individuals with sheltering, mass care and mass feeding.



Sand and debris surround damaged homes after Hurricane Michael. Some areas in Florida received over five inches of additional rainfall as a result of Michael. In addition to property damages, Hurricane Michael has also been blamed for at least 60 deaths throughout the path of the storm. Additionally, over three million acres of timber, costing an estimated \$1.3 billion was also damaged and approximately \$1.25 million worth of insurance loss has been reported with the storm.