



2018 Virginia Tornado Exercise

Exercise Plan

March 20, 2018

PREFACE & HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

The 2018 Statewide Tornado Full Scale Exercise (FSE) is sponsored by the Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition (EVHC). This Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) was produced with input, advice, and assistance from the EVHC staff and follows the guidance set forth by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

The EVHC 2018 Statewide Tornado FSE is an unclassified exercise. This EXPLAN is identified For Official Use Only (FOUO) and should be handled as sensitive information that is not to be disclosed. Control of exercise information is based on public sensitivity regarding the nature of the exercise rather than actual exercise content. All exercise participants should use appropriate guidelines to ensure proper control of information within their areas of expertise and protect this material in accordance with current directives.

At a minimum, the attached materials will be disseminated on a need-to-know basis and, when unattended, will be stored in an area that offers sufficient protection against theft, compromise, inadvertent access, and unauthorized disclosure. Public release of exercise materials to third parties is at the discretion of the EVHC.

The EVHC 2018 Statewide Tornado EXPLAN provides exercise planners and evaluators with the information needed to conduct and evaluate the exercise. As such, this EXPLAN is intended for the exclusive use of exercise planners and evaluators. Players may view other materials that are necessary to their performance during the exercise.

For more information about the exercise, please consult the following points of contact:

EVHC Program Manager

Mr. Glenn McBride
Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition
1104 Madison Plaza
Chesapeake, VA 23320
Office 757.963.0632
E-mail: mcbride@vaems.org

Exercise Director

Ms. Judith A. Shuck
Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition
1104 Madison Plaza
Chesapeake, VA 23320
Office 757.963.0632
E-mail: jshuck@vaems.org

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	2018 Virginia Statewide Tornado Exercise
Exercise Date and Time	March 20, 2018 at 9:45 a.m.
Scope	This exercise targets each facility's response to a tornado warning and is planned last for approximately 1 hour at participating health care facilities in the eastern region of Virginia.
Mission Area(s)	Protection
HPP Core Capabilities	Capability 1: Foundation of Health Care and Medical Readiness
HPP Objective	Objective 4: Train and Prepare the Health Care and Medical Workforce
HPP Objective Related Activities	Activity 2: Educate and Train on Identified Preparedness and Response Gaps Activity 3: Plan and Conduct Coordinated Exercises with Health Care Coalition Members and Other Response Organizations Activity 5: Evaluate Exercises and Responses to Emergencies
Threat or Hazard	Tornado
Scenario	The Statewide Tornado Exercise is a yearly opportunity to prepare Virginians for tornado emergencies and to test public warning systems. At approximately 9:45 a.m., the National Weather Service will send a test tornado warning over NOAA Weather Radios. This test signal will sound a tone alert, show a test message or flash to indicate a message, simulating what people would hear or see during an actual tornado warning. Local radio stations, TV stations and cable outlets will also broadcast the test message via the Emergency Alert System.
Sponsor	Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Participating Organizations	A full list of participating EVHC member organizations is located in Appendix B.
Point of Contact	HMC Judith A. Shuck USN (Ret.), AS, CHEC-II, Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition, 1104 Madison Plaza, Chesapeake, VA 23320, (757) 963-0632

GENERAL INFORMATION

What is a Tornado?

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground with whirling winds that can reach 300 miles per hour and is often—although not always—visible as a funnel cloud. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long. Lightning and hail are common in thunderstorms that produce tornadoes. Tornadoes cause extensive damage to structures and disrupt transportation, power, water, gas, communications, and other services in its direct path and in neighboring areas. Related thunderstorms can cause heavy rains, flash flooding, and hail. They may also be referred to as twisters or cyclones.

Waterspouts are similar to tornados and may also occur. Waterspouts fall into two categories: fair weather waterspouts and tornadic waterspouts. Tornadic waterspouts are tornadoes that form over water, or move from land to water. They have the same characteristics as a land tornado. They are associated with severe thunderstorms, and are often accompanied by high winds and seas, large hail, and frequent dangerous lightning. If a waterspout moves onshore, the National Weather Service issues a tornado warning, as some of them can cause significant damage and injuries to people. Typically, fair weather waterspouts dissipate rapidly when they make landfall, and rarely penetrate far inland.

Tornados in Virginia – The Threat

Nationally, the U.S. averages more than 800 tornadoes per year. Tornadoes can strike anywhere in the U.S., during any month and any time of day. Virginia has seen as few as one tornado in a year (1982) to as many as 84 tornadoes (2004).

The most recent tornado that occurring in southeastern Virginia occurred on February 24, 2016. An EF1 tornado struck the town of Waverly, Virginia, killing three people in a mobile home, including a two-year old child. This was the first deadly tornado to affect Virginia during the month of February since 1950. A separate EF3 tornado occurred later that night near the Tappahannock, destroying multiple homes along its path. About 35,000 people in Virginia lost power.

Tornado Watch vs. Tornado Warning

A Tornado watch is issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Storm Prediction Center meteorologists who watch the weather 24 hours per day across the entire United States for weather conditions that are favorable for tornadoes. A watch can cover parts of a state or several states. A tornado watch means that tornadoes are possible. When there is a watch, move to be near enough to a shelter or sturdy building to be able to get there quickly in a few minutes if there is a warning or if you see signs of a tornado approaching. Remain alert for approaching storms. Watch the sky and stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television to know when warnings are issued or the watch is lifted.

A Tornado warning is issued by your local NOAA National Weather Service Forecast Office meteorologists who watch the weather 24 hours per day over a designated area. This means a tornado has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar and there is a serious threat to life and property to those in the path of the tornado. A warning can cover parts of counties or several counties in the path of danger. A warning means that you should act immediately to find safe shelter!

EXERCISE OBJECTIVES

The *2017-2022 Health Care Preparedness and Response Capabilities, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (November 2016)* outlines the high-level objectives that the nation’s health care delivery system, including Health Care Coalitions and individual health care organizations, should undertake to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. The objectives for this exercise are linked to the core capabilities, objectives, and activities described in the exercise overview.

EXERCISE OBJECTIVES	
1.	Demonstrate the ability of participating healthcare facilities to receive a tornado warning from the National Weather Service in real time.
2.	Demonstrate the ability to notify all facility staff, patients or residents, volunteers and visitors of the tornado warning in real time using the facility’s public announcing system or mass notification system as outlined in the facility’s emergency plan.
3.	Demonstrate the ability of facility’s staff and volunteers to respond to a tornado warning in accordance with the facility’s emergency plan.
4.	Demonstrate the ability of the designated facility staff member to log into the Virginia Healthcare Alerting and Status System.
5.	Demonstrate the ability of the designated facility staff member to update the appropriate facility status board in the Virginia Healthcare Alerting and Status System. <i>(This objective applies to hospitals, long term care facilities and dialysis centers only.)</i>
6.	Demonstrate the ability of the designated facility staff member make an entry to the event log in the Virginia Healthcare Alerting and Status System.

CONDITIONS OF EXERCISE PARTICIPATION

By registering to participate in this exercise healthcare organizations agree to the following conditions:

1. Healthcare organizations should be physically located the eastern region of Virginia.
2. All participating healthcare facilities/organization MUST preregister to participate in this exercise at: https://2018_evhc_tornex.eventbrite.com
3. Participating healthcare organizations agree to conduct the exercise as outlined in this document and submit an exercise evaluation to the EVHC as outlined in this document.
4. Complete their own facility specific evaluation.
5. Create their own facility specific After Action Report and Improvement Plan based on the evaluation of this exercise.

EXERCISE CONDUCT

Exercise Date and Time

Each participating health care facility will begin their respective tornado exercise in real time with the tornado warning issued by the National Weather Service at 9:45 a.m. on Tuesday, March 20, 2018. The exercise is not expected to exceed one hour in length, including the Hot Wash.

Exercise Tasks

The degree to which each health care facility activates their respective Emergency Plan is up to each facility. However, your facility/organization should, as a minimum, perform the following tasks:

1. Use the Appendix B: Exercise Evaluation Guide (EEG) to evaluate the exercise. Document the performance elements that will be included in the regional evaluation.
2. Document when and by what communications method the tornado warning was received from the National Weather Service.
3. Announce the tornado exercise over the facility's announcing system.
4. Ask individual employees to verbally state or perform their duties during a tornado warning as stated in the facility's Emergency Plan and document their performance.
5. Log into the Virginia Healthcare Alerting and Status System (VHASS).

6. In VHASS, make an entry in the 2018 Tornado Exercise Event Log during the exercise, but no later than, Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 10:45 a.m.
7. ***For Hospitals, Long Term Care Facilities and Dialysis Centers Only:*** Update the respective status board for your type of facility in VHASS during the exercise, but no later than, Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 10:45 a.m.
8. Conduct a Hot Wash (debriefing) with exercise participants upon the conclusion of exercise play. Allow participants to discuss strengths and areas for improvement identified during the exercise. Evaluators may seek clarification regarding player actions and decision-making processes. All participants may attend; however, observers are not encouraged to attend the Hot Wash. The Hot Wash should not exceed 30 minutes.
9. Conduct an evaluator debriefing immediately following the exercise. During this debriefing, evaluators provide an overview of they observed in their functional areas during the exercise and discuss identified strengths and areas for improvement.
10. The lead evaluator must submit your facility's/organization's evaluation of the exercise on-line, no later than Friday, March 24, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. The exercise evaluation is located at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018TornEx>.
11. Document your individual facility's performance for the purpose of meeting their respective accreditation and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Emergency Preparedness Standards.

Exercise Assumptions and Safety

In any exercise, assumptions and artificialities may be necessary to complete play in the time allotted and/or account for logistical limitations. Exercise participants should accept that assumptions and artificialities are inherent in any exercise, and should not allow these considerations to negatively impact their participation.

Assumptions

Assumptions constitute the implied factual foundation for the exercise and, as such, are assumed to be present before the exercise starts. The following assumptions apply to this exercise:

- The exercise is conducted in a no-fault learning environment wherein capabilities, plans, systems, and processes will be evaluated.
- The exercise scenario is plausible, and events occur as they are presented.
- Exercise simulation contains sufficient detail to allow players to react to information and situations as they are presented as if the simulated incident were real.
- Participating health care facilities/organizations may need to balance exercise play with real-world patient care emergencies. Real-world emergencies take priority.

Safety

During the exercise resident/patient, staff, volunteers and visitor safety takes priority over exercise events.

EXERCISE EVALUATION

Exercise Evaluation Guides

Each facility should designate one or more individuals to formally evaluate the exercise. Annex B provides an Exercise Evaluation Guide (EEG) to help evaluators document their observations and evaluate the exercise. Ultimately staff performance should be measured against the staff actions required by pertinent annex/section of each facility's respective Emergency Plan. Therefore, facilities may also design their own EEG using their Emergency Plan (EP) as a guide. The EEGs, coupled with Participant Feedback Forms and Hot Wash notes, are used to evaluate the exercise and compile the After-Action Report (AAR).

POST-EXERCISE ACTIVITIES

Debriefings

Post-Exercise debriefings aim to collect sufficient relevant data to support effective evaluation and improvement planning.

Hot Wash

At the conclusion of exercise play, facilitate a Hot Wash to allow players to discuss strengths and areas for improvement, and evaluators to seek clarification regarding player actions and decision-making processes. All participants may attend; however, observers are not encouraged to attend the meeting. The Hot Wash should not exceed 30 minutes.

Evaluator Debriefing

Evaluators must attend the evaluator debriefing immediately following the exercise. During this debriefing, controllers and evaluators provide an overview of their observed functional areas and discuss strengths and areas for improvement identified during the exercise.

Participant Feedback Forms

Participating healthcare facilities may want to provide Participant Feedback Forms to provide staff members with the opportunity to comment candidly on exercise activities and design. Participant Feedback Forms should be collected at the conclusion of the Hot Wash.

AFTER ACTION REPORT & IMPROVEMENT PLAN

After-Action Report

The AAR summarizes key information related to evaluation. The AAR primarily focuses on the analysis of core capabilities, including capability performance, strengths, and areas for improvement. AARs also include basic exercise information, including the exercise name, type of exercise, date, location, participating organizations, mission area(s), specific threat or hazard, a brief scenario description, and the name of the exercise sponsor and POC. Each participating healthcare organization should develop an AAR for their respective facility based on the results of the exercise. The EVHC will use the evaluations submitted on-line to compile a regional AAR.

Improvement Plan

Improvement planning is the process by which the observations recorded in the AAR are resolved through development of concrete corrective actions, which are prioritized and tracked as a part of a continuous corrective action program. The corrective actions are listed in the Improvement Plan (IP). The IP identifies specific corrective actions, assigns them to responsible parties, and establishes target dates for their completion. It is discussed and validated during the AAM. Each participating healthcare organization should develop an IP for their respective facility based on the results of the exercise. The EVHC will compile a regional IP.

After-Action Meeting

The After-Action Meeting (AAM) is a meeting held among decision- and policy-makers from the exercising organizations, as well as the Lead Evaluator and members of the Exercise Planning Team, to debrief the exercise and to review and refine the draft AAR and Improvement Plan (IP). The AAM should be an interactive session, providing attendees the opportunity to discuss and validate the observations and corrective actions in the draft AAR/IP. Exercise participants will be notified of the AAM via an e-mail message from EventBrite.

APPENDIX A: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition healthcare facilities/organizations must preregister to participate in this exercise at https://2018_evhc_tornex.eventbrite.com

Participating Organizations
Federal
National Weather Service
State
Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Regional
Eastern Regional Healthcare Coordinating Center (RHCC)
Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition
Acute Care Hospitals
Children’s Hospital of the King’s Daughters, Norfolk
Rappahannock General Hospital, Kilmarnock
Intermediate Care Facilities
Colby Way ICF, Virginia Beach
Indian River ICF, Virginia Beach
Kentucky Ave ICF, Virginia Beach
West Neck ICF, Virginia Beach
Long Term Care Facilities
Autumn Care of Chesapeake, Chesapeake
Beacon Shores Nursing & Rehabilitation, Virginia Beach
Bon Secours Surgery Center at Virginia Beach, Virginia Beach
Envoy of Williamsburg, Williamsburg
HRCHC, Portsmouth
Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury, Irvington
Signature HealthCARE of Norfolk, Norfolk
Southeastern Virginia Training Center, Chesapeake
St Francis Nursing Center, Newport News
The Orchard, Warsaw
Westminster-Canterbury on Chesapeake Bay, Virginia Beach

APPENDIX B: EXERCISE EVALUATION GUIDE (EEG)

1. Please enter your facility / organization information here:

Facility/Organization Name:

Facility CMS Number:

Evaluator's Name:

Evaluator's Phone Number:

*2. Did your facility receive an audible National Weather Service tornado warning announcement?

- No
- Yes
- Not Certain

*3. How did your facility receive the National Weather Service tornado warning message. (Check all that apply.)

- Weather radio
- Other radio
- Television
- Smartphone
- On-line via Computer (PC, Laptop or Tablet)
- Heard about it from a friend/coworker
- Other

Other (please specify)

*4. Was the tornado warning communicated to everyone in the via a facility wide announcing system?

- No
- Yes
- Unknown

*5. Did facility staff indicate that they heard/received the tornado warning announcement?

- No
- Yes
- Some staff members received the announcement, some did not.
- Unknown

*6. Did the staff members, through interviews or observed behavior, demonstrate that they understood the actions they are required to take in response to the tornado warning announcement?

- No
- Yes
- Some staff members did, some did not.

*7. Did staff successfully log into the Virginia Healthcare Alerting & Status System (VHASS)?

- No
- Yes

*8. Did staff successfully make an entry in the 2018 Tornado Exercise Event Board in the Virginia Healthcare Alerting & Status System (VHASS)?

- No
- Yes

*9. FOR LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES & DIALYSIS CENTERS ONLY: Did staff successfully update the appropriate facility status board in the Virginia Healthcare Alerting & Status System (VHASS)?

- No
- Yes

*10. Does your facility's Emergency Plan have a tornado or severe weather annex or section that describes the actions staff must take to protect themselves, residents, visitors & volunteers, during a tornado warning?

- No
- Yes
- Don't Know

*11. Describe three strengths identified in the drill:

Strength 1

Strength 2

Strength 3

*12. Describe three areas for improvement identified in the drill:

Area for Improvement 1

Area for Improvement 2

Area for Improvement 3

13. What can the EVHC do to help you improve the emergency preparedness of your facility?

Item 1:

Item 2:

Item 3:

APPENDIX C: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
AAM	After Action Meeting
AAR	After Action Report
ASPR	Assistant Secretary of Preparedness and Response
CMS	Centers for Medicaid and Medicare
EEG	Exercise Evaluation Guide
EP	Emergency Plan
ESF	Emergency Support Function
EVHC	Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition
FOUO	For Official Use Only
HCC	Health Care Coalition
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HICS	Healthcare Incident Command System
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
IP	Improvement Plan
RHCC	Regional Healthcare Coordinating Center
VDH	Virginia Department of Health
VHASS	Virginia Healthcare Alerting and Status System
VHHA	Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association