



Back on Track: HazMat Railway Incident

Freeborn County Multi-Jurisdictional Tabletop Exercise

Albert Lea National Guard Armory – Albert Lea, MN

December 4, 2018



City of Alden



City of Albert Lea



City of Clarks Grove



City of Glenville

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)

After Action Report/Improvement Plan

December 18, 2018



HUNDRIESER
CONSULTING LLC

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CONTENTS

Handling Instructions	3
Executive Summary	4
Section 1: Exercise Overview	6
Section 2: Exercise Design Summary	9
Section 3: Community Observations	15
3.1 Section Overview	15
3.2 City of Alden.....	15
3.3 City of Albert Lea.....	19
3.4 City of Clarks Grove.....	23
3.5 City of Glenville.....	26
3.6 Whole-Group Observations.....	30
Section 4: Capability Performance Ratings	32
Section 5: Conclusion	33
Appendices:	
Appendix A: Improvement Plan	34
Appendix B: List of Participants	37
Appendix C: Exercise Schedule	40
Appendix D: Acronyms	41
Appendix E: Local Incident Area Maps	42

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

1. The title of this document is the “Freeborn County Back on Track: HazMat Railway Incident Multi-Jurisdictional Tabletop Exercise After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP).”
2. This report was developed by Exercise Director Bonnie Hundrieser, Hundrieser Consulting LLC, with input from Table Facilitators, Observers, design team members and exercise participants.
3. Information gathered in in this AAR/IP is For Official Use Only (FOUO) and should be handled as sensitive information not to be disclosed. This document should be safeguarded, handled, transmitted and stored in accordance with appropriate security directives.
4. This document is the property of the Freeborn County Sheriff’s Office. For more information about the exercise, please contact the following Point of Contact:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Freeborn County “Back on Track” Multi-Jurisdictional Tabletop Exercise was hosted by Freeborn County Emergency Management and was held on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Albert Lea National Guard Armory in Albert Lea, MN. The exercise was made possible by funding from the State of Minnesota’s Railroad and Pipeline Safety Account.

The purpose of the exercise was to test and evaluate the capabilities of **Public Information and Warning, Operational Coordination, Mass Care Services, Critical Transportation and Health and Social Services** by engaging City/County Emergency Managers, City/County Officials and Staff and other key supporting response agencies and organizations from the State, National and regional level in discussion of a simulated hazardous materials train derailment.

This tabletop exercise (TTX) and After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) were designed to meet U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) standards. In planning for the exercise, the exercise planning team worked to develop overarching objectives for each of the capability areas that would support respective critical tasks to evaluate during the exercise. The exercise objectives were as follows:

- **Public Information and Warning:** Players will **1)** Demonstrate understanding of what tools and methods are available to reach all segments of the population with emergency warning and information; and **2)** Demonstrate the ability to communicate and coordinate with all rail and other stakeholders to sustain clear and consistent information throughout the duration of the incident.
- **Operational Coordination:** Players will **1)** Demonstrate the ability to communicate and coordinate with rail and other key stakeholders at all levels in Unified Command and EOC Operations; and **2)** Demonstrate an understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Emergency Manager, rail, and other stakeholders during a railway incident.
- **Mass Care Services:** Players will demonstrate the ability to determine the public health/social services, medical, mental/behavioral health needs of the affected population, and coordinate with partner agencies to obtain and deliver required resources to meet the needs of survivors and responders.
- **Critical Transportation:** Players will evaluate their ability to **1)** Effectively evacuate people and animals out of the affected area and; **2)** Communicate and coordinate with key agencies during evacuation to support response priority objectives.
- **Health and Social Services:** Players will demonstrate the ability to identify and coordinate key public health/social service partners and understand when to engage those partners, and how.

The purpose of this report is to analyze outcomes of the exercise discussion, emphasize strengths to be maintained and enhanced, identify potential areas for improvement, and support development of corrective actions.

Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- Players displayed a strong understanding of the resources and capabilities that exist in their communities to manage an emergency at the local level, as well as how to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions and Freeborn County for assistance when needed.
- Players demonstrated that they have gained a wealth of experience from recent major events that has strengthened their understanding of emergency management and response partnerships.
- Players showed they were familiar with Freeborn County’s CodeRed system as well as their own means for local outreach (i.e. social media).
- Players displayed good understanding of how communication and coordination would occur between local Emergency Managers and responders, Freeborn County and the railway company.
- Players gained greater understanding of the role and support that the Railway Company, State and National agencies can provide in the event of hazardous materials train derailment.

Areas for Improvement

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement were identified. The primary, overarching areas for improvement identified are as follows:

- There is a need to improve and broaden local capabilities for public emergency notification, including use of social media, CodeRed and IPAWS.
- It would be beneficial for local elected officials to receive training on the roles and responsibilities of local government during emergencies or disasters, and the resources available to them. This is especially important with the turnover of local city officials either through unanticipated succession or new elections.
- Planning and exercising for key emergency functions such as community evacuation and mass care sheltering should be continued in concert with Freeborn County Emergency Management and Public Health, neighboring jurisdictions, the American Red Cross, as well as key agencies and organizations that would play a role in response efforts.

Based on player evaluations, evaluator discussion and hot wash feedback, participants expressed they felt that the tabletop exercise was a valuable opportunity to address a high-priority hazard and connect with other city and county Emergency Managers and elected officials, as well as to engage with Railroad and other key State and National agency partners in emergency management. Participants also expressed they found this to be a valuable training experience and would encourage similar exercises be held at the local or regional level again in the future.

SECTION 1: EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Details

Exercise Name:	Freeborn County “Back on Track: HazMat Railway Incident”
Type of Exercise:	Multi-Jurisdictional Tabletop Exercise
Exercise Date:	Tuesday, December 4, 2018
Duration:	11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Location:	Albert Lea National Guard Armory - Albert Lea, MN
Sponsor:	Freeborn County Emergency Management
Mission:	Response and Recovery
Capabilities:	Public Information and Warning, Operational Coordination, Mass Care Services, Critical Transportation, Health and Social Services
Scenario Type:	A hazardous materials railway incident has occurred in the cities of Alden, Albert Lea, Clarks Grove and Glenville , resulting in serious risk to life safety and the need for evacuation. Emergency response and recovery efforts will require extensive communication and coordination with rail and other key stakeholders. (<i>*Incidents are presented as independent, not concurrent events</i>).

Exercise Planning Team

- Bonnie Hundrieser, Hundrieser Consulting LLC (Exercise Director)
- Rich Hall, Freeborn County Sheriff’s Office
- Jody Larson, Freeborn County Sheriff’s Office
- Jeff Laskowske, Albert Lea Fire Department
- Dennis Glassel, Albert Lea Fire Department
- Darren Hanson, Albert Lea Police Department
- Jacob Stockwell, Albert Lea Police Department
- Anita Majerus, Freeborn County Public Health
- Jim Stockinger, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Michael Peterson, MN Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Table Facilitators

1. Joel McColl, Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director, City of Savage, MN
2. Kurt Fondrick, Captain, Emergency Manager, and Intelligence Analyst, Mdewakanton Sioux Public Safety
3. Seth Hansen, Director of Emergency Management, Wright County Sheriff’s Office
4. Ron Holbeck, Deputy Emergency Management Director, Scott County Emergency Management

Table Observers

1. Blain Johnson, Emergency Management Director, Lac qui Parle County
2. Jennifer Lindberg, Exercise & Training Officer, Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
3. Michael Peterson, MN HSEM Region 1 Regional Program Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
4. Scott Reiten, HSEM Region 1 Emergency Management Consultant, Cornerstone Consulting Services LLC

Floating Observers/Subject Matter Experts (SME's)

1. Rich Hall, Freeborn County Emergency Management Director
2. Kurt Freitag, Freeborn County Sheriff
3. Joe Kelly, State Director, Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
4. Doreen Fier-Tucker, Emergency Management Unit Supervisor, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
5. Geri Maki, Southeast Region Public Health Preparedness Consultant, Minnesota Department of Health
6. Todd Krause, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service
7. John Dooley, Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) Manager, Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Emergency Communications Network

Participating Organizations

1. Albert Lea Area Schools
2. Alden-Conger Public School
3. American Red Cross
4. Canadian National Railway
5. Canadian Pacific Railway
6. Central Farm Service
7. City of Alden
8. City of Albert Lea
9. City of Clarks Grove
10. City of Glenville
11. City of Wells (Faribault County)
12. Dodge County Emergency Management
13. Faribault County Emergency Management
14. Fillmore County Emergency Management
15. Freeborn County (Sheriff's Office & Other Depts.)
16. Freeborn-Mower Coop
17. Glenville-Emmons Schools
18. Mayo Clinic (Rochester)
19. Mayo Clinic Hospital & Clinic (Albert Lea)
20. Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Emergency Communication Networks
21. Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
22. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
23. Minnesota Department of Health
24. Mower County Emergency Management

25. National Weather Service
26. POET Biorefining
27. Rice County Emergency Management
28. Union Pacific Railroad
29. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region V
30. Waseca County Emergency Management
31. Worth County, Iowa Emergency Management

Total Number of Participants (97)

- Players: 82
- Table Facilitators: 4
- Table Observers: 4
- Floating Observer/SME’s: 7

Please see *Appendix B: List of Participants* for a comprehensive list of individual participants.

SECTION 2: EXERCISE DESIGN SUMMARY

2.1 Exercise Purpose and Design

The “Back on Track” tabletop exercise was developed to engage County and City personnel and departments as well as other key State, National and regional agency partners in discussion of critical functions and tasks to execute following a hypothetical hazardous materials railway incident occurring along the rail lines that run through Freeborn County. The exercise was designed to help to validate plans and procedures, test capabilities and identify strengths and gaps for coordinating response and recovery activities.

The selection of a hazardous materials train derailment scenario focusing on local-level response and recovery issues is a plausible incident that has already affected and could affect many more communities across the State in the future. Railway safety is a top threat/hazard identified for Freeborn County. Rail runs through the heart of Freeborn County, both from north to south as well as from east to west. On a daily basis, all sorts of commodities are transported by rail through the county, including hazardous materials. Through effective planning, training and exercising, Freeborn County is working to address railway safety and the building of strong partnerships with key State, National and regional agencies, nongovernmental organizations and neighboring county jurisdictions.

2.2 Exercise Capabilities, Objectives, and Activities

Capabilities-based planning allows for exercise planning teams to develop exercise objectives and observe exercise outcomes through a framework of specific action items that were derived from identified capabilities for Emergency Management. Following are the Core Capabilities and associated objectives developed for this exercise.

Core Capability: Public Information and Warning

Objectives: Players will 1) Demonstrate understanding of what tools and methods are available to reach all segments of the population with emergency warning and information; and 2) Demonstrate the ability to communicate and coordinate with all rail and other stakeholders to sustain clear and consistent information throughout the duration of the incident.

Core Capability: Operational Coordination

Objectives: Players will 1) Demonstrate the ability to communicate and coordinate with rail and other key stakeholders at all levels in Unified Command and EOC Operations; and 2) Demonstrate an understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Emergency Manager, rail and other stakeholders during a railway incident.

Core Capability: Mass Care Services

Objective: Players will demonstrate the ability to determine the public health/social services, medical, mental/behavioral health needs of the affected population, and coordinate with partner agencies to obtain and deliver required resources to meet the needs of survivors and responders.

Core Capability: Critical Transportation

Objectives: Players will evaluate their ability to 1) Effectively evacuate people and animals out of the affected area and; 2) Communicate and coordinate with key agencies during evacuation to support response priority objectives.

Core Capability: Health and Social Services:

Objective: Players will demonstrate the ability to identify and coordinate key public health/social service partners and understand when to engage those partners, and how.

2.3 Exercise Structure

This tabletop exercise was facilitated by a main moderator (Exercise Director) to run the exercise, maintaining control of the discussion and time. Participants were split into 4 discussion tables broken out by the four city jurisdictions of focus in the exercise:

- **Table 1: City of Alden**
- **Table 2: City of Albert Lea**
- **Table 3: City of Clarks Grove**
- **Table 4: City of Glenville**

Each discussion table was staffed by a designated Table Facilitator that was tasked with guiding participants through the discussion questions presented for each module. Each table also included one designated Observer who was present to help take down notes and document observation to support evaluation of exercise objectives.

Participants engaged in three separate modules of scenario briefings and group discussions involving the railway incident and issues that posed threat to public safety. Modules consisted of the following:

- Module 1: Incident Event & Immediate Response**
- Module 2: Establishing Coordinated Response & Communication**
- Module 3: Incident De-escalation & Transition to Recovery**

At the beginning of each module, the Exercise Director briefed participants on the current scenario and key issues of focus for discussion. After each scenario briefing, **Table Facilitators** used discussion question handouts and local-area incident maps to guide participants through meaningful dialogue on the procedures, resources, and capabilities that would be necessary to address the key issues presented in each module. (See Section 2.4 – Exercise Content: Modules 1-3). Designated **Observers** at each table helped to take notes during discussion as well as assisted in asking relevant follow-up questions or providing information to players as appropriate. **Floating Observers** (Freeborn County, State and National agency Subject Matter Experts) visited each table throughout each module of the exercise, observing discussion and participating as they deemed appropriate as key issues were addressed. After an allotted amount of time for group discussion, the Exercise Director facilitated a report out session from each table on key discussion highlights for that module. Following Module 3 a Hot Wash (exercise debrief) was held, first by individual discussion tables and next as a whole group of exercise players.

2.4 Exercise Content: Modules 1 - 3

The scenarios provided in Modules 1-3 presented escalating and compounding issues for public safety and emergency management due to the hazardous materials train derailment.

Following are the scenarios, key issues and discussion questions presented in Modules 1 – 3 of the Freeborn County “Back on Track” tabletop exercise. This information is provided as documentation of

exercise content and also provides background to the exercise observations, capability assessments, and recommended improvement actions provided in **Section 3 and Section 4** of this report.

Module 1 Scenario: Incident Event & Immediate Response

It is Friday, May 10, 2019, the weekend of the 72nd Annual MN Governor’s Fishing Opener in Albert Lea, and traffic is busy across Freeborn County with locals and visitors from across the state gearing up for a weekend of fishing. It’s a blustery day and the forecast calls for occasional showers and strong shifting winds until the storm system moves out early on Saturday.

At 1:00 p.m. 9-1-1 Dispatch receives a flood of calls by people that have witnessed a unit train of black tank cars hitting a loaded cement truck and sending cars off the tracks in your community. Panicked callers report seeing an explosion with a massive fire and black smoke billowing into the air. Calls continue to rapidly come in with people asking what has happened and what they should do.

The train derailment has occurred within a dense to semi-populated area within your jurisdiction, which includes a mix of businesses, residential areas, schools, day care facilities, senior living facilities, fire stations and government centers.

Within minutes, your city’s fire department is first on-scene to assess the conditions of the incident. Initial reports to Dispatch inform that a train hauling tank cars has derailed, with 12 rail cars piled up off the track. 2 tank cars are engulfed in flames and another 4 tank cars are breeched and pouring volumes of liquid product onto the ground. At this time it is not known exactly what product the train was hauling.

Derailed of the train has mangled the main line, blocking key road crossings for over a mile and snarling traffic. Transformers were also blown and power lines have fallen, resulting in localized power outages throughout the area. As the flames and smoke rise high into the air, people driving by are starting to pull over on the side of the road to take pictures and live-stream video of the accident to post on social media.

Module 1 Key Issues:

- 1. A train derailment has occurred within the community.**
- 2. Public health and safety are at risk due an un-known product release (fire/spill).**
- 3. Key transportation routes have been blocked and traffic is an issue.**
- 4. Power outages have occurred due to power failure.**

Module 1 Discussion Questions:

1. You have just been notified of this incident. With the information you have, and with the job duties you hold, what would be your immediate role and responsibilities?
2. At this time, who will you be communicating with, and how? (Internally/Externally?) What information do you need?
3. How is public information and warning handled during this early stage of the incident? With the limited information that you have, what will be conveyed, and how? By who?
4. What resources would you anticipate needing? Do you have them? If not, how would they be obtained?

Module 2 Scenario: Establishing Coordinated Response & Communication

It is now 3:00 p.m. Friday, 2 hours since the time of the incident. Neighboring municipal fire departments have joined on-scene and are assisting with cooling nearby structures and unaffected rail cars. Law enforcement has established perimeter security and the Regional HazMat Team and Railway HazMat Team have also just arrived.

*It is verified that the rail cars were hauling **Ethanol**, a dangerous chemical that is highly flammable and dangerous to public safety and the environment when released into the air, ground, or water. Each of the single-tank cars has a capacity of 30,000 – 34,000 gallons each. It's determined the best course of action is to let the fuel burn off and protect against the failure of additional rail cars. This may take up to 24-hours or more until the fuel is consumed. The release of the estimated 60,000 gallon spill is a major concern, as ethanol is a highly-soluble contaminate in surface and ground water. However, no measures can be taken to stop the release of ethanol from the rail cars at this time due to the raging fire.*

The HazMat Team recommends that a mandatory evacuation order be issued immediately for all businesses, residents and other facilities that are within a half-mile of the incident in all directions. Due to the shifting winds, an additional advisory is recommended for voluntary evacuation or to shelter-in-place for those within an additional half-mile zone, especially for children, the elderly, or those with respiratory disorders. It is expected that these safety measures may be in place for up to the next 24-hours (Saturday afternoon), based on the ability to manage the incident and assess the environmental health and safety risks to the community before returning.

A multitude of cascading issues quickly builds during this time as news of the incident spreads. Pictures of the derailment and HazMat teams in protective gear have circulated through social media with rumors of people dying, and local media teams have arrived to the community seeking information updates, eye-witness interviews and footage of the accident. The local hospital/clinic has started to report that they are receiving a surge of people arriving with headaches, eye and respiratory system irritation. Anxious parents are calling the elementary and high schools to learn about the relocation of their students, which is within the evacuation area. An assisted living facility is also calling 9-1-1 for help with transport of the elderly and disabled. Key transportation routes in the city have been closed for safety detours, and traffic is still backing up with determined travelers heading out for the fishing opener weekend.

Module 2 Key Issues:

- 1. An ethanol release has occurred with air and ground contamination.**
- 2. A mandatory evacuation order and shelter-in-place advisory have been recommended.**
- 3. The news media has arrived and are seeking information, and rumors are starting to build.**
- 4. The hospital/clinic is starting to experience medical surge with those affected.**
- 5. Traffic control is an issue for managing transportation and public safety.**
- 6. Additional evacuation efforts are in need for local schools and a senior care facility.**

Note: During Module 2, **Local Area Incident Maps** were distributed to be used during the discussion period. Please see *Appendix E: Local Area Incident Area Maps* for detail of local impact area, including affected critical infrastructure and population within a ½ mile evacuation zone buffer zone.

Module 2 Discussion Questions:

1. What critical facilities and infrastructure within your community are impacted by the incident? (i.e., City Hall, Fire/Police, Hospitals, sewers, water supply, electrical, transportation). What issues would result, and how would they be addressed?
2. What does on-scene Incident Command look like right now? (Where is it located, and who is involved?) Would an Emergency Operations Center be activated? (If yes – where, and why? Who needs to be there?)
3. How is emergency information being delivered to the public? Are there any issues in reaching all who are affected? How would they be addressed?
4. How will the evacuation orders/advisories for your community be addressed? What are the needs of the affected population? What resources do you have/do you need? Where will those resources come from and how do you request them?
5. How would response to the incident be coordinated with the Railway Company? Who is involved? What role would they play? What information or resources can they provide?
6. Who is responsible to work with the Media? How (and where) will this be done? How will rumors be monitored and controlled?
7. With the responsibilities that you hold, what are your top priorities as you look ahead to the next 24 hours?

Module 3 Scenario: Incident De-escalation & Transition to Recovery

It is now 3:00 p.m. Saturday, 24-hours since the evacuation order was issued. Incident Command reports that the ethanol fire and spill have been brought under control and that the evacuation and shelter-in-place orders can be lifted. The Railway Company is working to remove the derailed rail cars and repair the broken rail to resume train traffic. Traffic barricades are expected to be in place with road closures and detoured traffic for at least 3 to 5 more days.

As firefighters and the HazMat teams have brought the fire and spill under control, attention now turns to efforts to recover the remaining ethanol and mitigate the impacts for the volumes of runoff water and ethanol released to the soil and/or surface waters. The migration of spilled ethanol is of extreme concern, due to possible groundwater contamination and impacts to surface water, as well as methane generation. Methane is non-toxic, yet it is extremely flammable and may migrate from the site and form explosive mixtures with air. Methane is also an asphyxiant if the oxygen concentration is reduced to low levels.

HazMat personnel and state agency experts recommend that specific health precautions be conveyed to the public and kept in place for as long as necessary, particularly those that live or work in close proximity to the incident area. Areas of concern to be addressed include the city’s drinking water system, impacted water bodies, as well as vapor migration to low-lying or confined areas such as the city’s sewer/stormwater system and basements.

It is expected that an environmental assessment will need to be conducted over the coming weeks in order to monitor conditions and mitigate against the risks to public health and safety.

Module 3 Key Issues:

1. **Evacuation/Shelter-in-Place orders have been lifted and must be conveyed to the public.**
2. **Road closures will continue to be in place for 3-5 days.**
3. **Environmental response measures are underway to contain/recover spilled product.**
4. **Environmental & public health risks exist due to the impacts of spilled methane on ground and surface water, as well as generation of methane in low-lying areas. On-going health precautions must be conveyed to the public.**

Module 3 Discussion Questions:

1. With the information you have at this time, and with the job duties that you hold, what would be your primary concerns and responsibilities?
2. What specific health precautions must be conveyed to the public? What challenges may exist in the extended public outreach that must be conducted? How will they be addressed?
3. What plans or resources would you have at your disposal to assist with the issues at hand? Is there anything you recognize as a gap or deficiency? If so, how will you address it?
4. Who are the key personnel you would be communicating with to help with the environmental and public health issues happening at this time? (City/County/State/Other?) What is their role, and what information or resources can they bring to the recovery effort?

2.5 Exercise Evaluation

Evaluation of players meeting of objectives for the exercise was conducted in three ways:

1. **Observations from Table Facilitators & Observers:** Following completion of the exercise the team of Table Facilitators, Observers/Subject Matter Experts (SME’s) provided their written observations and assessments on each community’s areas of strengths and areas for improvement noted during the exercise.
2. **Hot Wash:** Immediately following the tabletop exercise, a “Hot Wash” exercise debrief was conducted with all players engaged in the exercise. Questions included:
 - What were 3 areas of strength revealed during the exercise discussions?
 - What were 3 areas of improvement revealed during the exercise discussions?
 - How may some of these areas of improvement be addressed?
3. **Participant Feedback Forms:** At the conclusion of the exercise, all participants were asked to fill out a Participant Feedback Form to provide their evaluation of the exercise.

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY OBSERVATIONS

3.1 Section Overview

Section 3 of this report provides a review of observations for the cities of Alden, Albert Lea, Clarks Grove, and Glenville on **areas of strength and areas for improvement** as related to the core capabilities and objectives for the exercise. Community-specific observations are based on feedback from Table Facilitators, Observers, and Subject Matter Experts who participated in the exercise.

3.2 City of Alden (Table #1)



OVERVIEW:

Profile: The City of Alden is a small community in western Freeborn County, located 13 miles west of the City of Albert Lea and 4 miles east of the border with Faribault County. As of the 2010 census the city has a population of 661. Minnesota State Highway 109 and Interstate 90 are two of the main routes in the community. The City has its own fire department and the Alden-Conger School District within city limits. Main line railroad track runs east-west through the center of the city.

Incident: In the City of Alden, the train crash and derailment occurred at the railroad crossing at Broadway Street N. / State Hwy. 109. The ethanol fire and spill resulted in a required ½ mile evacuation zone in all directions, affecting roughly a population of 681 within those boundaries. An overview of critical facilities within the impact zone includes: residential homes, roads (city and state), city government buildings, fire station, school (est. Staff/Students: 561), senior living community, apartment complex, athletic fields, childcare facilities, bank, bar, restaurant facilities, agricultural elevator, church, gas station, park, and Morin Lake. *(See Appendix E for local area incident map)*

Players: The City of Alden discussion table consisted of approximately 22 players representing local elected City Officials, Public Works, Fire Department, Alden-Conger School as well as Freeborn County, neighboring jurisdictions, State of MN Department of Public Safety (HSEM & ECN), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, National Weather Service, Albert Lea Mayo Hospital and Clinic, U.S. EPS Region V and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Facilitator: Joel McColl, Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director, City of Savage, MN

Observer: Blain Johnson, Emergency Management Director, Lac qui Parle County

GENERAL COMMENTS

- The City of Alden group met all objectives of this exercise. They showed great communication and a huge willingness and desire to continue on with this type of training. For some of the parties at the table, this was their first exposure to something of this size and scope.
- The group stayed tight and on-task with the objectives throughout the entire exercise. It was clear that this is an extremely tight-knit community that is very proud of their community and their residents. Looking out for one another is a priority of the community.
- City Officials, First Responders and others were willing to listen to the table SME’s and seemed genuinely interested in the best possible response actions that could be taken. They knew their city’s limitations and were not afraid to mention them and request additional help in the form of funding, personnel and subject matter expertise.
- At the end of the exercise, all table players expressed an urge to do another similar exercise within the City of Alden and were already throwing ideas back and forth. This exercise spurred their imagination.
- The Alden-Conger School has already proactively laid the groundwork for a culture of emergency preparedness. They have an un-required Risk Management Plan and multiple other plans at their disposal that were developed by school staff. The Superintendent was prepared and had thought a lot about what to do in nearly every situation that was presented to him. Note that these plans should still be tested on the local community level.

CAPABILITY-RELATED OBSERVATIONS

Areas of Strength

- **Operational Coordination:** The City of Alden displayed that strong partnerships and the ability to collaborate together were in place. This made for quick and easy decision making and delegation of authority on-scene. New city officials were eager to join in response and recovery efforts to protect their community.
- **Operational Coordination:** The group was quick to assume and prioritize operational command priorities to immediately address dangers to life and health hazards. They quickly realized this situation would overwhelm their local resources and immediately requested resources from neighboring jurisdictions as part of mutual aid agreements.
- **Operational Coordination:** The group was aware that that with an incident of this type and magnitude that emergency response staffing and resources outside of the city would take time to arrive, and numerous injuries and property damage may occur before help arrives. They were positioned to work quickly with other jurisdictions and agencies to respond to the incident. Due to the size of the City’s staffing, they acknowledged that they are limited to a very short operational period and will have to rely on outside agencies for long term disasters.

- **Operational Coordination:** The City was not aware of some of the railroad expertise that could be utilized in a timely manner and learned about the capabilities and resources that the railroad could bring to such an incident.
- **Public Information and Warning:** The group quickly identified the need for “one voice and one message” to be sent out to ensure clear, factual and timely information was sent out to the public.
- **Critical Transportation / Health & Social Services:** Getting all evacuated community members to return home was important to them and making sure all residents were taken care of upon returning was of utmost importance.
- **Operational Coordination / Health & Social Services** - It was clear that the City of Alden has great pride in their school system. During discussion they worked extremely well together to achieve a common goal of student safety first upon reopening of the schools in the area.
- **Operational Coordination (Recovery)** - The City was aware of the need for financial assistance that would ensue during the recovery phase with an incident with this type of magnitude. The City quickly recognized that it would be in need of financial help from outside agency(ies) to assist with the resulting infrastructure and financial burden that this incident would likely impose on them as they do not have the tax capacity to carry on with potential repair of critical infrastructure (i.e., roads).

Areas for Improvement

- **Increase Resource Planning** - Have a resource list on hand and someone trained that that can help to request necessary resources as city emergency response staff (i.e., Fire Chief) will be busy with the on-scene operations of an incident.
- **EOP Planning** – Ensure the City has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in place where it addresses elements such as designated leadership, how to begin documentation early on into an incident and holding periodic briefings for city leadership, key staff and response partners.
- **Operational Coordination** - Continue to work with Freeborn County Emergency Management and neighboring jurisdictions on clarifying communication, roles, responsibilities and expectations when dealing with large scale incidents. Understanding what sorts of resources and other assistance would be available in emergency response situations such as this will be beneficial for local emergency planning and response.
- **Hold Additional Tabletop Exercises:** Continue to have smaller tabletop exercises at the local level and build into an exercise of this scale. It was clear this was the first time the city had gotten together and practiced a tabletop exercise. There was some confusion as to how the city (elected officials, key staff and fire department) would function together during an incident. Luckily the table showed a clear interest in doing another local tabletop exercise, involving even more of their community members.
- **PIO/JIC/Media Training:** Discussion revealed that there were no identified Public Information Officers (PIO’s) and no clear spokesperson for the City of Alden. There was also limited

knowledge of the systems available for use by the city and school system for working with the media. Understanding of the role and responsibilities of a PIO, how to establish a Joint Information Center and how work with the media are critical functions to support Public Information and Warning.

- **ICS and NIMS Trainings:** Although the exercise afforded sparse discussion about actual on-scene operations and incident management, it seemed like clarification on the Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS) would be of benefit for First Responders. Ensuring key response staff are trained in FEMA courses on ICS 100, 200, and NIMS 700, 800 would be effective in this regard.
- **Local Elected Officials Training:** It would be beneficial for all local elected officials with the City to receive HSEM’s elected official course to understand their role and responsibilities during an emergency and the resources/assistance available to them from the State and other agencies.
- **Public Information and Warning (Minority Group Discussion):** The group never mentioned issues relating to delivery of public information and warning for minority groups and citizens with functional and/or access needs. This is a functional area of public information and warning that the City should be certain to address as needed for the community.
- **Social Media Presence:** The roles and responsibilities of who would be in charge to use Social Media for emergency public messaging and information was unclear. It would be beneficial for the City to plan for use of social media during an emergency (i.e., Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook) and designate a city Public Information Officer with responsibility to disseminate messages by Social Media.

3.3 City of Albert Lea (Table #2)



Overview:

Profile: The City of Albert Lea is located in central Freeborn County and is the largest city in the county and is also the county seat. As of the 2010 census the city has a population of 18,016. The city is roughly 90 miles south of the Twin Cities at the junction of Interstates 35 and 90. The city has extensive fire and law enforcement services, city departmental staff, and includes the Albert Lea Area Schools system within the city limits. As a city with a large manufacturing base for employment, there is high ethnic diversity throughout the city, including non-English speaking residents. Main line railroad track runs from both north to south and east to west through the city.

Incident: In the City of Albert Lea, the train crash occurred at the railroad crossing on Garfield Avenue. The physical derailment of rail cars occurred roughly 700 feet back in the residential area between Columbus Avenue and Johnson Street. The ethanol fire and spill resulted in a required ½ mile evacuation zone in all directions, affecting roughly a population of 3,180 within those boundaries. This residential area is noted to have a concentration of non-English speaking Karen community members. An overview of critical facilities within the impact zone includes: residential homes, roads (city), school (est. Staff/Students: 480), senior living community (est. Residents/Staff: 330), athletic fields, bank, church, gas station, park, and surrounding lakes. *(See Appendix E for local area incident map)*

Players: The City of Albert Lea discussion table consisted of approximately 22 players representing local elected City Officials and key department staff, Fire Department, Police Department, Public Works, Albert-Lea Area Schools as well as Freeborn County, neighboring jurisdictions, the State of MN Department of Public Safety (HSEM), National Weather Service, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Mayo Clinic Health System and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Facilitator: Kurt Fondrick, Captain, Emergency Manager & Intelligence Analyst, Mdewakanton Sioux Public Safety

Observer: Jennifer Lindberg, Exercise/Training Officer, MN HSEM

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- The City of Albert Lea group met all of the objectives for this exercise. The group was engaged and passionate about moving through the questions in professional manner. They have obviously worked and trained together in the past.
- The group demonstrated they had a high level of training and had done their homework. They also illustrated they were a cohesive team that would come together.
- The group had excellent discussions that displayed their knowledge on the affected portions of the city. There was an obvious friendship or professional knowledge between all responding entities. They called each other by first names and knew who the second in command were.
- The group stayed fairly compartmentalized, but when Freeborn County Public Health, Mayo Clinic Language Services and the Canadian Pacific Railroad personnel were suggested for input by the table facilitator they were readily accepted and were routinely asked for opinions and input. This reflected very positively on the City for their ability and readiness to work in collaboration with others.
- The group valued the input of state agency SME’s at the table that provided additional information on resources that their agencies could provide during response and recovery to this incident (MN HSEM Director Joe Kelly, MN ECN IPAWS Manager John Dooley and Mike Rose, MPCA Emergency Management Unit and Hydrologist).

CAPABILITY-RELATED OBSERVATIONS

Areas of Strength

- **Public Information and Warning** – The Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) was discussed and John Dooley, DPS Emergency Communication Networks IPAWS Manager spoke on the capabilities and training opportunities available to them to advance their abilities for disseminating emergency public notifications.
- **Public Information and Warning** – Another large portion of discussion during discussion was on the methods for dissemination of emergency notifications and the ability to reach the special needs community in Albert Lea (both with language barriers and accessibility needs). Glenna Kristy, Mayo Language Services Supervisor and Sue Yost, Freeborn County Public Health Director were a wealth of information and highly valued by the group.
- **Critical Transportation / Health and Social Services** – During the discussion of re-entry for those evacuated, the group had active discussion that touched on responsibility (*Who would actually have the authority to do this? Since there is still contamination, what would the parameters of the “scene” still be?*) Mark Toso, MPCA Emergency Management Unit and Hydrologist gave parameters that could be expected as well as future mitigation possibilities and concerns.

- **Health and Social Services** – Mayo Clinic Language Services and Freeborn County Public Health provided invaluable information to the group on the services they would provide to support the community during the response to and recovery from the incident. This was especially pertinent in matters relating to reaching the non-English speaking members of the Karen community or other ethnic groups.
- **Operational Coordination** – Fire and Law Enforcement response was exceptional. Both trust their leadership in the city leadership to have their back and have an excellent understanding of their respective operational abilities. City Management was supportive and “stayed out of the way” until they were needed during the response phase. The City Manager, Chad Adams, was excellent at giving the personnel with specific training what they needed to get started (in their city response role) and waited for updates from the Director of Public Safety JD Carlson to stay informed.
- **Operational Coordination** – All in the group were aware of the Incident Command System (ICS) and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) possibilities to apply during this magnitude of incident and stated that Rich Hall, Freeborn County Emergency Management Director has been excellent at helping them train to the Emergency Management model.
- **Operational Coordination** – The group determined that on-scene operations would be moved after the local area incident map was provided in Module 2, but this was not an issue. Command was in the same place and it was determined that an EOC would be set up at the City Hall, which would also be the location of the Joint Information Center (JIC).
- **Operational Coordination** – Extensive portions of Module 2 were a question and answer portion on what the Railroad could do and provide. Albert Lea has never worked a disaster with the Railroad before. Tracy Bergerson, Canadian Pacific Railroad Special Agent was spectacular in her responses. (This discussion was one of the best things that happened in the TTX for the Albert Lea group.)
- **Operational Coordination** – During discussion of the recovery phase, there was good discussion between the Railroad and the City on matters regarding hazmat cleanup and mitigation.
- **Operational Coordination** - During the 3rd module addressing recovery, the topic of lawyers was brought up and discussed. Overall it was felt that addressing lawyers could wait. It was suggested that the lawyers need to be brought in to help the City prepare to defend itself from future lawsuits, and start the process of repayment of services.

Areas for Improvement

- **City EOP Update** - When answering questions such as “who would you notify” the answers were less specific/more general. It would be a good idea for the City to nail down the notification order and specific positions in their Emergency Operations Plan as far as who they are sharing info with, and when.
- **Code Red/IPAWS Training** - IPAWS was discussed, but city personnel expressed that they are not trained on it or have experience using it regularly so they were not confident in it. The City would benefit from IPAWS training in conjunction with Freeborn County and other jurisdictions.

The use of Code Red/IPAWS seems to be limited to a few individuals, and some of these admitted they are uncomfortable using these tools. This area needs more training and exercise to improve capability to deliver timely and targeted emergency information.

- **Local Media Coordination** - Public information was addressed, but was recognized as a weakness. The group was unaware of how to use local news outlets to put their message out in a timely fashion without the local media coming to them. However, the City Manager did have contacts in the local news media so relationships can continue to be built. The City should continue to work on a public outreach strategy in advance with key local media in order to be more effective during an emergency.
- **PIO Training** – It was not clear of who would have what PIO responsibilities between the City and the Railroad. PIO or spokesperson was not differentiated and assumed that the city would have to do it. The capabilities of the Railroad in this type of instance was unknown. The City would benefit from PIO training in conjunction with Freeborn County and other jurisdictions.
- **Communication to Non-English Residents** - The group was unaware of some of the capabilities of Public Health and Language Services. The City should continue to learn about and be prepared to communicate critical information to non-English speaking residents. The Mayo Language Services Supervisor and Freeborn County Public Health Director were both a great resource on this.
- **Dispatch Operations** - Dispatch was slightly concerned about their call trees and how much time they were allotted to contact everyone. Dispatch plans for such details should continue to be reviewed and updated to be effective in the event an event this big.

3.4 City of Clarks Grove (Table #3)



Overview:

Profile: The City of Clarks Grove is a small community in northeast Freeborn County, located roughly 10 miles northeast of the city of Albert Lea and 8 miles south of the border with Steele County. As of the 2010 census the city has a population of 706. Interstate 35 is located to the east of the city. The City has its own fire department and the agricultural cooperative Central Farm Service (CFS) located within city limits. Main line railroad track runs north-south through the western part of the city.

Incident: In the City of Clarks Grove, the train crash and derailment occurred at the railroad crossing at Main Street W and 2nd Avenue SW. The ethanol fire and spill resulted in a required ½ mile evacuation zone in all directions, affecting roughly a population of 773 within those boundaries. An overview of critical facilities within the impact zone includes: residential homes, roads (city), city government buildings, fire station, apartment complex, athletic fields, church, parks, bank, bar, and CFS facilities. (See *Appendix E for local area incident map*)

Players: The City of Clarks Grove discussion table consisted of approximately 22 players representing local elected City officials, Fire Department, Public Works/Maintenance as well as Freeborn County, Central Farm Service (CFS), neighboring jurisdictions, the Minnesota Rural Water Association, State of MN Department of Public Safety (HSEM), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, National Weather Service, Mayo Clinic (Rochester) and the Union Pacific Railroad.

Facilitator: Seth Hansen, Director of Emergency Management, Wright County Sheriff’s Office

Observer: Michael Peterson, MN HSEM Region 1 Regional Program Coordinator

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- The City of Clarks Grove group met all of the objectives of this exercise and showed a willingness to participate actively to learn through it.
- Clarks Grove has already proven to be a very resilient community with its recent past history of two large scale events (Tornado and Anhydrous explosion incident) that have given them experience in the large-scale response category. They are aware and have identified that they will need help from various entities throughout the entire duration of this type of event.

- Clarks Grove First Responders are efficient, knowledgeable and know what actions to take immediately to start responding to an event of this magnitude. Continued work with their partners within the mutual aid system as well as public and private partners will enhance their abilities even further.

CAPABILITY-RELATED OBSERVATIONS

Areas of Strength

- **Public Information and Warning** – The group discussed the value of using social media and local newspapers, television and radio outlets to aid them in reaching the public. The City acknowledged that they have limited capabilities for public outreach and noted that agencies such as Freeborn County Emergency Management and Freeborn County Public Health and Social Services would be invaluable and have other resources and messages to assist in reaching the public during both response and recovery.
- **Operational Coordination** – The group quickly realized that a unified command approach would be needed and set up for this event.
- **Operational Coordination** – Clarks Grove was aware that staffing for the initial evacuation phase would pose an issue with personnel as well as the man power needed for the initial response. This is due to the size of the fire department. They knew that their initial response would rely heavily on mutual aid resources.
- **Operational Coordination** – The recognition of involving and calling the Railroad as a major partner in this event was immediately identified. The Sheriff’s Office also noted they would get their drones up and above the crash site as soon as possible to get a better overall operational picture. The local officials of the community were willing to let the railroad and agency professionals take care of the incident and follow their lead with what they needed to do at the local level.
- **Operational Coordination** – The group quickly understood that it would not have all the resources needed to provide the proper response to an incident of this magnitude. Through past recent incidents it has forged good relationships with public and private partners to get resources needed. City Officials were well-aware that they would reach out to Freeborn County Emergency Management and mutual aid partners as needed to help them with response and recovery resources.
- **Operational Coordination** – It was quickly identified that the CFS manufacturing facility could provide some valuable resources to perhaps aid in the response as well as relying on help from the Railroad.
- **Operational Coordination** – The Sheriff’s Office also noted other areas of concern in the safety of resident’s property (protection of property during evacuation) and how they would aid the city in that area.

- **Operational Coordination** – A large strength identified by the group in overwhelming accolades was that Freeborn County has its own Emergency Management Director to help coordinate resources.
- **Operational Coordination** – The group quickly identified the need to document all activities involved with the response and recovery of the incident for financial reimbursements. The group also was aware that now that upon moving into recovery after the incident that the aid of other local government departments would be necessary.
- **Operational Coordination (Recovery)** - Clarks Grove is still recovering from a tornado event that occurred in summer, 2017 and the rebuilding as a result of this. The financial implications to infrastructure would greatly limit and prolong the cities recovery in an event like this and would rely heavily on outside agencies for help. The City was aware of the need for financial assistance that would ensue during the recovery phase with an incident with this scope of magnitude.

Areas of Improvement

- **Public Notification and Warning** – The group noted that their ability to notify all residents of the need to evacuate or shelter in place was an area for improvement. It was identified that CodeRed is in place now in Freeborn County, but getting the public to opt-in has been difficult. Because of this limitation the city noted that they would rely heavily on local media outlets. The City would benefit from CodeRed as well as IPAWS training in conjunction with Freeborn County and other jurisdictions.
- **Evacuation Resources (Public Transport)** – The group noted that the transportation needed to evacuate the town were limited but to one bus company. This could prove to be difficult when it comes to those needing specialized services in the event of an evacuation. The City would benefit to identify additional transportation resources, particularly those that cover accessible transport for those with functional accessibility needs.
- **Additional Staff Training** - First Responders in the group had a very strong commitment to see the incident through but there seemed to be a lack of acknowledging a need to rest and bring in back-up staffing for decision makers in Incident Command. This can prove to be detrimental when it becomes prolonged and when important decisions need to be made. Providing additional response personnel with ICS training will help the city in times of extended response.
- **Local Officials Training** – During the course of discussion City Officials maintained a fairly “hands-off” approach with responsibility for many elements turned to outside agencies. City officials should plan for the ability to take a stronger lead in conveying information to their residents as a large-scale incident progresses. The message should be the same unified message from all sources involved. It would be beneficial for city elected officials to take HSEM’s Elected Official’s course to understand their role, responsibilities and the outside resources and assistance available to them, and when they should be used.
- **Public Information and Warning** - Public information and warning strategies and policies should be shared and implemented to ensure safety and timely information to the locals.

3.5 City of Glenville (Table #4)



Table Overview:

Profile: The City of Glenville is a small community in south-central Freeborn County, located 7 miles southeast of the City of Albert Lea and approximately 7 miles north of the border with Worth County, Iowa. As of the 2010 census the city has a population of 643. State Highway 65 runs north-south through the western corner of the city. The city has its own fire department, the Glenville-Emmons School District, and the POET Biorefinery plant located within city limits. Main line railroad track runs east-west through the city and includes a spur line to the POET facility.

Incident: In the City of Glenville, the train crash and derailment has occurred at the railroad crossing at U.S. Highway 65 and 2nd Avenue SW. The ethanol fire and spill resulted in a required ½ mile evacuation zone in all directions, affecting roughly a population of 633 within those boundaries. An overview of critical facilities within the impact zone includes: residential homes, roads (city and state), city government buildings, fire station, school (est. Staff/Students: 310), athletic fields, park, gas station, bank, bar, and agricultural elevator. *(See Appendix E for local area incident map)*

Players: The City of Glenville discussion table consisted of approximately 20 players representing local elected City Officials, Fire Department, Public Works/Maintenance, Glenville-Emmons Schools, as well as Freeborn County, neighboring jurisdictions, POET Biorefinery, American Red Cross, State of MN Department of Public Safety (HSEM), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, National Weather Service, Albert Lea Mayo Hospital and Clinic, the U.S. EPA (Region V) and the Canadian National Railway.

Facilitator: Ron Holbeck, Deputy Director of Emergency Management, Scott County Sheriff’s Office

Observer: Scott Reiten, MN HSEM Region 1 Emergency Management Consultant

GENERAL COMMENTS

- The City of Glenville seemed extremely resilient for a city of its size. Public safety is clearly a priority in the city as it was apparent they had planned for similar events. This was true when speaking with First Responders but was also apparent in speaking with members of the School District, city officials and city public works.

- Though the city understood the scope of this incident required assistance from beyond their borders, local officials seemed willing and able to address this incident to its end. An example of this was Public Works stating they would staff perimeters in lieu of public safety if needed so they could maintain their response objectives through several operational periods if needed.
- The group showed they fully understand the critical infrastructure within their city that could be impacted. Due to the size of the city, critical infrastructure is limited mainly to the schools and government buildings.
- The City realized that at some point there was only so much they could do on their own. They would be reliant on outside resources such as the Red Cross, the Railroad, POET, MPCA and the Freeborn County Sheriff’s Office once the evacuation and fire had passed. There was a clear understanding of the capabilities the city did and did not possess for an incident of this magnitude. The city was aware that it would be dependent on outside resources and mutual aid partners for additional resources such as a drone, mass notification messages, a PIO, a Hazardous Materials Team and a chemical assessment team.
- Local officials understood the need to provide accurate documentation of the incident as well as accountability of those who were affected. This data may be critical during any claims processing or if the community attempts to seek reimbursement from the state or FEMA.
- The group also understood this incident would impact their citizens in different ways emotionally and was prepared to address their needs following such an incident.
- Though accountability was discussed, the community did not seem to have a method currently in place to ensure the accountability of those affected by the incident. In the event of an actual railway disaster, this is a process they would seek to clarify with lawyers as well as the Railroad.

CAPABILITY-RELATED OBSERVATIONS

Areas of Strength

- **Public Information and Warning** - The group noted that the City of Glenville, the School District, and Freeborn County all use social media for public outreach and would likely utilize this resource to send emergency information to the public.
- **Public Information and Warning** - The City has a robust social media presence of about 450 followers. This is incredible considering the city itself has a population of less than 700. Having a strong social media presence allows the city another communication tool for its citizens if needed to help disseminate emergency messaging.
- **Public Information and Warning** – As the City moved into the recovery phase of the incident, they discussed that information concerns would shift from initial emergency messaging to addressing healthcare concerns, claims processing and sharing toxicology reports from the affected area. During the three to five-day period following the incident, local officials identified the need to have community meetings to address the many concerns citizens would likely have.

These meetings would address health concerns, liability issues and environmental concerns among other things.

- **Mass Care Services:** Local responders would contact the American Red Cross through the 911 Dispatch Center. Upon notification, the Red Cross would notify local volunteers and plan to open an overnight shelter or a temporary shelter while they seek additional information. Should a longer-term shelter be needed, the Red Cross shared that they have two shelter trailers located in Albert Lea which hold 250 cots and other sheltering equipment. School students would remain in the care of school staff until they were able to reunite with their parents/guardians.
- **Critical Transportation:** The Glenville-Emmons Schools stated they’d be ready to evacuate their students quickly once they were informed to do so. They would have buses on-site quickly and had a secondary location outside of the evacuation zone to take students.
- **Health and Social Services:** During the extended recovery phase of the emergency, the City acknowledged that they would be reliant on Freeborn County and mutual aid partners and local healthcare providers to address health and social service issues.
- **Health and Social Services** - The Glenville-Emmons Schools seemed ready to address the potential emotional needs of their students and staff.
- **Health and Social Services** - The City discussed holding a potential “Community Day” where residents could reflect upon what occurred and share stories of the incident, evacuation and recovery. The community did show a desire to address any emotional needs their citizens may have as well.
- **Operational Coordination** - Being a very small community, the City of Glenville was able to communicate with local elected officials and public works quickly. The city has a fully staffed fire department that appears very well trained. The fire department and City Council are almost intertwined due to members of belonging to both organizations.
- **Operational Coordination** - Due to their staffing levels and the size of their community, the group was aware that many organizations would be notified of the incident the moment the fire call was received by local responders.
- **Operational Coordination** - Local responders were able to show knowledge on immediate actions to be taken during the response. The firefighters assessed the scene from a distance and assessed secondary threats, such as a nearby oil plant. Local dispatchers contacted the Railroad while first responders reported the incident to the State Duty Officer.
- **Operational Coordination** - The group discussed that the Freeborn County Sheriff’s Office would likely utilize a drone to get as close to the derailed train cars as possible in hopes to both identify the leaking chemical, and to get situational assessment on the plume size and direction.
- **Operational Coordination** - Critical facilities within the city include the POET Biorefinery, located just NW of the city. Having POET Biorefinery players at the table was a benefit to discussion. In the event of such an incident they stressed that they would need to know about the incident immediately, so they can decide on whether to halt operations. It was noted that

notifying POET would also potentially allow equipment and resources stored at the Biorefinery to be utilized in the response to the derailment.

- **Operational Coordination / Mass Care:** The City quickly identified the need to set up a unified command that would include Fire, the Sheriff’s Office, Elected Officials, the MPCA, Freeborn County Public Health, and possibly the State Patrol. The hospital in Albert Lea, upon notification, would prepare for a potential medical surge from the incident and staff their facility accordingly. The hospital would relay information they received through MNTRAC and other networks to ensure healthcare facilities in neighboring jurisdictions were aware of the incident.
- **Operational Coordination** - The group discussed that environmental issues would be handled by the U.S. EPA, MPCA, and the railroad throughout the recovery phase. The group also discussed that the Freeborn County Sheriff’s Office, Canadian Northern, and potentially the FBI would investigate as to why the train derailed.
- **Operational Coordination** - Responders saw a need to have a hot wash following the incident, and to conduct an After-Action Report and an Improvement Plan for the incident. They felt this would be critical to improving future responses and would also help identify additional resources and training local officials may need.

Areas for Improvement

- **Communications** - Communications between community partners seemed limited. A concern expressed during discussion was how the local responders would communicate pertinent information quickly to community partners such as the schools and local businesses. The School District was concerned about how they would receive the level of timely, actionable information they would depend upon for the best outcome in this type of situation. POET Biorefinery also shared similar concerns on how to obtain information regarding the incident in a fast-enough manner to take initial safety actions at their respective locations. This is something that the city can work to address in its emergency communications planning.
- **Public Information and Warning** - The City of Glenville seemed reliant on outside resources (Freeborn County) to disseminate mass notification messages to their community. The exception to this would be the School District, which has its own mass notification system they can utilize to share emergency information with parents. However, the School District once again pointed out they would need relevant emergency information from the first responders quickly in order to send the most thorough and actionable messages to the parents/guardians of the children within the local schools. IPAWS messages, if needed, would be requested through the 911 Dispatch Center. The City would benefit from public information and warning training with Freeborn County and in conjunction with other jurisdictions.
- **Critical Transportation** - During the exercise the City ordered an evacuation of the entire city. How the evacuation would take place for local citizens was not discussed much, though participants felt most citizens would self-evacuate if needed. There was no discussion on how functional access/special needs residents would be evacuated. Planning for transportation resources, particularly those that can provide accessible transport, is recommended.

- **PIO Training** - The City seemed heavily reliant on the County for a Public Information Officer (PIO). This is understandable due to the size of the city; however, the city should consider an elected official or a first responder to be prepared to act as an official spokesperson for any sort of large scale emergency event. Local citizens will especially appreciate and believe messaging from their peers at the local level.
- **HazMat Awareness** - The City seemed unaware of the hazardous materials that may regularly pass through their community by rail. It was suggested that a member of public safety request a Hazard Commodity Flow from the Canadian National Railroad annually to get a better idea of the potential threat in their community.
- **Pet Evacuation and Sheltering** - The concerns of pet owners and the well-being of pets was brought up towards the end of the exercise. The community didn't seem to possess a clear plan for conducting a pet evacuation or sheltering pets for an extended period. The City would benefit to make note of local pet shelters that could act as a resource for transport and animal housing during a disaster. Freeborn County Emergency Management can also help provide such information as it is included in the county's Emergency Operations Plan.
- **Plan and Exercise** - It was suggested by Glenville Emmons Schools Superintendent that the City should ensure that they have a local Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in place that addresses the roles and responsibilities of local government and first responders for key functions such as operational coordination, public information and warning, mass care, and communications. If the city does not have an EOP in place this is something they can seek assistance on developing at the local level with Freeborn County Emergency Management. The city should consider holding a tabletop exercise at the city level to test portions of their EOP and functionality of key operations.

3.6 Whole Group Observations

During the exercise several State and National agency Subject Matter Experts (SME) assisted in observing discussions and making note of areas of strengths and areas of improvement. Following is feedback provided as it relates in general to the whole group of exercise participants from Freeborn County and the participating local jurisdictions.

Areas of Strength

- Local Officials demonstrated their readiness to be involved.
- Communities showed commitment to looking out for the utmost safety for their residents and students. Locals really know each other and how to connect with each other.
- Fire and Law Enforcement demonstrated an ability for good response coordination and valuable experience gained from past incidents.
- Emergency Management has good contacts and plans in place.
- It was clear that good partnerships exist between local city government and private companies within their communities (CFS, POET Biorefinery).

- School Districts demonstrated that they have put extensive effort into emergency planning. The schools and the local communities showed that they have strong working relationships in place and would be ready to work together.
- Learning from the Railroad representatives and becoming aware of the wealth of resources they have and how they would work with a local community during a rail incident was excellent.
- Communities learned a great deal about the range of resources and technical assistance that would be available in working with the County (i.e. Sheriff’s Office, Emergency Management, Public Health), State agencies (MN HSEM and ECN), National agencies (National Weather Service, U.S. EPA), local businesses, the American Red Cross, the Mayo Hospital/Clinic and the Railroads.

Areas of Improvement

- **Public Outreach** – All communities demonstrated a range of abilities and resources for disseminating public information. Overall it was noted that all on some level could do more to improve local capabilities for public messaging (i.e. through social media and working with local media). Ensuring the ability to reach non-English speaking residents is especially important in communities with those who may speak little to no English.
- **Emergency Notification** – All communities should work to constantly advance their abilities for use of CodeRed and IPAWS for emergency public messaging.
- **PIO Training** – All communities should have a designated and trained Public Information Officer that is trained in acting as the spokesperson for the community.
- **Elected Officials Training** – Each group of local elected officials (Mayors, City Councilors) demonstrated their commitment and a range of understanding of their roles and responsibilities during an emergency situation. It would be highly beneficial for all local governments to receive local elected officials training that is offered by HSEM as a follow-up to this exercise.
- **Shelter Training & Exercises** – Continue to plan for the temporary or long-term sheltering of people and pets in the event they need to be evacuated. Planning assistance and local trainings can be done in coordination with the American Red Cross and Freeborn County Public Health.
- **Continue Training and Exercise** – All local government, Law Enforcement, Fire and EMS can work together on key trainings and exercises related to the Incident Command System, EOC Operations, and resource coordination. Continue to engage key community partners such as local media contacts, the Southeast MN Disaster Health Coalition, American Red Cross, the schools and area businesses through additional exercises and trainings.
- **Continue Pre-Planning** - All communities should continue to develop and update local emergency operations plans to clarify the roles, responsibilities and procedures that are in place in the event of an emergency. Key resources should be identified in advance to support critical functions such as evacuation and sheltering.

SECTION 4: CAPABILITY PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Capabilities are the means to accomplish a mission, function, or objective based on the performance of related tasks, under specified conditions, to target levels of performance. Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent classification for evaluation that interprets individual exercises to support preparedness.

The following table includes the **overall performance ratings** for Freeborn County and the cities of Alden, Albert Lea, Clarks Grove, and Glenville (as a group) as observed the team of Table Facilitators and Observers during the exercise.

Capability	Exercise Objective	Overall Group Performance Rating
Public Information and Warning	Players will 1) Demonstrate understanding of what tools and methods are available to reach all segments of the population with emergency warning and information; and 2) Demonstrate the ability to communicate and coordinate with all rail and other stakeholders to sustain clear and consistent information throughout the duration of the incident.	S / M
Operational Coordination	Players will 1) Demonstrate the ability to communicate and coordinate with rail and other key stakeholders at all levels in Unified Command and EOC Operations; and 2) Demonstrate an understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Emergency Manager, rail, and other stakeholders during a railway incident.	S / P
Mass Care Services	Players will demonstrate the ability to determine the public health/social services, medical, mental/behavioral health needs of the affected population, and coordinate with partner agencies to obtain and deliver required resources to meet the needs of survivors and responders.	S
Critical Transportation	Players will evaluate their ability to 1) Effectively evacuate people and animals out of the affected area and; 2) Communicate and coordinate with key agencies during evacuation to support response priority objectives.	S / M
Health and Social Services	Players will demonstrate the ability to identify and coordinate key public health/social service partners and understand when to engage those partners, and how.	S

Performance Ratings Key
P – Performed without Challenges
S – Performed with Some Challenges
M – Performed with Major Challenges
U – Unable to be Performed

SECTION 5: CONCLUSION

The Freeborn County “Back on Track” Multi-Jurisdictional Tabletop Exercise provided a valuable opportunity to engage City/County Emergency Managers, City/County Officials and Staff, and other key supporting response agencies and organizations discussing response and recovery to a simulated hazardous materials train derailment. The exercise provided participants with a safe and collaborative environment to test their abilities to develop and implement policies, plans, and procedures through all phases of a local and shared emergency response and recovery effort.

With the opportunity to provide this exercise to multiple jurisdictions, Freeborn County was able to engage participants across a broad range of management and response roles and responsibilities. Participants strongly expressed the benefit they felt this exercise provided as part of their local training and exercise and expressed interest in holding future local level and regional exercises like this again in the future.

The identified strengths and areas for improvement will allow Freeborn County Emergency Management and the cities of Alden, Albert Lea, Clarks Grove and Glenville to more precisely guide emergency preparedness efforts at both the local and county level over the coming months and years.

Players who participated in the exercise are encouraged to review the Improvement Plan recommendations implementation and apply them to their respective emergency management programs as deemed appropriate. (See *Appendix A: Improvement Plan*)

APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

As a multi-jurisdictional exercise, the improvement recommendations provided in this section are broadly-developed for all each community to review and apply as applicable to related emergency preparedness efforts within their own jurisdiction and in collaboration with Freeborn County and key response/recovery agencies and organizations as appropriate.

All of the Improvement Plan recommended actions are drawn from the areas of strength and areas for improvement as noted in **Section 3: Community Observations**.

Players who participated in the exercise are encouraged to review the Improvement Plan recommendations apply them to their respective emergency management programs moving forward.

Capability Area #1 – Public Information and Warning

Action #	Area for Improvement	Jurisdiction	Recommended Action	Capability Element(s)
1.1	CodeRed & IPAWS Training	All	Work to ensure that key city staff are familiar with how to use CodeRed and IPAWS for emergency public messaging.	Planning
1.2	PIO/JIC Training	All	Ensure there is a Public Information Officer (PIO) that is prepared to fulfill PIO duties and coordinate with the media and other agency PIO’s through the use of a Joint Information Center (JIC).	Training
1.3	Ability to Reach Vulnerable Populations	All	Ensure that efforts to plan for public emergency notifications include special considerations for reaching senior populations and non-English speaking populations with emergency notifications.	Planning
1.4	Collaboration with Key Agency Partners	All	Regularly incorporate key agencies such as the National Weather Service, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and other key local and regional agency/organizational partners in emergency management exercises to increase understanding of the communication procedures that would be applied or resources they can provide during/following an emergency.	Planning, Training & Exercise
1.5	Capacity for Local Public Outreach	All	Build local capacity to disseminate emergency notifications within the community with use of local social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter) and local media outlets (TV, Radio, News).	Planning

Capability Area #2 – Operational Coordination

Action #	Area for Improvement	Jurisdiction	Recommended Action	Capability Element(s)
2.1	ICS & NIMS Training	All	Ensure key city personnel and First Responders are trained in FEMA independent study courses for ICS 100, 200, and NIMS 700, 800.	Planning
2.2	Local Elected Officials Training	All	Ensure local elected officials receive HSEM’s “Local Elected Officials” training to understand their role and responsibilities during an emergency and the options available to them from the State and other agencies.	Planning
2.3	Build Capacity for ICS-Trained Personnel and Resources	All	Work to improve the ability to find back-ups for things like personnel (3-deep in the command structure), shelters, transportation, and other disaster-based response/recovery needs.	Planning Equipment Training
2.4	Training and Exercise to Improve Operational Coordination	All	Local government, Law Enforcement, Fire and EMS can work together on key trainings and exercises related to the Incident Command System, EOC Operations, and resource coordination. Continue to engage key partners such as local media, Public Health, Red Cross, the schools and area businesses in exercises and trainings.	Planning Training Exercise

Capability Area #3 – Mass Care Services

Action #	Area for Improvement	Jurisdiction	Recommended Action	Capability Element(s)
3.1	Shelter Training & Exercises	All	Plan for the temporary or long-term sheltering of people and pets in the event they need to be evacuated. Planning assistance and local trainings can be done in coordination with the American Red Cross and Freeborn County Public Health.	Planning Training Exercises

Capability Area #4 – Critical Transportation

Action #	Area for Improvement	Jurisdiction	Recommended Action	Capability Element(s)
4.1	Evacuation Planning	All	Ensure local evacuation plans are established that include identification of transportation resources that can be mobilized. Planning for transportation resources, particularly those that can provide accessible transport, is recommended.	Planning

Capability Area #5 – Health and Social Services

Action #	Area for Improvement	Jurisdiction	Recommended Action	Capability Element(s)
5.1	Engage Key Partners in Health and Social Services in Planning & Exercises	All	Work with Freeborn County Public Health, local facilities (i.e., Schools, Hospital) and the Southeast MN Disaster Health Coalition to address health and social service needs of the community in emergency preparedness and response plans and exercises.	Planning Training Exercise

APPENDIX B: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Freeborn County (14)			
1	Rich	Hall	Freeborn County Emergency Management
2	Anita	Majerus	Freeborn County Public Health
3	Michelle	Severtson	Freeborn County Public Health
4	Sue	Yost	Freeborn County Public Health
5	Mark	Goskeson	Freeborn County Public Works
6	Sue	Miller	Freeborn County Public Works
7	Todd	Earl	Freeborn County Sheriff's Office
8	James	Everhart	Freeborn County Sheriff's Office
9	Kurt	Freitag	Freeborn County Sheriff's Office
10	Jody	Larson	Freeborn County Sheriff's Office
11	Cheyenne	Ludak	Freeborn County Sheriff's Office
12	John	Mitchum	Freeborn County Sheriff's Office
13	Ryan	Shea	Freeborn County Sheriff's Office
14	Steve	Anderson	Albert Lea Area Schools
City of Alden (7)			
15	Jon	Duncan	City of Alden
16	Greg	Hitchcock	City of Alden
17	Lexi	Scholten	City of Alden
18	Jim	Thunstedt	City of Alden
19	Janelle	Van Engelenburg	City of Alden
20	Jerome	Wuerflein	City of Alden
21	Brian	Shanks	Alden-Conger Public School
City of Albert Lea (11)			
22	Chad	Adams	City of Albert Lea
23	JD	Carlson	City of Albert Lea
24	Kevin	Flattum	City of Albert Lea
25	Jerry	Gabrielatos	City of Albert Lea
26	Dennis	Glassel	City of Albert Lea
27	Darren	Hanson	City of Albert Lea
28	Steven	Janke	City of Albert Lea
29	Jeff	Laskowske	City of Albert Lea
30	Jacob	Stockwell	City of Albert Lea
31	Dalton	Syverson	City of Albert Lea
32	Philip	Wacholz	City of Albert Lea
33	Steve	Anderson	Albert Lea Area Schools
City of Clarks Grove (7)			
34	Cody	Boverhuis	City of Clarks Grove

35	Bruce	Hanson	City of Clarks Grove
36	Kathy	Jensen	City of Clarks Grove
37	Richard	Nelson	City of Clarks Grove
38	Mark	Raunhorst	City of Clarks Grove
39	Steven	Thisius	City of Clarks Grove
40	Bill	Zezulka	City of Clarks Grove
City of Glenville (7)			
41	Dacia	Bottleson	City of Glenville
42	Russ	Shaunce	City of Glenville
43	Ronni	VanRiper	City of Glenville
44	Matt	Webb	City of Glenville
45	Web	Wess	City of Glenville
46	Craig	Ramman	Glenville Emmons Schools
47	Jerry	Reshetar	Glenville Emmons Schools
Neighboring Jurisdictions (16)			
48	Tim	Brenegan	City of Wells (Faribault County)
49	CJ	Holl	City of Wells (Faribault County)
50	Lisa	Frommie	Faribault County Emergency Management
51	Don	Kullot	Fillmore County Emergency Management
52	Erin	Wegner	Dodge County Emergency Management
53	Amy	Lammey	Mower County Emergency Management
54	Jennifer	Hauer-Schmitz	Rice County Emergency Management
55	Ron	Holbeck	Scott County Emergency Management
56	Denise	Wright	Waseca County Emergency Management
57	Mark	Tomlinson	Worth County, Iowa Emergency Management
58	Seth	Hansen	Wright County Sheriff's Office
59	Blain	Johnson	Lac qui Parle County Emergency Management
60	Dustin	Dienst	City of Faribault (Rice County)
61	Scott	Reiten	Cornerstone Consulting Services LLC
62	Kurt	Fondrick	Mdewakanton Sioux Public Safety
63	Joel	McColl	City of Savage
State/National Agencies (19)			
64	Joe	Kelly	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
65	John	Kreuser	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
66	Jennifer	Lindberg	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
67	Rick	Luth	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
68	Michael	Peterson	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
69	Brad	Winger	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

70	Cathy	Anderson	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Emergency Communication Networks
71	John	Dooley	Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Division of Emergency Communication Networks
72	Geri	Maki	Minnesota Department of Health
73	Dorene	Fier-Tucker	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
74	Mike	Rose	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
75	Craig	Schafer	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
76	Jim	Stockinger	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
77	Mark	Toso	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
78	Todd	Krause	National Weather Service
79	Michelle	Margraf	National Weather Service
80	Lisa	Schmit	National Weather Service
81	Andy	Maguire	U.S. EPA Region V
82	Paul	Ruesch	U.S. EPA Region V

Railroad Companies (4)

83	Ken	Collins	Canadian National Railway
84	Tracy	Bergerson	Canadian Pacific Railway
85	Ed	Dankbar	Canadian Pacific Railway
86	Joe	Eichten	Union Pacific Railroad

Area Businesses (5)

87	Quentin	Sickels	POET Biorefining
88	Dennis	Adams	Central Farm Service
89	Jamie	Jorgenson	Central Farm Service
90	Justin	Stieglbauer	Central Farm Service
91	Lori	Read	Freeborn-Mower Coop

Non-Government Organizations (6)

92	Pat	Blake	Albert Lea Mayo Hospital & Clinic
93	Brad	Niebuhr	Albert Lea Mayo Hospital & Clinic
94	Glenna	Kristy	Mayo Clinic Health System
95	Jo M.	Granberg	Mayo Clinic (Rochester)
96	Dave	Beaty	American Red Cross, SE MN Chapter
97	Lance	Loverink	Minnesota Rural Water Association

Media Representatives

1	Annalise	Johnson	KIMT
2	Ala	Errebhi	KTTC
3	Chuck	Sibley	KTTC

Participants: 97

Media: 3

Total Present: 100

APPENDIX C: EXERCISE SCHEDULE

Time	Activity
11:00 – 11:20 (20 min)	Welcome, Introductions, and Exercise Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rich Hall, Freeborn County Emergency Management Director- Bonnie Hundrieser, Exercise Director
11:20 – 12:00 (40 min)	Module 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Briefing & Discussion: 25 minutes- Report Outs: 15 minutes
12:00 – 1:00 (60 min)	Module 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Briefing & Discussion: 45 minutes- Report Outs: 15 minutes
1:00 – 1:40 (40 min)	Module 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Briefing & Discussion: 25 minutes- Report Outs: 15 minutes
1:40 – 1:55 (15 min)	Hot Wash <ul style="list-style-type: none">- By Table: 5 minutes- Whole Group: 10 minutes
1:55 - 2:00 (5 min)	Closing Comments & Participant Feedback Forms
2:15 – 2:30 (15 min)	Facilitator/Evaluator Debrief

APPENDIX D: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full Reference Name
AAR	After Action Report
CFS	Central Farm Service
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DPS	Department of Public Safety
ECN	Emergency Communication Networks
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
FOUO	For Official Use Only
HazMat	Hazardous Materials
HSEM	Homeland Security and Emergency Management
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
ICS	Incident Command System
IP	Improvement Plan
IPAWS	Integrated Public Alert & Warning System
JIC	Joint Information Center
LE	Law Enforcement
MDH	Minnesota Department of Health
MN	Minnesota
MPCA	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NWS	National Weather Service
PIO	Public Information Officer
SME	Subject Matter Expert
TTX	Tabletop Exercise

APPENDIX E: LOCAL AREA INCIDENT MAPS

MAP #1 - CITY OF ALDEN

MAP #2 - CITY OF ALBERT LEA

MAP #3 - CITY OF CLARKS GROVE

MAP #4 - CITY OF GLENVILLE

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ALDEN

Legend

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|---|
|  | Apartment |  | Government |
|  | Athletic Fields |  | Park |
|  | Bank |  | Restaurant |
|  | Bar |  | School
Est. Staff/Students 561 |
|  | Cafe |  | School Buses |
|  | Childcare |  | Senior Living Community |
|  | Church |  | RailRoad |
|  | Derailment |  | Road |
|  | Elevator |  | City Limits |
|  | Fire Station |  | 1/2 mile Buffer Evacuation Zone
Population 681 |
|  | Gas Station |  | Lake |



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ALBERT LEA



Legend

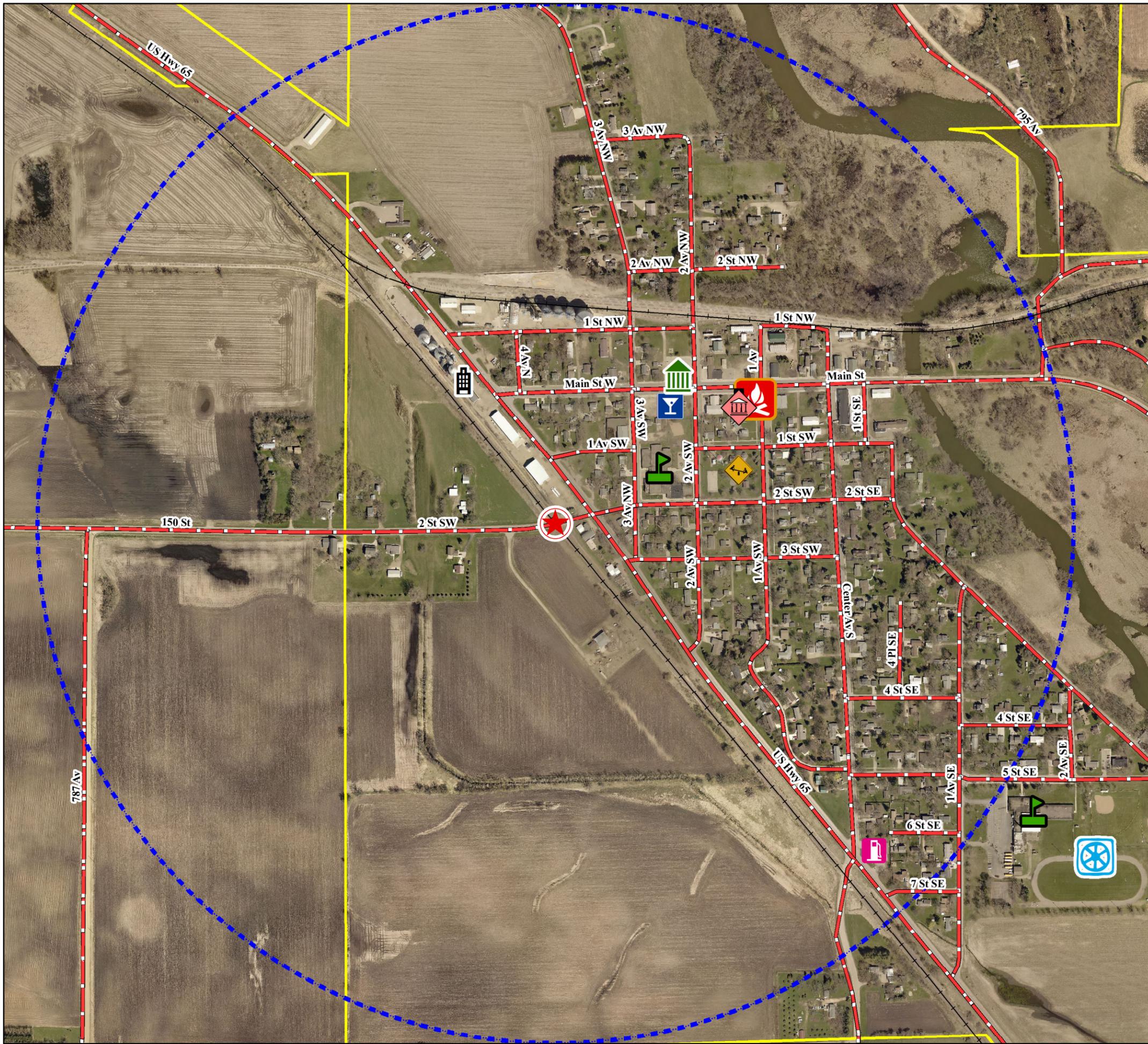
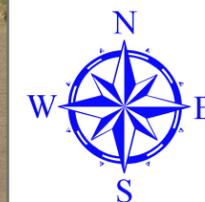
- | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|---|
| | Athletic Fields | | School
Est. Staff/Students 480 |
| | Bank | | Senior Living Community
Est. Residents/Staff 330 |
| | Church | | RailRoad |
| | Impact | | Road |
| | Derailment | | City Limits |
| | Gas Station | | 1/2 mile Buffer Evacuation Zone
Population 3,180 |
| | Park | | Lake |



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GLENVILLE

Legend

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|---|
|  | Athletic Fields |  | Government |
|  | Bank |  | Park |
|  | Bar |  | School
Est. Staff/Students 310 |
|  | Derailment |  | RailRoad |
|  | Elevator |  | Road |
|  | Fire Station |  | City Limits |
|  | Gas Station |  | 1/2 mile Buffer Evacuation Zone
Population 633 |



End of AAR/IP