



What does it take to manage an emergency?



The white board is filling with tasks, reminders, updates and requests. Emergency Management Planner Amelia Gagnon has an eye on multiple websites and news broadcasts while calmly juggling phone calls from local, state and national partners. And the situation is changing by the hour.

The coronavirus crisis may have caught most ordinary people by surprise, but the City of Manassas Emergency Operations team has been training continually to manage even unpredictable emergencies like this. "This event is the biggest thing we've ever seen," Gagnon says, "and it impacts every person. But we still have to make sure that people are safe and that we have a continuity of government services."

About 75 City employees from every department have voluntarily taken emergency management training that enables them to step into a crisis and perform a specific duty—everything from purchasing special supplies to coordinating rescue services to setting up shelters. Community partners from the Prince William Health District, Red Cross, and CERT volunteers and the

Virginia Department of Emergency Management participate in the response.

In some emergencies, staff can work remotely, checking in on the web-based Emergency Operations Center (EOC). For other events, an Information Technology team plugs in computers, phones and monitors to quickly transform a conference room into a physical EOC where staff

share up-to-the-minute information, make requests for assistance to a central controller, fill up a white board with status updates and communicate the latest information to the public. Staff members work 12-hour shifts either in the field or in the EOC when it is activated and operate 24-hours a day.

Every month, Gagnon creates a web EOC exercise for staff and partners that helps to familiarize them with some new aspect of the web-based EOC. Four times a year she coordinates an emergency simulation where staff practice responding to a disaster or emergency situation. Several years ago, a day-long exercise at the Manassas Regional Airport brought together emergency response teams from several area localities and agencies, showing that the EOC system makes it easy for local governments and agencies to share information and ask for help.

An important result of these exercises is the after-action report, where all the participants talk about what went well and what needs improvement in emergency responses.

"We are constantly building relationships, updating plans and implementing changes from the after-action reports," Gagnon says.

Empty store shelves and school closures during this crisis have now inspired many people to think about preparedness. Although it might be difficult to build your family's emergency supply kit right now, Gagnon says there are still important ways to stay prepared and informed in this or any emergency. First, make sure you are signed up for the City's emergency alert system to receive updates on your cell phone. You can register from the Alert link at the bottom of the city's web page (www.manassascity.org). If you have a land line phone, you are already registered and will receive emergency calls on that line. Or, text the word CityHealth to 888-777 for text messages. Second, watch the City's website and social media (facebook.com/cityofmanassas or twitter.com/cityofmanassas) for official information and updates.

The Manassas EOC team is working as best they can to make life as safe as possible for all of our neighbors, even as the coronavirus crisis has upended our lives. One of the great lessons of emergency management, as Gagnon says, is that "we all work better together, and we are all in this together."

A Message from the City Manager



City Manager
W. Patrick Pate

Last month I mentioned that March is “a month of anticipation and preparation for things to come over the next several months.” I now wish those words had not been quite so true or literal!

March created a new reality that we will be facing over the next several months and will create lessons to be learned for many years to come. As I write this article, the City has declared a local state of emergency to go with the national and state proclamations that have also been made. A local state of emergency gives the City additional flexibility to prepare for changing circumstances or information and allows for opportunities to seek state and federal aid and assistance as necessary and appropriate.

This is not the first state of emergency that has been declared by the City, but they are typically for weather-related events and cover a short duration. The City has an outstanding track record of responding to emergencies and we expect the same from this pandemic. The City of Manassas had a pandemic plan in place before this event and we have been following the plan during the crisis. As you have seen, public safety requests are being responded to, social services benefits are being processed, utility services are being delivered and traffic continues to operate safely on our streets.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find information and phone numbers on how to interact with the City without actually coming to a City facility. These ways to conduct business are a necessity during a pandemic, but were initially put into place before the pandemic to make interaction with the City easier and will continue after the pandemic is over.

We have also seen, however, some major changes, including in how business must operate, cancellation of sports and entertainment performances we would be watching, elimination of gatherings for the many events that would have taken place in our downtown, reshaping of how schools deliver education and alteration of how we greet and interact with one another. What has not changed is who we are as

Manassas residents and our ability to pull together to help one another work our way through crisis situations. From the moment the pandemic crisis began folks were asking who needed help and how they could assist them. That is the Manassas way!

I am still anticipating a new spring and preparing for more normalcy in my daily routines. I have completed my census form and I hope you have done so as well. I am looking forward to seeing the historic downtown area bustling and people gathering for events and activities. We have come through emergencies many times before and we will weather this event as well.

Stay healthy!



EVERYONE COUNTS

Count **everyone** who lives in your house:
children, parents, friends, roommates and renters

Your information is protected &
confidential

Private Information cannot be shared with
anyone or any other federal, state or local agency

Respond by mail, phone, or online.

Learn more at: www.2020Census.gov

COVID-19 and some phone numbers

The City of Manassas wants you to know that we are all in this together. COVID-19 is a scary term and the City is doing everything we can to help our residents and staff during this time. In order to maintain a minimum social distance of 6 feet, we offer the following resources and contact information you may want to use during this pandemic. One number you may want to know is our emergency text information. Text the word CityHealth to 888-777 for text messages during this health crisis.

Bill Pay

www.manassascity.org/paymybill

Treasurer's Office 703-257-8242

Drop box outside 9027 Center Street

Utilities

Drop box outside 8500 Public Works Dr.

Direct Debit 703-257-8245

Pay by phone 844-278-9120

Power Outage 703-257-8353

City Agencies

Development Services 703-257-8278

Emergency building repair permits

Fire & Rescue HQ 703-257-8458

Manassas City Police

Emergency 9-1-1

Non-emergency 703-257-8000

Animal Control 703-257-8009

Manassas Regional Airport

703-361-1882

Permits & Inspections 703-257-8278

planstatus@manassasva.gov

Online Permits -

www.manassascity.gov/energov

Refuse & Recycling 703-257-8252

Social Services 703-361-8277

Public Benefits

<https://commonhelp.virginia.gov>
1-855-635-4370

Child/Adult Protective Services
571-921-8807

After hours 800-552-7096

Voter Registration 703-257-8230

Fax 703-257-0080

VoterRegistration@manassasva.gov

Vote by Absentee at <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/>

Other Agencies

Center for Disease Control

800-232-4636

www.cdc.gov

Prince William Health District

Call Center (703) 872-7759

www.vdh.virginia.gov

Social Security Administration

www.ssa.gov

Virginia Employment Commission

703-897-0407

A note about Utilities: Out of concern for our customers, we are suspending disconnections for non-payment during this unprecedented pandemic event. Requests for new connections and move out disconnects will continue to be processed by contacting Customer Service at 703-257-8245.



Recycling Note:

Five Things to Remember About Trash and Recycling

- Use City containers when setting out trash and recycling. Please do not set out loose trash or plastic bags.
- Remember, we recycle plastic containers #1, 2 and 5, metal cans, cardboard, paper and glass. Recycling needs to be empty, clean and dry.

- Call ahead to (703) 257-8252 to schedule collections for large items that do not fit in your container, such as TVs, computer monitors, air conditioners and other appliances. Not all items can be collected curbside.
- Set out yard waste in brown paper yard waste bags. Bundle and tie loose branches. No compost, soil, sand or stone will be collected.

- Remember to pull your container back from the curb following collections. Store containers at the side or in back of your home, or use a screened enclosure for storage.

All residents and property owners are responsible for following City guidelines for trash and recycling collection. We ask that residents do their part to help keep Manassas safe, clean and beautiful. For more information, visit: www.manassascity.org/trash.

The City of Manassas Happenings

Because there is so much uncertainty at this time as to whether events will happen or be canceled, the event listings below are the concert series being held at the Harris Pavilion. All are subject to change. Make sure to check www.visitmanassas.org frequently for more events.

Summer @ The Harris Pavilion - Get Ready!

Acoustic Tuesday Concerts @ 7 p.m.

May 12 Jason Masi
 May 19 Shane Gamble
 May 26 Luke James Shaffer
 June 2 Sharif
 June 9 Jason Teach
 June 16 Among The Willows
 June 23 Shane Gamble
 June 30 Brian Harris
 July 7 Daniel Roberts
 July 14 Scott Kurt
 July 21 Jason Masi
 July 28 Shane Gamble
 Aug. 4 Tender Polman
 Aug. 11 Ashleigh Chevalier
 Aug. 18 Timmie Metz
 Aug. 25 Shane Hines
 Sept. 1 Shane Gamble

Saturday Night Concert & Adult Dance @ 8 p.m.

June 13 Beatlegacy
 June 27 Special Occasions
 July 18 Tim Campbell & the Tropical Attitudes
 Aug. 1 Silver Tones Swing Band
 Aug. 15 Justified

Summer Sundaes Concerts @ 3 p.m.

May 17 Community Band Festival
 May 31 Navy Commodores
 June 14 NiteHawk Swing Band
 June 21 Kings Park Concert Band
 June 28 Navy Country Current
 July 12 Classic Spotlight
 July 19 Marshall Artz
 July 26 Prince William Community Band
 Aug. 2 257th Army Band (Band of the Nation's Capital)
 Aug. 9 Washington Balalaika Society
 Aug. 16 Moonlight Jazz Orchestra
 Aug. 23 Prince William Community Band
 Aug. 30 Manassas Symphony

2020 SummerSounds Concert Series

(All Saturdays, 6:30-8 p.m.; Rain or Shine)

July 11 The Splinters (*Americana, Roots, Rock, Country*)
 July 25 Shenandoah Run (*Bluegrass*)
 Aug. 8 Lil' Maceo
 Aug. 22 Ashby Run (*Bluegrass*)
 Sept. 5 Wicked Olde (*Blues, Celtic, Roots*)

City of Manassas and Manassas Public Schools

City of Manassas Council

Mayor Harry J. Parrish II 703-257-8213
 Vice Mayor
 Pamela J. Sebesky 571-330-5514
 Michelle Davis-Younger 571-206-8433
 Theresa Coates Ellis 571-247-6729
 Ian T. Lovejoy 703-828-7592
 Ralph J. Smith 703-303-8530
 Mark D. Wolfe 703-257-1702

City of Manassas School Board

Chairman Sanford S. Williams 571-535-6364
 Vice Chair Kristen Kiefer 571-606-0285
 Scott M. Albrecht 571-606-1129
 Tim Demeria 703-895-4856
 Suzanne W. Seaberg 703-869-1171
 Lisa A. Stevens 571-535-0652
 Robyn Williams 571-535-7510

Get Social!

Visit the City at www.manassascity.org.

 www.facebook.com/cityofmanassas

 www.twitter.com/cityofmanassas

 www.flickr.com/photos/cityofmanassas

 www.instagram.com/cityofmanassas

 www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva

To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email prrince@manassasva.gov