

A quarterly newsletter of MABAS WISCONSIN incidents and activities that underscore its value to the community and to foster growth and improvement through the sharing of actual experience.

SUMMER 2017

TRAGIC CAMBRIA EXPLOSION FELT THROUGHOUT DIV 135

BY CODY DOUCETTE, FIRE CHIEF, CAMBRIA COMMUNITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

It was **11:01pm, Wednesday night, May 31, 2017**. I had just gone to bed. I had fallen asleep and then I heard what I thought was a door slamming shut. It was weird at first because a CPAP machine in my room quit working. As I sat up in bed my pager went off. I was very dazed at this point so it was all a blur.

When I got up to get my pager I tried turning on the lights and that is when I put 2 and 2 together. There was no power. I used my phone to light my area to get dressed, grab my radio and get my keys.

When I was driving through town, my town, the village of Cambria, it was eerie as there were no lights on and there was a convoy of cars heading to the **Cambria Community Fire Department** station.

"It was the worst night of my life" - Chief Cody Doucette

I remember coming up to the fire station and seeing the lights on and the garage doors open. We have a generator that powers the apparatus side of the station. It was a good feeling knowing that the power was on at the station.

The incident was at **Didion Milling, 501 Williams Street in Cambria**. A Columbia County Sheriff Deputy was on scene first followed by Cambria EMS Ambulance 112 and I was right behind in our Engine 73.



The scene 2 months later. (Photo by Gary Schmidt)

I was in sensory overload. I remember coming around the corner heading past the canning factory and looking over to the left and saying "oh s--t, it is gone"!

I remember getting out of the truck and there was another explosion. I remember seeing people walk towards me and my first instinct was setting up triage being a fulltime critical care medic.

Someone said to me what do you want us to do and that is when I walked away from the ambulance. I remember **Rick Wendt, Pardeeville Fire Chief** arrive on location and he said stay calm.

Having him say that to me made a huge impact. I remember taking a breath and we began setting up command out of the back of his truck.

Knowing the layout of the mill from pre-planning and having great chiefs around me helped assess the situation. Setting up a unified command (with Law Enforcement) and having a Didion employee there to help relay information was great.

But my pre-planning did not cover the scope of this event. We plan for fire or an accident. But the sheer volume that was affected was nothing that I could have planned for. On the other hand, pre-planning made it much easier to determine the resources that we needed.

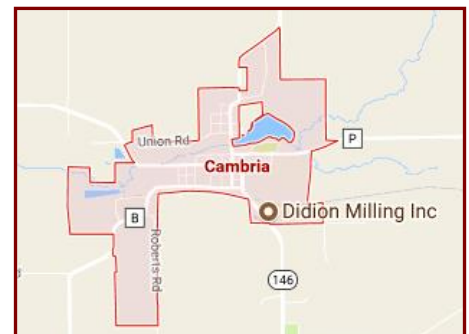
The explosion caused a collapse in place. There was some debris spread about but it was not over a great distance.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY KEVIN BIERCE, CHIEF, PEWAUKEE FIRE DEPARTMENT, AND PRESIDENT, MABAS WISCONSIN

Well it certainly been a busy time in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System with the callout for MABAS coming in a more frequent and unfortunately more intense incidents.

From the southeastern flooding to the Cambria Explosion, we have seen larger and longer deployments which just reinforce the need for our resources management plan. MABAS is nothing new to many of us. For some of us, we're still working out the kinks.

Whatever the case, and we're all in this together, partners in providing service to our communities - neighbors helping neighbors.

Thank you for making it happen. We look forward to continuing to hone our battle skills and preparing for our next challenges.



Mission

MABAS Wisconsin is the organization that promotes the development, implementation, and sustainment of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) within the state of Wisconsin.

TRAGIC CAMBRIA EXPLOSION—CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

Due to the size of this incident and knowing the potential for injury I asked for 4 helicopters immediately.

Being a paramedic, I knew where all the helicopters would potentially be coming from and I was always taught it was better to have them and not need them than need them and not have them. I wanted to give the patients the best chance they could have.

I also immediately called for the **Madison Fire Department Heavy Rescue Team**. I knew of them as I am a fire geek. I love studying different fire departments and knowing what equipment they have. This helped me in my preplans for knowing which departments offered what services.

I didn't have my MABAS cards with me. We normally call mutual aid from

neighboring departments for smaller calls and I started doing that. It took me a minute to get my bearings and then I called for a MABAS box. My dispatch center figured out to use our **Target Hazard MABAS Box Card CB 4-7 for Didion**.

I went to the **4th alarm** right away to make sure that I had the resources if anything escalated further. It was based on what I saw, what I couldn't see, and a gut feeling. I wanted to make sure that we had the necessary resources for the best outcome possible.

Eventually, we had three aerial master streams going. Cambria's Truck was placed on the A side, the Portage Truck was on the B side and Beaver Dam's Truck was on the corner of C Side (A is the front, then clockwise, B-C-D designate the building sides).

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The Cambria Community Fire Department is an all-volunteer fire department. At the time of the Didion call, we had 22 members and all 22 members showed up. Cambria EMS (Cambria Community Ambulance Service) is a separate agency.

I have been a firefighter since 2004. After I became a firefighter I was promoted to Safety Officer. In 2009 I became a Lieutenant. I was elected Chief in October of 2015.

I work fulltime at Divine Savior EMS in Portage WI. I am a critical care paramedic and the EMS Operations supervisor.

When I first got on scene as the Fire Chief, I saw injured people and just wanted to help them. That is what I am trained to do. It was hard to have to walk away from them to set up incident command. - Chief Cody Doucette

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If you see MABAS described in your local community news, please let us know at: garyschmidt@wi.rr.com

TRAGIC CAMBRIA EXPLOSION—CONTINUED

(Continued from page 2)

We also had a few ground monitors going (devices that can hold a flowing firehose nozzle and be left unmanned) and a few hand lines.

It was very hard to attack the fire due to the size of the plant and the location of the fire.

We were pulling water from both the village side and Didion, which has a private high capacity well on the far side of the grounds that supplies the fire suppression system for the ethanol plant (there is a milling side and an ethanol side to the Didion facility).

When we had all the power shut off to the ethanol plant, this in turn shut off the pumps to the well. We had to get two Tender Task Forces to supply water on the C/D side (Beaver Dam's Truck). While we did send crews over to the ethanol side to check on the plant with Didion employees, we did not have to call in any hazmat teams.

Treating the Victims

The hardest part was determining how many employees were working that night. It took us quite a while to get a good count for everyone and how many people we were missing.

In the end there were 16 people involved in the incident with 5 passing away and 11 injured. The injuries were spread across the site.

We had a total of 12 ambulances coming to the scene. Most of them were paged out before our MABAS card was even pulled.

The dispatcher for Columbia County did an amazing job and had resources coming for us immediately.

Cambria EMS called for some ambulances as well.



(Photo courtesy of <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>)

When I was standing in the command area I remember looking over to my right and there were firefighters lined up with tools and lights. It looked like an army ready to go to battle.

When Madison Heavy Rescue Team got on scene, there was no easy way to access the rescue operation going on involving the rail car so a lot of the manpower was used carrying things back to that area. Had we not gone to the 4th alarm right away this would have slowed down this process tremendously.

Madison Assistant Chief Popovich made a suggestion that we should consider calling in **Wisconsin Task Force One (WI-TF1)** due to the sheer size of incident. At that point we knew that we had two people unaccounted for.

As the sun came up we realized there were a lot of potential void spaces where someone could be trapped and that we needed the expertise of WI-TF1. This is when we requested WI-TF1 to come in and help with the search and rescue.

During the next 36 hours, Ryan Hart, Jim Cutsforth (Assistant Chief Cambria), Rick Wendt, Josh Rimmert,

(Continued on page 4)

MABAS WI & WEM Assistance

Due to us losing a water source on the south side of the incident, it was discussed with our MABAS Regional Coordinator that we would need two **tender strike teams** to supply water to the south side trucks. He arranged for them to come from **Dodge (Div. 129) and Fond du Lac (Div. 120) Counties**.

The Division 135 president also worked with the MABAS Regional Coordinator to bring in an **ambulance strike team** from **Dane (Div. 115) County** to stage in the village of Rio as almost every ambulance in the Columbia County was in Cambria.

WEM coordinated with Rick James for WI-TF1 and he was very instrumental in the whole incident operations.

He made great recommendations on what WI-TF1 needed and how we could help them in the search and rescue aspect of the operation.

The WI-TF1 operation started around 1pm on Thursday and, after finding the last victim, they left on Friday morning around 10am.

TRAGIC CAMBRIA EXPLOSION—CONTINUED

(Continued from page 3)

Bruce Miller, Craig Raatz and Clayton Simonson (Fire Chief Portage) and many others helped keep operations moving forward and making sure that I was ok.

This meant the world to me and if it wasn't for them this would not have gone as great as it did.

"I want people to be able to learn from this incident. This incident still affects me everyday and it was hard writing about it" - Chief Cody Doucette

We started to release services around 7am the next morning (Thursday June 1st). We kept 5 departments there to assist when WI-TF1 was to show up. That afternoon we went into operations periods for the remainder of the incident.

We did 12-hour rotations starting at 6pm. Chief Josh Rimmert took care of setting up the operation periods. **The incident was finally terminated on Friday June 2nd around 2pm.**

I also had help from the Columbia County Sheriff's Office. Chief Deputy Darrel Kuhl was in the command area with me for the duration of the initial operations (until 7am). He helped get in touch with Columbia County Emergency Management and WEM.

Having a unified command worked out extremely well and made for easy communications with all aspects of this incident.

Community Impact. We have never experienced anything like this as a department. This was by far the largest and most complex incident that I am aware of in our department's history.

This incident had a serious impact on our community. We lost 5 community members and multiple lives were changed forever. It also strengthened our community by bringing it together. The community has been amazing in fund raising and taking care of our own.

It also affected our fire department. It brought us all closer together. We have had 5 new members join our department. It has also strengthened our bond with all the fire departments around us.

We as a community will continue to learn from this experience and remember the ones we have lost.



(Photo courtesy of <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>)

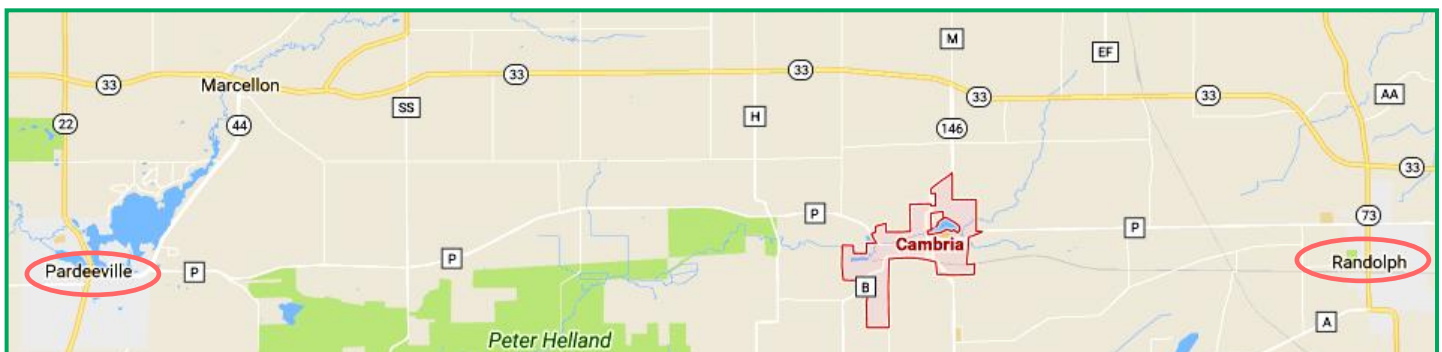
Use of Chiefs

I can't say enough about all the chiefs and assistant chiefs that helped out that night. Rick Wendt was the first chief on scene and he was attached to my hip. We were monitoring 4 radios between the 2 of us. We had Fire suppression, Search and Rescue and a Medical area that were all going on simultaneously.

Josh Rimmert, Fire Chief of Friesland, set up the landing zones at the fire station on the hill. He did a great job coordinating all the helicopters coming in. Bruce Miller, Randolph Fire Chief, took on accountability and Randolph's Assistant Chief, Ed Hoksbergen, was assigned the safety officer. Alan Mannel, Fire Chief of Beaver Dam, took over C/D side command. Craig Ratz from Fire Inspector Portage Fire was B Side Command. Ryan Hart, Cambria Assistant Chief, was overseeing the rescue operations in the rail cars.

Aaron Paul, Fire Chief of Fox Lake, was in charge of Staging area. Michael Popovich, Assistant Chief Madison Fire, oversaw the Madison HURT Team. It was an amazing effort by all these chiefs that made the biggest difference. They were all there when I had a question or needed help with something.

I have worked with all these chiefs throughout the years. Having them all there, and the other chiefs that came in through the whole process, made the operations go as smoothly as they could. I know there are chiefs and assistant chiefs that I am forgetting but they all did an amazing job.



"The location of the calls ranged from Randolph to Pardeeville" - Elisabeth Olson, E911 Center Sergeant

HOW THE DIVISION 135 E911 CENTER HANDLED THE CAMBRIA EXPLOSION

BY ELISABETH OLSON, E911 CENTER SERGEANT, COLUMBIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The **Columbia County Sheriff's Office E911 Center** handles the calls for the Village of Cambria. Our normal staffing for Day Shift (0700-1515) is 3, the PM Shift (1500-2315) is 3, and the Midnight Shift (2300-0715) is 2.

Calls for the incident at Didion came in just as a shift change was occurring and the PM shift stayed until 3am. They were awesome because they stayed without even being asked.

MABAS Wisconsin In Action: Most of the newsletter readers are familiar with a fire scene (because it is so visible), but don't have the ability to comprehend the inside of a dispatch center. In a situation like Didion, is a dispatcher so busy that they don't have the time to take in the scope of the incident?

Sgt. Olson: The dispatcher realizes once the multiple calls come in and the first on scene requests a MABAS box, that the incident is pretty large. If the responders need that much help, we start to understand that the scene must be something out of the ordinary.

MWIA: At what point, does it sink in?

Sgt. Olson: I think it depends on the call. I think this one, from speaking to the dispatchers working, it sunk in right away. Especially taking calls from the victims.

MWIA: Does being isolated within the E911 center help dispatchers maintain focus?

Sgt. Olson: Yes. It is part of the job to stay focused. If we don't then everyone's safety can be put into jeopardy.

MWIA: Do dispatchers feel detached?

Sgt. Olson: I don't think detached is the correct word. More like not in the loop. We get the beginning of the story but never the ending. We always compare our job to reading a really good book and getting into the plot but the last couple chapters are torn out and never know the outcome.

Many calls lack closure for a dispatcher. I think for Didion, we were able to get the information from beginning to end, but a lot of times that isn't the case.

When a MABAS box is initiated, we page over IFERN along with our local channels. The crew that was working has taken quite a few MABAS calls in the past and were quite familiar with the process. The incident began at 11pm; by 12:30am, we took 35 calls related to the incident via 911; 28 of them occurred in the first 30 minutes.

The location of the calls ranged from Randolph to Pardeeville (15 miles). A lot of calls came from outside of Cambria due to their power being out. In addition, Dodge County received 911 calls as Cambria is 5 miles from the county line.

For this emergency, inside our E911 Center, it was hectic. There were quite a few 911 calls that were transferred automatically to our rollover PSAP (Wisconsin Dells Police Department) because all our lines were tied up. We also had a lot of radio traffic not just on our Fire/EMS channel but also on our law channels as well.

We've never had anything to this scale. In the past, we've had the constant phone calls if there is an accident on the interstate or major highway, but once someone gets on scene, the calls stop and radio traffic is minimum.

For the Didion event, we still were receiving calls after help was on scene and there was constant radio traffic. Whether it was the fire command asking for something, emergency management, law enforcement agencies, or EMS, the incident kept going on throughout the night.

Plus, during this incident, the rest of the county still needed to operate and other people still needed calls for service. There was some juggling

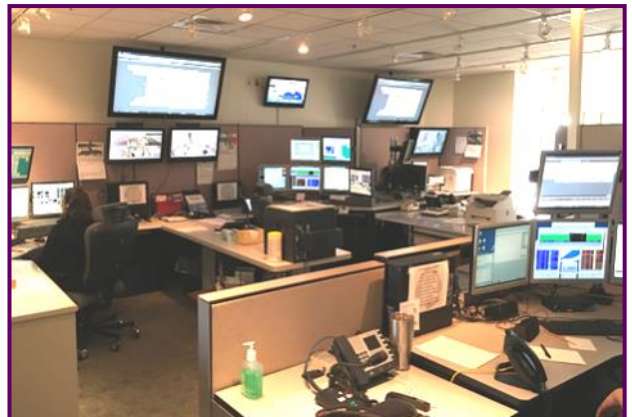
between dispatchers to make sure everything is covered.

Besides Fire Departments, other agencies we were in contact with were various EMS companies, Emergency Management, Salvation Army, Red Cross, Badger Red, excavating companies, rescue task force (WI-TF1), HURT (Madison FD Heavy Rescue), and the highway department. I am sure I am forgetting plenty.

I think for an incident like this MABAS works. The IFERN tones alerted the other counties. There was one miss where another Division did not page out a local Fire Department. I am not sure if it was missed by my dispatch because of the scale of the call or if the other Division acknowledged and then didn't page them. For things such as the HURT team that were not on the card, dispatch must manually contact.

MABAS works well for us in the E911 Center. It is preplanned and everything is in front of the dispatcher. We are able to page everything at once instead of every 1 to 2 minutes getting an update from the fire chief asking us to page another department for a resource.

We are not planning any changes to our MABAS procedures within the E911 Center due to the Didion incident.



MADISON RESCUE TEAM RESPONDS TO DIDION MILLING EXPLOSION

BY MIKE POPOVICH, ASSISTANT CHIEF, MADISON FIRE DEPARTMENT

When Madison Fire arrived with our HURT members we saw a tremendous amount of devastation, however, given the magnitude of the event, Cambria Fire Chief Cody Doucette had “set the table” for the operation and performed as well as any incident commander I have seen.

The Activation. As the on-call Chief responsible for out of the city responses, I got a call from the Dane County Communications Center at about 2300 hours.

Chief Doucette told his Columbia Communications center he wanted a Madison HURT response early in the incident and they called our Center.

We were on scene in about an hour and a half.

The Arrival. Madison HURT has had urban rescue trained personnel for over ten years and not seen an event of this magnitude with this many casualties.

The Challenge. The departments on scene had the larger volumes of fire contained but many small fires were burning under the concrete rubble. Where we worked there wasn't a fire hazard, but instead, a danger of additional concrete collapse.

WI-TF1. We realized the extended need for resources and called Wisconsin Emergency Management TF-1. We requested they respond to make an assessment of what they could provide long term.

The Follow-up. We have discussed several areas to improve but overall the training and equipment members have received proved to be invaluable to the mutual aid response system.



WISCONSIN TASK FORCE ONE (WI-TF1) REQUESTED TO CAMBRIA INCIDENT

BY RICK JAMES, TASK FORCE LEADER, WISCONSIN US&R TASK FORCE 1

When disaster strikes, the State of Wisconsin has a highly trained force of rescuers ready to provide needed assistance.

Wisconsin's **Urban Search and Rescue Task Force (WI-TF1)** was activated on the morning of **June 1, 2017** at the request of the fire chief of the **Cambria Volunteer Fire Department** to assist in the search for victims following the explosion and structural collapse of the Didion Milling plant. WI-TF1 operated through the night and was demobilized after completing its mission on the afternoon of June 2, 2017.

WI-TF1 also deployed to Florida on September 10, 2017 in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma. The Task Force had been requested to assist with search and rescue efforts in the Jacksonville area, but the mission was cancelled two days later when damage from the hurricane was less severe than anticipated in that area.

WI-TF1 is comprised of more than 140 highly-trained personnel including

Capabilities Inherent of WI-TF1:

- Assess, manage, coordinate chaotic or large incidents
- Technical, Wide Area, and K9 Search organization, management, and execution
- Access and rescue of victims from a wide variety of technical and disaster situations
- Advanced medical care
- Establish and maintain communications (radio, cellular, and internet using internal communications cache and outside resources)
- Hazardous materials assessment and monitoring
- Structural assessment
- Self-sustaining for 72-hours (food, shelter, water, sanitation)
- Deployable up to 14 continuous days



WI-TF1 vehicles and equipment (above).

WI-TF1 Base of Operations (BoO) (right).



structural engineers, canine handlers, technical search specialists, doctors, and advanced rescue personnel.

Many of the members of WI-TF1 are firefighters with local fire departments that have an agreement with WEM to make their personnel available for training and deployment.

The participating fire departments are reimbursed by the State when their personnel are participating in WI-TF1 activities.

There are currently eleven fire departments that have agreements with WEM for participation on the task force. These are: Antigo, Appleton, Beloit, Chippewa Falls, Green Bay, Janesville, La Crosse, Menomonie, Neenah-Menasha, Oshkosh, and Superior.

A number of instructors and other personnel assigned to the Regional Emergency All Climate Training (REACT) Center are also members of the Task Force or provide support services.

WI-TF1 is available to stricken communities by request of local emergency managers through the WEM Duty Officer. Currently, WI-TF1 is not a MABAS asset.

Upon deployment by WEM, the main body of WI-TF1 musters at the REACT Center located at Volk Field Air National Guard Base, with the goal of being on the road to the disaster site within six hours.

A liaison team is deployed directly to the incident site to work with the local incident commander and to prepare space for the arrival of WI-TF1.

WI-TF1 is a team specializing in urban hazard mitigation, search and rescue, and incident stabilization.

While their emphasis is the location and extrication of victims trapped in collapsed structures or confined spaces, the task force is capable of responding to state and national disasters including earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and man-made technological and terrorist events.

The capabilities of WI-TF1 are not designed to replace the highly-trained local responders in our state, but is built and maintained to support these local responders in times of disaster.

WI-TF1 is owned and managed by Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM), funded through federal Homeland Security funds.

WISCONSIN TASK FORCE ONE RESPONSE RESOURCES

BY RICK JAMES, TASK FORCE LEADER, WISCONSIN US&R TASK FORCE 1

Task force members receive over 300 hours of general rescue and position specific training to qualify to function in their assigned roles.

Task force members also have annual training requirements including three quarterly training sessions and participation in a 72-hour operational readiness exercise every other year. WI-TF1 is built around the following areas:

- Command
- Rescue
- Medical
- Logistics
- Hazardous Materials
- Planning
- Search – Technical, Wide Area and K9

WI-TF1 Mission

The mission of WI-TF1 is to assist stricken communities who have been overwhelmed by the effects of an emergency by providing specialized resources to aid the local authorities in hazard mitigation, search and rescue, and incident stabilization. The focus of this system is to provide both “quick strike” capabilities and the ability to sustain operations for a minimum of 72-hours to ensure maximum survivability of trapped victims.

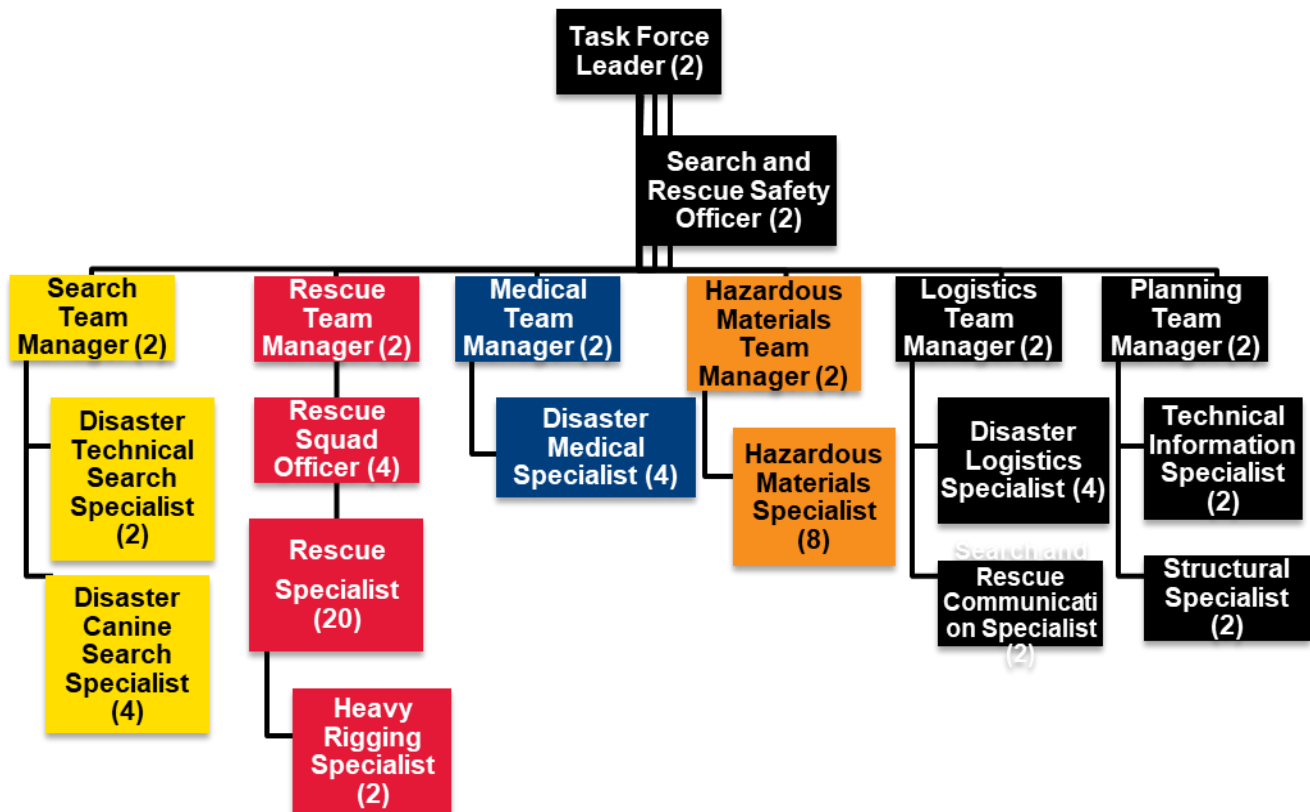
Mission-Ready Packages

WI-TF1 is currently working to increase its usefulness to local communities by developing Mission-Ready Packages (MRPs) or modular response capabilities designed to address specific response and recovery needs. The types of MRPs being developed include:

- Canine Search
- Command Support
- Logistics Support
- Search Support
- Structures Specialist Support

WI-TF1 can respond as a NIMS Type II US&R Task Force (80 personnel) capable of 24-hour search and rescue operations or a NIMS Type III US&R Task Force (40 personnel) capable of 12-hour search and rescue operations.

NIMS Type II US&R Task Force



MABAS DIVISION SPOTLIGHT - DIV 112 BROWN COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

BY PAT PEREZ, COMMUNICATIONS SUPERVISOR, BROWN COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY



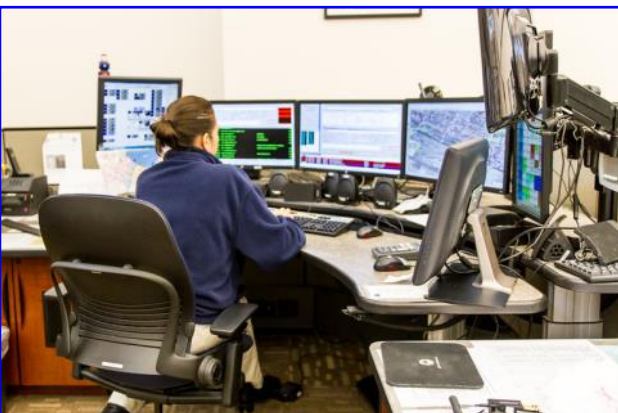
Brown County Public Safety Communications averages 10 to 12 MABAS Calls to the box level or higher each year.

We went live with MABAS Dispatch in the Spring of 2009. A change we made since then is we now do a "Pre-Alert" MABAS page within 30 seconds of Incident Command requesting an upgrade.

This is very quick and simple - "This is MABAS Division 112 to all locals the "XYZ fire department has declared a Box Alarm for Card number "XXXX". All units stand-by for assignments."



The only other changes we have made were related to a new radio system that was put into place in 2013. We now have interoperability that we did not have when we first started. We have one common MABAS tone to alert the entire county - rather than having to page departments according to what tower they normally hit off of.

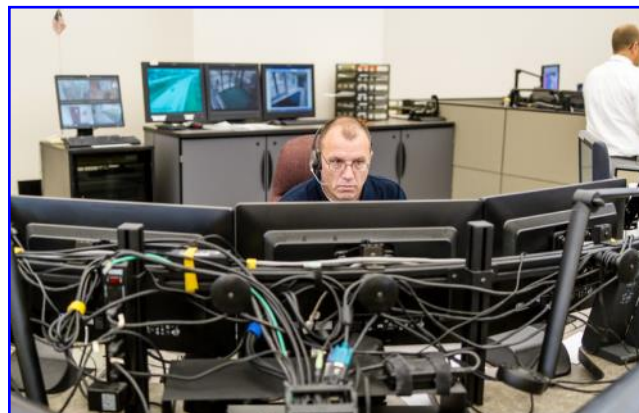


Our MABAS Cards are stored in paper form in 3-ring binders in page protectors so that dispatchers can write on the cards with dry erase markers - when the call is complete the pages can be wiped off and reused. We have all adjacent Division's Box cards stored electronically.

When a resource takes a pass during a MABAS call, we automatically drop down a level in the card and page the next resource of the same type.

Our fire dispatchers train for an average of 240 hours - this includes MABAS. We also try to hold yearly MABAS refreshers that include scenario practices with MAYDAY and Retreat/Evacuate.

We are fortunate enough to have two dedicated fire dispatchers on duty always with generally a backup fire dispatcher or two somewhere in the room. When a working fire occurs, we make every attempt to move a backup dispatcher in place to assist.



Both our fire dispatch positions and the room Supervisor monitor IFERN at all times. Not many divisions near Brown County use IFERN, but we can hear skip from southern Wisconsin Divisions. We have not experienced IFERN overload.

When an adjacent division has an active box, the room supervisor is made aware of the "increased awareness" and passes it on to the fire dispatchers - it is nice to have a heads up that a request is coming.



As far as suggestions that may be helpful to other dispatch centers, especially ones that are just in the beginning stages of being a MABAS Division - practice, make up scenarios, practice those scenarios with other dispatchers in down time, and drill with the fire departments.

The easiest aspect for our dispatchers during a MABAS call is our Pre-Alerts. Most difficult is cloning incidents in CAD and keeping track of Apparatus status (location and times).

(All photos by Matt Gerber. These and other photos can be found at firstinphotos.smugmug.com)

INNOVATIVE AMBULANCE USED AT WISCONSIN STATE FAIR

BY KURT ZELLMANN, ASSISTANT CHIEF (EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES), WEST ALLIS FIRE DEPARTMENT

The **ASAP All Terrain Ambulance** went into service in May of 2017. The unit, made by **Alternative Support Apparatus LLC**, was funded by two different grant sources and matching funds provided by the City of West Allis.

The primary purpose of the unit is to provide protection and rescue response capability into the construction zone created by the multi-year Zoo Interchange Project (where I-94 and I-41/I-894/US-45 meet).

The **West Allis Fire Department (WAFD)** maintains the vehicle in a state of readiness to respond to this area and the vehicle is housed at WAFD Station #63 near WI Hwy 100 and Greenfield Avenue (WI-59).

The ASAP All Terrain Ambulance has been utilized in a series of events so far in its limited time with the WAFD.

The unit's busiest time by far though has been at the **Wisconsin State Fair Park Grounds** during the eleven-day run of the Wisconsin State Fair (the Fairgrounds are within the City of West Allis, except for some ancillary buildings at the north end which are in the City of Milwaukee).

The unit has also provided service at the three-day Harvest Fair event on the Fair Grounds.



The ASAP was very helpful in accessing and surveying remote areas of a nearly two-mile-long train derailment in July 2017 in West Allis. In August, shortly after the State Fair ended, the unit responded deep into the Zoo Interchange construction zone to transport a party injured in a dump truck roll-over. It has also been used in two separate mass casualty simulations within Milwaukee County and as a stand by EMS unit at a fun run through a County Park.

There are no hard and fast restrictions on the use of the ASAP All Terrain Ambulance. Within the WAFD its use is at the discretion of the membership as they see fit.

Outside of the WAFD the department has agreed to make the unit available in emergencies to MABAS participating agencies within the Southeastern Wisconsin **Healthcare Readiness Coalition "HERC" Region 7** boundaries and further if there is significant need.

Fond du Lac (Div. 120), Sheboygan (Div. 113), Washington (Div. 111), Ozaukee (Div. 119), Waukesha (Div. 106), Milwaukee (Div. 107), Walworth (Div. 103), Racine (Div. 102) and Kenosha (Div. 101) counties all fall within the HERC Region 7 confines.

The vehicle is fully equipped with warning lights, a siren and even Opticom traffic-signal preemption. It has a top road speed of 48 mph. Our policy is to drive it directly to any call within our city or within a reasonable distance to a directly adjoining community to ours. Any request by an agency further than that and the WAFD has an agreement with a local towing company to respond with a roll back flat bed and they will transport the unit to wherever it needs to go.

In the event of an emergent request or need for the vehicle outside of West Allis, the WAFD will provide the vehicle staffed as an ALS equipped unit with two paramedics for the first operational period of an event or emergency. If the vehicle is required beyond that time frame it will be at the discretion of the Chief of the WAFD. The vehicle may be requested by contacting WAFD Dispatch at (414) 302-8000, via radio as a Division 107 Resource, or by contacting the HERC Region 7 24-hour hotline (414) 278-2007.



(Photos by Gary Schmidt)

FIRE PROTECTION AT THE WISCONSIN STATE FAIR

BY KURT ZELLMANN, ASSISTANT CHIEF (EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES), WEST ALLIS FIRE DEPARTMENT

For the annual run of the State Fair the **West Allis Fire Department** (WAFD) essentially opens and staffs another station (inside the grounds). Station 64 is in service from 9am until Midnight each day of the Fair. Staffing is six Firefighter/Paramedics, two are assigned to the ASAP All Terrain Ambulance and four are assigned to an Engine.

The WAFD responds to all ALS level calls for the run of the Fair (the State contracts with a local private ambulance firm, also stationed on the Fairgrounds, for BLS calls). Run volume is highly variable, but typically it is weather dependent. The higher the temperature, the higher the run volume, with weekends and high attendance days resulting in more runs. Outside of the Fair dates, WAFD responds to all calls within the Fair Grounds.

In 2010, a full-scale evacuation of the entire Sky Glider system was performed by WAFD and mutual aid partners after a component in the driveline stranded all parties on the elevated ride. The evacuation was completed with multiple Fire Department aerial platforms and on-site Cherry Pickers.

ASAP Specifications

All WAFD personnel were trained in the operational capabilities and systems of the unit. The training consisted of lecture and hands on operation of the unit both on and off road.

We felt it necessary to educate all our members in not only the units capabilities but it's limitations as well for safety purposes.

The unit has a 4000 lb. winch that can be remotely operated and deployed to either the front or rear depending on the circumstances. The unit has an on-board generator, Air Conditioning, and a pole mounted LED scene light that is powered by the generator.

For the year 2016 the WAFD had 123 incidents at the State Fairgrounds with 56 of those occurring during the run of the State Fair. The vast majority of the calls are for medical service, but there is the occasional fire and fire alarm from structures on the Fairgrounds.

During the run of State Fair, the equipment and apparatus assigned to Station 64 do not leave the Fair Park. For EMS calls, the ASAP All Terrain Ambulance responds within the grounds to assess and retrieve the patient. If transport is required, the crew of the ASAP All Terrain Ambulance requests a standard transporting ambulance to respond either emergent or non-emergent from a station within the City or from one of our mutual aid partners to one of several pre-determined staging locations on the edge of the Fair Park.

The goal of this system is to keep the large transporting apparatus from needing to enter the crowded fair grounds. The ASAP All Terrain Ambulance is far better at navigating the crowds and narrow streets and alleys of the Fairgrounds than a full-sized transporting ambulance. This method is also much safer and more efficient for both the fair goers and the public safety staff that would be needed to assist in getting a full-sized ambulance through the crowds of people.

The crew of the ASAP All Terrain Ambulance transports the patient from the emergency scene to the staged transporting unit. Once at the rendezvous point, the patient is transferred from the ASAP unit to the Transporting unit. Most of the time this is done by simply exchanging identical cots from one WAFD unit to another. When needed, all our mutual aid partners (in particular ALS paramedic units) are pre-programmed into our CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system and it recommends to dispatchers



resources based on distance from the Fairgrounds.

All partners are provided with advanced notice of the Fair and routing instructions to the pre-determined EMS staging areas as well as radio communications guides and a grid style map of the entire Fairgrounds.

During the eleven-day run of the State Fair an additional one million people descend on the City of West Allis and our in-city resources utilization rates increase significantly.

As a result, it is fairly common during the run of the Fair for multiple mutual aid partners to be assigned simultaneous calls within our city and we rely on their assistance for patient transports often.

During this period, our engine or truck companies are providing first response to EMS calls and are providing ALS level aid to patients until the transporting units arrive.

Other events at the Fairgrounds

Any racing event at the Milwaukee Mile (professional race track within the Fairgrounds) is covered by a two person ALS/BLS ambulance dedicated to the event. The three-day Harvest Fair is the other major event that takes place and is covered by a dedicated EMS unit. All other special events are evaluated based on need or the request of event organizers. This past year presidential visits and political rallies have been provided on site EMS coverage as a precautionary measure.

DIV 107 - THINKING OUTSIDE THE MABAS BOX CARD BY GARY SCHMIDT, EDITOR, MABAS WI NEWSLETTER

In 2006, Milwaukee County began actively functioning as MABAS Division 107. Division 107 may be unique in Wisconsin as the county is fully incorporated - there are no townships. All 19 villages and cities are contiguous, for the most part sharing the same street grid and a given street may pass through many municipalities. The division is the most populous county in Wisconsin and has a robust system of Fire Departments, one of which is a consolidation of seven communities.

It was during the 1950's and 1960's that all townships were consumed. Very jagged boundaries were formed as the suburbs raced to annexation with the City of Milwaukee. What resulted was for some neighborhoods, the nearest firehouse was in an adjacent municipality. It wasn't until MABAS arrived and presented an infrastructure that enabled fire departments to rethink the traditional practice of sending all their equipment to a fire despite the fact another department might have a firehouse closer.

For many years, Division 107 used **the local dispatch area** to designate the first alarm that often had a mix of departments. However, the Box Card and MABAS in general did not adequately solve the issue of specifying the closest firehouses for the initial response (sometimes called a "working still"). At first, a large number of cards were specified for each address-block. But that was counterproductive when seconds counted during an escalating incident.

Some Division 107 departments have solved that issue, by combining the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system with the MABAS Box

cards, by expanding the use of the local dispatch area. **Jay Scharfenberg, Assistant Chief (Operations) of the West Allis Fire Dept.** explains:

"We've built our CAD with 15 engine companies, 10 truck companies, 15 med units, 2 heavy rescue companies and 10 chief officers for each address in the city. The resources belong to our city as well as the other Fire Departments".

"The order of recommended companies will vary depending on which response zone the incident address is in (there are 12 zones in West Allis), but the companies are always recommended by CAD based on order of proximity to the incident address, regardless of municipal boundaries".

"Currently we pull a 2nd alarm for a structure fire from CAD before moving to a MABAS box. Starting in 2018 we will be able to pull a 3rd alarm for a structure fire directly from our CAD (local dispatch area on the card) without moving into MABAS".

"For us, MABAS is transitioning to a tool that is used to deal with catastrophic events rather than a tool that is used for routine incidents".

"We maintain a mass casualty MABAS card which may be used to provide resources at State Fair, but we do not have a MABAS card specifically for the Fair".



"With Milwaukee County Fire Departments typically staffing over three dozen paramedic rigs 24/7, we can pull up to 15 paramedic units out of our own CAD system without switching over to MABAS".

"However, should something catastrophic happen, it's great having MABAS available to us".

It should be noted that while some Division 107 departments have expanded their local dispatch area section to include multiple alarm levels, they still adhere to the MABAS standards, including, minimum staffing & certification and using Red, White, and Blue.

Until they reach the MABAS level, a local common communications channel is used. This frees up IFERN, but IFERN is switched to once the MABAS level is reached.

DEPARTMENT NAME: West Allis		BOX ALARM TYPE: Structure Fire				EFFECTIVE DATE: December 19, 2016	
BOX ALARM # 1-11		LOCATION OR AREA: Citywide				AUTHORIZED SIGNAT <i>Steve Bone</i>	
LOCAL DISPATCH AREA:							
ALARM LEVEL	ENGINES	TRUCKS	SQUADS	AMBULANCES	CHIEFS	SPECIAL EQUIPMENT	CHANG
Smoke Assignment	2	1		1	1		
Full Still Structure Fire	1	1			1		
Working Still Structure Fire	1	1		1	1		Milwau City of Bro
Working Still 2nd Alarm	2	1			1	Wauwatosa Utility 55	
MABAS BOX ALARM:							
ALARM LEVEL	ENGINES	TRUCKS	SQUADS	AMBULANCES	CHIEFS	SPECIAL EQUIPMENT	CHANG
BOX	Milwaukee City of Brookfield	Milwaukee		Milwaukee ALS	Milwaukee North Shore	Milwaukee RIT Team Milw. Fire Bell	New Br Greenc North S
2ND	New Berlin Greendale	North Shore		Wauwatosa ALS	New Berlin City of Brookfield	Milwaukee Command Post	Hales Co Cuda Milwa

2017 ANNUAL COMMAND & DISPATCH CONFERENCE BY GARY SCHMIDT, EDITOR, MABAS WISCONSIN NEWSLETTER

The 2017 MABAS Wisconsin Annual Command & Dispatch Conference was held August 3-5 in Stevens Point. This issue and subsequent newsletters will report on activities that were held as well as reactions from participants.

One of the many highlights were the guest speakers. Three of them had a common theme: an incident occurred that was never anticipated, there were some unique challenges encountered, and it heavily involved fire responders, emergency managers, and dispatchers.

These presentations included actual radio transmissions and 911 calls. Communications staff, Incident Commanders and Emergency Management personnel made the presentations. Much of the audience either commiserated with the individual presenters or learned about those other partners involved in disasters. It was captivating, entertaining, informative, educational, and thought provoking.

Gatlinburg Tennessee experienced a wildfire about a year ago that engulfed much of the entire town and threatened a major tourist attraction called Dollywood (owned by Dolly Parton).

Kevin Lauer detailed the response and the challenges encountered and the decisions that needed to be made from an Emergency Management perspective.

Sublette Illinois in MABAS Division 38 (90 miles west of Chicago in Lee County) suffered an F2 tornado that struck the Woodhaven Campground. The campground contains over 6,000 campsites.

Fortunately, only 300 were occupied on Monday, June 22, 2016, but nonetheless, the storm caused unfathomable challenges not only to those responding to the heavily wooded area, but also to the dispatch center.

The **Iron Ridge / Dodge County** Emergency Manager, Incident Commander, and Dispatch Supervisor detailed their experiences with the search for 3 teens lost in an

abandoned underground mine that occurred in July 2016. Again, many lessons were learned from the incident that spanned overnight hours.



Presentation of the Tennessee Fire Chief's Association's Mutual Aid Response Team to Gatlinburg (Photo by Gary Schmidt)



Acknowledging those who volunteered to make the conference a success (Photo by Gary Schmidt)

STANDARDIZATION IS KEY TO MABAS SUCCESS BY GARY SCHMIDT, EDITOR, MABAS WISCONSIN NEWSLETTER

MABAS is many things but ultimately it is a regional solution to a local emergency. To maintain coverage in the communities surrounding the stricken locale, escalation continues extending outward in the region. In some cases, this means crossing state lines.

In Wisconsin, 62 of the 72 counties are part of MABAS, consisting of 59 divisions. Illinois has 69 divisions, expanding into all 102 counties. Indiana has 16 divisions in 18 counties and Michigan has 22 divisions.

Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri are moving towards implementing MABAS and has some departments already belonging to MABAS in a bordering state.

To make this work - being both functional and effective - standardization is mandatory.

This was proven when many responded to help in the September 11th attacks (2001) and hurricanes Rita (2005) and Katrina (2005), but lack of interoperability hampered responders. A call for change came from the national level; the National Incident Management System (NIMS) was established in 2004 and revised in 2008.

MABAS, which was already in use in Illinois for 20 years (including 5 southern Wisconsin counties), served as the foundation for Wisconsin to meet the federal directives.

MABAS in all States uses the same radio frequencies (IFERN, Red, White, Blue), same terminology for resources, same announcement script over IFERN, same minimum staffing, same firefighter certification, and same Box Card format. This is a critical point.

This "sameness" allows for seamless integration for any participating department. The stricken Incident Command staff can rely on getting the resources expected.

MABAS respects that at the local level, fire departments may have differing policies and procedures. This is accommodated by the **Local Dispatch Area** on the Box Card. Departments listed in that area of a card may have an agreement with the requesting department that differs from MABAS policies. However, once the MABAS level is reached, responding agencies must meet MABAS standards.

With hundreds of Divisions and thousands of Fire Departments participating, member-departments must adjust their procedures to meet the whole; otherwise a return to ineffectiveness is eventual.

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How to Receive MABAS Emails

Visit the list server site, enter your email address & name and click "subscribe":

<http://mailman.wsfca.com/mailman/listinfo>

Incident Reporting Is Important & Easy To Do

MABAS Wisconsin has a tool in place to log the use of MABAS. The **Incident Entry Portal** can be accessed via <http://incident.mabaswisconsin.org> or through <http://www.mabaswisconsin.org> using the Databases drop down box.

To enter an incident, login with a UserID of *mabas* and a password of *wisconsin*. After the initial entry, Departments need their specific credentials to alter the incident information or to alter the other information on the site about their department. Departments should contact their Division President for the login information

Incidents Entered February, 2017 thru April 30, 2017				
Date & Time	Location	Div.	Host Agency	Box Type
2/5/2017 12:00	9812 silver springs rd	125	GRATIOT VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
2/7/2017 10:19	W375 S2045 Hwy Z	106	DOUSMAN FIRE DIST	Structure - Non Hydrant
2/18/2017 20:38	4704 Terminal Dr	115	MCFARLAND FIRE DEPT	Commercial - Hydrant
2/22/2017 0:00	3656 State Rd 23	124	DODGEVILLE VOL FIRE DEPT	Commercial - Non Hydrant
2/24/2017 6:05	W137 N6076 Weyerhaven Ct	106	MENOMONEE FALLS FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
2/27/2017 13:31	W349 S8186 Whitetail Dr	106	EAGLE FIRE DEPT	Brush Fire
2/27/2017 16:32	10929 County Hwy. "T"	132	CHIPPEWA FIRE DIST	Structure - Non Hydrant
2/27/2017 22:17	380 Cardigan Ct	106	WALES GENESEE FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
2/27/2017 23:05	200 C Ave	144	GOODMAN VOL FIRE DEPT	Target Hazard
3/3/2017 5:14	6975 Baker Rd.	124	ARENA VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
3/7/2017 0:00	W4820 Krueger RD	127	BLACK CREEK VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
3/8/2017 12:19	3201 CTH H	102	SOUTH SHORE CONSOL FIRE/EMS DEPT	Disaster
3/8/2017 15:01	N3570 Sunset Lane	127	ELLINGTON TWP FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
3/13/2017 12:00	N16798 State Hwy 13	149	PARK FALLS VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
3/20/2017 14:54	431 East Main Street	137	GILLETT CITY VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
3/24/2017 22:15	851 Chelsea Drive	103	ELKHORN AREA FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
3/27/2017 14:48	409 Prairie View Dr	106	NORTH PRAIRIE VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
4/1/2017 5:13	386 Ledgeview Av	120	FOND DU LAC CITY FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
4/1/2017 15:26	18693 Hidden Lake Road	137	LAKEWOOD VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
4/14/2017 19:17	N5474 Stillwater Ct	119	WAUBEKA FIRE DEPARTMENT	Structure - Non Hydrant
4/20/2017 0:00	N2947 Valley View Drive	127	ELLINGTON TWP FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
4/30/2017 0:00	N76 W14818 Clare Drive	106	MENOMONEE FALLS FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
4/30/2017 0:02	W1211 Sunny Circle Dr	118	SULLIVAN VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
4/30/2017 20:05	N76 W14818 Clare Dr	106	MENOMONEE FALLS FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant

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Let us know when you have a
 circumstance where you
 found yourself

“Thinking Outside the
 MABAS Box Card”

at garyschmidt@wi.rr.com

For more information
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MABAS – Wisconsin

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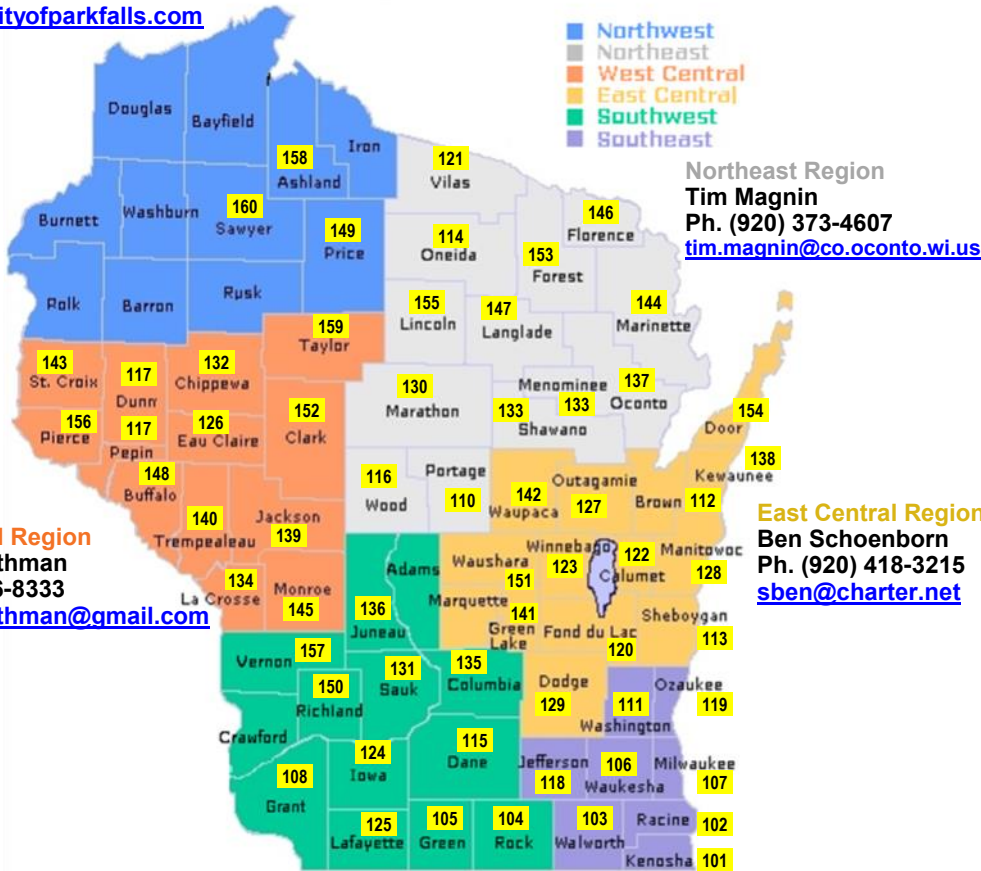
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MABAS Divisions

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- 103 – Walworth County
- 104 – Rock County
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- 110 – Portage County
- 111 – Washington County
- 112 – Brown County
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- 126 – Eau Claire County
- 127 – Outagamie County
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- 131 – Sauk County
- 132 – Chippewa County
- 133 – Shawano/Menominee Cnty
- 134 – La Crosse County
- 135 – Columbia County
- 136 – Juneau County
- 137 – Oconto County
- 138 – Kewaunee County
- 139 – Jackson County
- 140 – Trempealeau County
- 141 – Green Lake County
- 142 – Waupaca County
- 143 – St. Croix County
- 144 – Marinette County
- 145 – Monroe County
- 146 – Florence County
- 147 – Langlade County
- 148 – Buffalo County
- 149 – Price County
- 150 – Richland County
- 151 – Waushara County
- 152 – Clark County
- 153 – Forest County
- 154 – Door County
- 155 – Lincoln County
- 156 – Pierce County
- 157 – Vernon County
- 158 – Ashland County
- 159 – Taylor County
- 160 – Sawyer County

Red Center -

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MABAS OPERATING FREQUENCIES

- IFERN MABAS Alerting / intra-Divisional responses
- IFERN2 Alternate intra-Divisional responses
- MABAS1 (WISCOM) Inter-Divisional Responses
- MABAS2 (WISCOM) Contact with Wisconsin Red Center
- Regional Coordinators - WEM Coordination*
- *Future use