

# MABAS-WISCONSIN *in ACTION*

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 1

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.

WINTER 2019-20

## DIV 118 NEEDS INTERDIVISIONALS AT HELENVILLE CHRISTMAS DAY BUSINESS FIRE

BY RAY MADISON, CHIEF, HELENVILLE FIRE AND RESCUE DISTRICT

It was **Christmas morning, December 25, 2019, in Helenville Wisconsin**, a rural community in Jefferson County, located about 5 miles south of I-94, midway between Milwaukee and Madison. Along one of our two-lane roads is 52,000 square foot building. In the past, it was a machine shop, then an electronics manufacturer. After several additions and modifications, its present use housed 11 different businesses plus some storage units.

Helenville gets only 1 or 2 fires per year. At **7:21am**, a worker in one of the businesses reported a fire.



I was first on scene and saw smoke coming from between the roof and side walls along with smoke coming from the roof farther into the building.

I knew we would be there most of the day if the fire could be controlled to the front section of the building. The building, located at **N4525 Hwy D in Helenville**, was 20% concrete block, 15% wood frame, and 65% steel structure with numerous wood frame room dividers.

Being Christmas, it was a good thing because more personnel were not at a full-time job. But, it was a bad thing because it took so many firefighters away from their families for most of Christmas Day.

I knew every time I called for another Box, I was disrupting more family Christmases but as a brotherhood, fire departments came just the same with very few passes.

At **7:28am**, I upgraded **Jefferson County MABAS Div. 118 Boxcard 50-2** to the **box level**. At **7:31am**, I upgraded tenders to the **2<sup>nd</sup> alarm**, then the **3<sup>rd</sup> alarm**.

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Top left: Side C rear. Bottom left: Side B's poor access. Bottom Right: Side D. See page 3 for Side A front of building. (Photos by Helenville Fire and Rescue)



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### COVID Impact on Newsletter

In early March, 2020, we had 75% of the winter-season articles completed when we suspended all communications with Fire Chiefs/Officers as it was obvious something much more critical was taking priority. In May, 2020, we decided to publish what we had along with some COVID related additions.

We will continue holding off on reaching out to you for information for future issues, but will accept and follow-up on any MABAS related information you would like to share with us.

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

We are many weeks into the COVID-19 pandemic but our real business, the stuff we do really good hasn't come to an end and I expect to see it picking up as the summer arrives.

I appreciate all the work that MABAS leaders continue to do, as handling this pandemic has been a challenge for everyone.

I know it's been difficult for both the larger agencies as well as the smaller agencies. As a whole, we've learned a lot and we continue to learn.

But the one thing that I like to just push out is that the communication cycle that we learned in these last couple of weeks, from sharing between divisions, sharing within interdivisional, sharing between states, and sharing with the **SEOC (State of Wisconsin Emergency Operations Center)** has improved.

What we do has made MABAS even more affluent in the world of the fire service. I give Matt Davies and all the MABAS WI Leadership a lot of kudos because their communications have

helped so many, so often.

I don't think it is realized that so many of the ideas offered up have probably saved countless lives because we've been able to share those things with various agencies.

With the turmoil that we've gone through, it's nice to know that when things are really turning dark on your side of the fence, you can reach out and find a friend really quick through MABAS.



**COVID NOTE FROM SEOC** *BY MATT DAVIES, WI SEOC ESF 4/9, WI NG JOINT STAFF, RAPID INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM COORDINATOR*

The COVID-19 virus has brought about a weekly call with MABAS from Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, and the Minnesota Fire Marshal's office with Indiana expected to join soon. Discussions include Fire Service and the different political actions occurring. Knowing what how other states are handling various issues has been very valuable.

**COVID IMPACT ON FIREGROUND** *BY RANDY PICKERING, CHIEF, EDGERTON FIRE PROTECTION DIST, AND VICE-PRESIDENT, MABAS WI*

Every day, Illinois and Minnesota, updates their numbers of firefighters exposed to COVID-19, number tested, number coming back positive, and number returned to work.

We haven't implemented that in Wisconsin, but it does give a frame of reference. As of May 6, 2020, Illinois has 133 firefighters in quarantine from 50 different departments with 246 firefighters that have tested positive from the outset. The real scary thing is that Illinois is at two line-of-duty deaths related to COVID-19.

What we in Wisconsin can learn from this is dealing with complacency. It is really hard to maintain vigilance with our personnel to try to make sure that we don't wipe out an entire department with COVID exposure, particularly during a mutual aid event.

Recently, in Wisconsin, there was a large incident that involved many different departments, where two days later, it was discovered that one of the firefighters that was part of the mutual aid response was COVID positive.

At the scene of that fire, it sounds like we didn't do a really good job of crew integrity - keeping crews together and keeping them away from other crews.

The worst part was during rehab, where you got to try to maintain social distancing and separation for crews.

That particular incident ended up exposing personnel from eight different departments before it was done.

**A COVID INTROSPECTIVE** *BY ROB GOPLIN, ASST CHIEF, GREEN BAY METRO FIRE DEPARTMENT, AND SECRETARY, MABAS WISCONSIN*

The other day we (Green Bay Metro Fire Department) went to a third alarm because the city was flooding.

We had guys in cold water rescue suits, wearing P95 respirators, dragging boats down city streets. Sounds like a really bad movie.

I'm standing in our headquarter station and looking out the window and see that we are literally surrounded by all

these different rigs because that was our staging area.

We forced them all to sit in their trucks wearing P95 respirators, not allowing the firefighters to come in the station.

We had that at three of our fire stations, where we basically just had the rigs surrounding the stations because we didn't want to have that

risk of cross contamination (we felt bad but it was true).

Brown County had a sudden dramatic increase in COVID cases. I would encourage you, if your county sees an outbreak or you suspect an escalation, start reaching out and start asking for help early and ask often. Matt Davies is a huge asset at the SEOC to put some feelers out and help get the information to you.

# DIV 118 NEEDS INTERDIVISIONALS AT HELENVILLE BUSINESS FIRE - CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 1)*

I went to a Full 4<sup>th</sup> alarm Box at 7:45am and a 5<sup>th</sup> alarm at 8:55am.

This was due to the size of the building, its rural location which created a water supply issue, the fire load, and access to fire origin due to multiple partitions within the building structure creating a maze to maneuver through.

There was a fire wall that could save over half the building. We needed to be prepared in the event the fire wall was breached. So, we requested an **Interdivisional Tender Strike Team from Division 106 at 9:14am**, and an **Interdivisional Tender Strike Team from Division 104 at 9:21am**.

The firewall protection was successful. There was a tractor

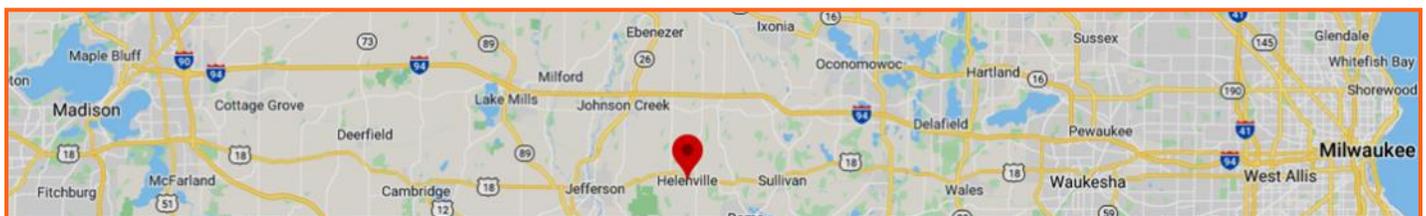
backhoe on site that helped open up walls.

Water supply was for the most part good. Having a building plan of the structure was a big help for officers on scene. The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office drone, having a thermograph sensor, was a big help confirming hot zones.

*(Continued on page 4)*



Front Side A facing East (Photo by Helenville Fire and Rescue )



Helenville is located in Jefferson County on US-18, about the midpoint between Madison and Milwaukee

### Standardization is Key to MABAS Success

MABAS is a regional solution to a local emergency, in use in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan, with Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri moving towards implementation. To make this work - being both functional and effective - standardization is mandatory.

MABAS in all States use 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 "sameness" allows for seamless integration for any participating department. The stricken Incident Command staff can rely on getting as many resources as needed. In a 2010 deployment test, 300 rigs responded from 3 States and arrived in Chicago within 90 minutes (see MABAS Wisconsin In Action newsletter Volume 3, Issue 1).

With hundreds of Divisions and thousands of Fire Departments participating, member-departments must adjust their procedures to meet the organizational standards and policies in order to keep MABAS strong, valuable, and efficient.

## DIV 118 NEEDS INTERDIVISIONALS AT HELENVILLE BUSINESS FIRE - CONTINUED

*(Continued from page 3)*

We **struck out the box at 11:41am** (indicating no further escalation was expected) and terminated command **3:27pm**.

Five or six 6 businesses have been displaced with much of their property lost - approximately 20,000 sq ft had

heavy fire damage and will need to be razed.

MABAS worked as designed, but we ran short of SCBA air bottles and should have started refilling them off site sooner.

Badger Red contacted the MABAS Southeast Regional Coordinator.

The structure had two electric power line going to it and we need to have that noted on the building plans we have.

Having SCBA air supply squads noted on the MABAS card to respond to the scene when we request multiple boxes is something we are thinking about adding.



**Above: Personnel wait the next empty tender to arrive to refill with water at a US-18 fill-site.**

**Below: At US-18 & CR-D, one tender (right background) begins backing down the road to the fire while another tender (foreground) returns to the fill site.** (Photos by Gary Schmidt).

**Above: The tender operation portable water tanks.**  
**Below: An excavator finding hot spots.**

(Photos by Helenville Fire and Rescue )



## THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX: DIV 118 USES MODIFIED FIRE TASK FORCE FOR CHRISTMAS DAY COVERAGE DURING FIRE

BY GARY SCHMIDT

MABAS Division 118, Jefferson County, consists mainly of volunteer departments. Being the Christmas holiday, those volunteers were either at family gatherings or already at the Highway D fire.

And with the fact that Change of Quarters resources on the box card were all used, Chief Ray Madison of Helenville Fire and Rescue, decided to use the MABAS Interdivisional Request tool a slightly different way.

Interdivisional requests typically send resources to the scene of an incident. According to Chief Madison, "A large amount of Division 118 (Jefferson County) resources were committed to Helenville leaving our division at risk countywide if another incident occurred. With the approval of Jefferson's Fire chief, the resources were staged at the Jefferson Fire Station due to its central location of Division 118."

An Interdivisional Fire Task Force was requested, but not needing all types of resources, the Task Force request was limited to Engines and Squads (no Trucks, Tenders, Ambulances, Chiefs).



Left: Here comes the interdivisional task force on US-18, arriving in the city of Jefferson.

Top right: The rigs maneuvering into the City of Jefferson Firehouse.

Bottom Right: Getting the lay of the land from some remaining Jefferson FD personnel. (Photos by Gary Schmidt).

Let us know when you have a circumstance where you find yourself "thinking outside the MABAS Box card"!

## DIV 106 IN ACTION - BUILDING COLLAPSE REQUIRES LIFE SAFETY BOX

BY JEFF STEIN, FIRE CHIEF, MUKWONAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT; PRESIDENT, MABAS DIVISION 106

**Kay's Academy of Dance** is well known in Mukwonago, a village of just under 7,500 people in southwestern Waukesha County. The business is in the process of building a new facility. We were aware of the new construction and type but unaware that they were pouring concrete floors that day, **Wednesday July 3, 2019**. There was an unknown number of workers on site that day (as this varies daily with construction). The **Mukwonago Fire Department** had four on staff (ambulance and engine) and me as the Chief officer that day.

At **8:18am**, a caller reported a partial roof collapse and three patients inside at a new construction site located at **715 Main Street (CR-ES)**.

While enroute, I requested ambulances from neighboring Vernon FD, Eagle FD and East Troy FD as well as the City of Waukesha Special Services Team (SST), from the City of Waukesha Fire Department (CWFD) that Mukwonago contracts for those specialized rescue services.

I arrived at **8:23am**, assumed command of a new construction commercial building with partial roof collapse and began investigating.

I confirmed a second-floor collapse that had pancaked down throwing the individuals on top outward in a half circle, not trapped and clear of the materials that collapsed. Exterior walls were not compromised.

I requested **Waukesha County MABAS Division 106 Box 34-13** to the box level for ambulances due to number of patients.

Radio operations were on 8TACRED (800 MHz version of MABAS VHF Red) and response on OAIFERN (this is a patch with Waukesha County's OASIS 800 MHz radio system talk group to VHF IFERN).

Assisting agencies were Eagle, East Troy, Vernon, Western Lakes, Big Bend, Town of Waukesha, Town of Brookfield and City of Brookfield - all ambulances. CWFD with the SST was cancelled.

By then, I had additional Mukwonago staff that responded with two more ambulances.

Engine 3462 and Med 3488 positioned in parking lot at 801 Main Street. Lt. Cuomo and Paramedic Fickau completed triage.

Operations contacted ProHealth Care Mukwonago ER and Waukesha Memorial Hospital to inform them of the situation and their capabilities.

Mukwonago PD assisted very quickly to shutting down Main Street at this location.



Due to the number of individuals on the site, it took a minute or two to confirm the total number of individuals involved and injured.

I cleared all non-essential people from the structure except for the patients and the Mukwonago Police Department. I had a total of six patients, no entrapment and all were conscious.

*(Continued on page 7)*

Note the wet, freshly poured concrete (Photos by Mukwonago Fire Dept)



## DIV 106 IN ACTION: BUILDING COLLAPSE REQUIRES LIFE SAFETY BOX - CONT

(Continued from page 6)

We explained our traffic flow for ambulances and the Vernon Chief directed ambulances to the entry and exit path (staged southbound on Main Street). Patients were removed and transported. The Town of Brookfield ambulance was redirected to Mukwonago FD Station for change of quarters.

### MABAS assessment and Post-Incident Review.

With the number of volunteer-staffed departments involved, the responses actually were great. The main challenge was that we had 3 med calls during the event.

In trying to coordinate those resources, with Mukwonago being a

separate PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point or Dispatch Center) from Waukesha County Communications (WCC), our communication was good with Mukwonago Dispatch but sometimes confusing to WCC of who was responding to what call.

### Advice for Newer Divisions.

Based on your experience, for counties not yet on MABAS, do you feel you need "all ducks in a row" before joining MABAS, or, at what point can you join the system but not yet be fully organized, just in case the big one happens sooner than later?

For newer Divisions, I think that anytime that you can start organizing response plans for the possibility of these low frequency, high impact, incidents as you progress to joining MABAS is good.

MABAS does give the uniform consistency for communications and expectations.

Having pre-determined resources for specific call types eliminates the stress of determining what agencies and resources you want to request and provides a

template to escalate without causing a delay in response.

Fortunately, in this case, no one was trapped or buried and were clear of any immediate danger and had minor injuries. MABAS provides the ability to get several resources in an expedient time and if need to be additional just by requesting an additional alarm level.

I do plan on changes to my MABAS cards, adding additional ambulances, engines, and squads for staffing.

**Critical lessons learned:** don't limit to specific resources when requesting your box. Take the full alarm assignment - you can always turn them around. We could have used additional staff for patient movement and due to the additional EMS calls during the event, that would have been useful.

This always been my typical practice but for some reason this incident I did not follow my own rule; that will not happen again.

We used majority of face to face communications due to the proximity of the responders which aided in clear and direct orders and requests on scene. Operations and Triage Officers were assigned early which helped with scene control.



(Photo by Mukwonago Fire Dept)

### MABAS WISCONSIN CORPORATE SPONSER

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, MABAS Wisconsin relies on donations and sponsors to further its mission of mutual aid, associated systems, and training.

We thank the following organization for their sponsorship.

**Mutual Aid Labs** provides world-class software to emergency services agencies without regard to their size. For too long size and budget has dictated the quality of technology available to these agencies, Mutual Aid Labs will provide software that revolutionizes processes and procedures, in such a way that it does not place undue burden on an agency's budget.

Mutual Aid Labs is the provider of **EMABAS** full electronic implementation of the *Mutual Aid* Box Alarm System (MABAS).

**EMABAS** converts box cards from static data to dynamic documents that change as departments and agencies change; **EMABAS** transforms the manner in which you plan and respond.

The desktop version of **EMABAS** provides the main interface for creating and using box cards. It also provides interfaces into resources, contacts, dispatch and reporting. Additionally the system has the ability to aid agencies in the use of MABAS during actual Calls.



## DIV 119 IN ACTION - TREE CUTTING SERVICE BUILDING ABLAZE IN GRAFTON

BY BILL RICE, CHIEF, GRAFTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

About a mile away, I could see the orange glow in the sky. I knew we had a substantial fire and it was the larger building on the property. As we pulled up, I could see the building was fully involved, end-to-end. floor to roof. I noticed 2 or 3 service / dump trucks also on fire.

I am the Chief of the Village of **Grafton Fire Department**. The village of Grafton is 5 square miles, located in about the middle of Ozaukee County. The Grafton Fire Department also is contracted for EMS and Fire protection by the Town of Grafton, which is 21 square miles. Originally, the Town was very rural, but over time, there are areas built up of upscale residential subdivisions.

For the most part, the Village is hydrated and the Town is not. Ironically, the Town has 6 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. With few public access points (due to the undeveloped rural areas and bluffs), we have only 1 or 2 calls per year on Lake Michigan.

It was **3:25am on Saturday January 4, 2020**. My pager woke me alerting me that a Village of Grafton Police Officer noticed an orange glow in the sky and a building on fire in the distance in the Township of Grafton.

The village has many big-box stores, shopping centers, a hospital, a large high school, and a large river bisecting the area, but the Town doesn't.

Upon seeing the address, **1009 Arrowhead Road**, I knew it was the **Hoppe Tree Service** property (well-known in southeast Wisconsin). Having been there before, I knew the buildings. The area is agricultural & residential and at the end of a dead-end road, it is the only business.

The access is ½ mile from CR-W; after the I-43 overpass bridge, there is an intersecting street – a cul-de-sac with a few houses along it.

I knew the Hoppe property had sheds, outbuildings, and storage buildings. The same property (which is 37 acres), in an area where excess scrap wood from trees was piled up, had a significant brush fire that went to a 3<sup>rd</sup> alarm MABAS Box on 8-25-13.

While enroute, I was thinking about the restricted access to the property and how challenging the water supply would be. I was hoping it was one of the smaller outbuildings that was on fire.

The site was in a rural area, did not have paved driveways, had muddy conditions due to unfinished grounds and unlike a village fire, a business fire is unpredictable with potential unknown hazardous materials. Oh, also, there are railroad tracks that go through the property.

I have a full-time Division Chief, a part-time (paid on-call) Deputy Chief, three full-time paramedic/firefighters and a volunteer staff of about 40 – 20 are paramedic/firefighters, 10 are certified as firefighters, and 10 are EMT's.

They are very dedicated and I expected that my Department would respond with 2 engines (staffed with 4 personnel each), a ladder truck (staffed with 4), a tender (staffed with 2), and an ambulance (staffed with 2), along with my Division and Deputy Chiefs.

In this case, we also were able to staff a third engine with 2 personnel.

*(Continued on page 9)*



(Photos by Grafton Fire Department)

For more information about becoming a member of MABAS Wisconsin or to view all issues of this newsletter, visit: [www.mabaswisconsin.org](http://www.mabaswisconsin.org) (scroll down for newsletter links)

## DIV 119 IN ACTION - TREE CUTTING SERVICE BLDG ABLAZE IN GRAFTON - CONT

*(Continued from page 8)*

While enroute, my Division Chief (who was just ahead of me) took it to a **full still**. When he passed the edge of the Village on CR-W, he radioed me that the Aurora-Grafton Hospital grounds, a mile from the scene, but the last of the divided roadways, **would make a good staging area.**

Once on scene, I called our Dispatch and upgraded **Ozaukee County MABAS Division 119 card 8-12 to the box level.**

We knew the building would not be savable, but there were some adjacent structures and vehicles that were not involved yet. We needed to setup a sustainable water supply about 1,500 feet of LDH to nearest intersection and not at the end of the dead-end road due to a need to turnaround the water tenders.

So we set up the portable dump tanks drafting area away from the fire at Indian Hill Drive & Arrowhead Road. It was 1,400 feet from attack engine at the fire scene to the drafting engine. Access was a challenge. We needed to ensure supply line was off to the side of the road so rigs could get to the scene.

By establishing the staging area at Aurora-Grafton Hospital, it gave us good control of resources and a spacious place to park the rigs. Roads narrowed after that.

Aurora was a well-known, visible location, and also became the initial fill site (a second site at Arrowhead Rd & Delaware, a ½ mile west of CR -W eventually also used).

We did not have a good circular flow for the water shuttles due to dead end roads near the incident. Tenders called in one at a time by the water officer to the water dump site when needed.

We used the prescribed MABAS radio channels: VHF-IFERN, FG (fireground)-Blue for water, and FG-Red for fire.

We had no radio comm issues.

We needed to upgrade to a **2<sup>nd</sup> alarm and a 3<sup>rd</sup> alarm for tenders only.**

MABAS brought me enough Chiefs to handle Command, Operations, Water Supply, Staging and Safety positions.

At one point our captain noticed what appeared to be oil draining from the structure. The Ozaukee County Level B Haz Mat team was special-called and was able to soak it up. I assumed it was from oil containers for chain saws and other tree cutting equipment.

Around **6am**, rigs started leaving the scene. At **7:46am**, the last unit cleared the scene. The Change of Quarters companies helped with cleanup at the station – completed by **8am**.

### Five MABAS Responses in Seven Weeks for the Grafton Fire Department By Gary Schmidt

The Grafton Fire Department had five MABAS responses that were at least a 2nd alarm level in seven weeks, three of which were in Grafton.

I asked Chief Bill Rice about that:

**Schmidt:** From a resource-needs perspective, how did the role of MABAS play out for each one?

**Chief Rice:** All worked smoothly. MABAS is part of our response plan. We rely on MABAS resources. MABAS works consistently and little effort is needed to get many resources. Last two incidents (in rural areas) needed a lot of water tenders and I was able to get them quickly.

**Schmidt:** What was the impact on your department having five events so close together?

**Rice:** Our volunteers rise to the occasion. They get to use the skills they train on. No burnout.

**Schmidt:** You were the Deputy Chief of a department in Milwaukee County (Division 107) for many years when MABAS was just taking off beginning in 2006. You typically participated in early MABAS events throughout that Division. Being the most populous county in the State, there is a higher incidence of large fires – 31 MABAS alarms occurred by early 2013 (when you became Chief in Grafton), of which you were involved in over 24 of them. Has MABAS changed from your Milwaukee County days to the use of MABAS in Ozaukee County?

**Rice:** Hasn't changed at all. MABAS techniques have been steady in the last 14 years I have been using it. As MABAS use has increased in Division 119, we got more familiar with MABAS. We get more passes in rural areas due to non full-time depts than I had in Division 107. We're just trying to get a little better at it here in Ozaukee County.

# DIV 107 MAKES CHANGES TO HANDLE THOUSANDS OF COVID PATIENTS BY GARY SCHMIDT

Milwaukee County MABAS Division 107 is fully incorporated – there are no townships with tracts of undeveloped land. There is a mix of housing, ranging from areas of low income to some affluent areas of high-end residences and high-rise condos, but mainly there is densely spaced, middle-income housing either dating from pre-Great Depression or post-World War II.

There are many elderly housing centers and several meat processing plants. Milwaukee County is also the most populous county in Wisconsin with almost one million residents, but with a vibrant downtown area, several universities, and skyscraper offices employing many, it is easy to exceed that number every day.

This was a recipe for disaster when the COVID-19 coronavirus struck. Hundreds, then over two thousand cases of COVID positive emerged in a very short period of time. MABAS Division 107 had to take some unprecedented actions to handle the volume of calls and to prevent disastrous exposure impact to fire and EMS services.

One of the more prolific policies to be implemented was the isolation of personnel, equipment, and vehicles used to treat and transport COVID symptomatic patients.

At first two, then three, then four, and eventually five ALS (advanced life support) paramedic rigs were designated to transport COVID patients.

To assess potential patients presenting BLS (basic life support or non-life threatening) symptoms or may be in a COVID environment (like a nursing home), eventually four **Alternate Response Vehicles (ARV units)** were also used. The ARV's were SUV's (non-transport) rigs staffed with a paramedic and EMT and COVID protective gear.

Four fire departments housed these vehicles staffed by personnel from all twelve fire departments in the County and served all 19 municipalities in Division 107. At their peak, the units were crisscrossing the County responding from four different firehouses in three cities.

All other equipment and staff (like Fire Engine Companies) were moved to other firehouses and no other personnel were allowed inside those

firehouses to prevent cross contamination.

In one instance, Wauwatosa Engine 52 moved in with nearby Milwaukee's Engine 22. Having two different department's share one firehouse is extremely rare. Wauwatosa would have to radio Milwaukee Fire Department dispatch to page out Engine 52 for calls in Wauwatosa (Engine 52 was integrated into Milwaukee's Dispatch Computer system).

Ambulances or engines in the other "COVID" firehouses doubled up in adjacent fire stations. For several weeks, it was rare that a COVID ARV or MED unit was in quarters for more than an hour before the next call came in (if they even got back to quarters). By mid-May, 2020, total positive cases exceeded 5,000.



ARV-3 (Photo by Jim Ley)

### How to Contact Us

Your contributions to the various columns will make this newsletter a success. Let us know about your MABAS response activity or training events at [mabaswinews@gmail.com](mailto:mabaswinews@gmail.com)

In particular, pictures of activity are needed.

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# GREEN BAY CONFRONTS A MAJOR COVID OUTBREAK BY ROB GOPLIN, ASST CHIEF, GREEN BAY METRO FIRE DEPT

We have changed many things response wise due to COVID-19, but nothing quite as extreme as Division 107.

We have daily disinfections of our Med units, required N95 respirator use whenever they are out of the station.

We do "doorway assessments" prior to entering the home - we actually have 911 tell the patient to meet us outside whenever possible whether they are COVID or not.

We also take any rig out of service for an immediate "deep clean" if an aerosolizing procedure was done, etc. etc.

Our most interesting change has been operating a fully activated EOC (Emergency Operations Center) with a Full ICS (Incident Command System).

We have two National Guard units on the ground operating at two separate community test sites, all built and supported by our Unified Command efforts.

We are working closely with all of our hospitals (three hospital systems with four hospitals, all in the City of Green Bay). The City of Green Bay is under the Brown County Health Department.

We also used MABAS to specifically request a special resource of a Planning Section Chief from Division 123, Winnebago County.

We did this because we wanted Drew Jaeger, a City of Oshkosh Fire Department Lieutenant and 20-year veteran of the USCG with Planning Section Chief experience at Deep Water Horizon, Super Storm Sandy, and many other Type I incidents.

And wow has he been a godsend. Hat's off to him and his Chief for helping us out!

Last week, the Green Bay area experienced floods and had to evacuate several dozen houses all while being heavily directed by the State of Wisconsin to stand up a community test site of tents in 30 to 40 mile per hour sustained winds.

We would not stand that up because of the safety risks so they pushed very, very hard to set up an indoor site.

During this time, we had to stand up a second EOC for the flood issues and operate two EOC's simultaneously and in parallel, including a reception center for flood evacuees who would have to be screened for COVID and then sheltered separately based on that screening.

How Fast COVID Can Spread	
Brown County Count of Positive Cases	
⇒ 4-01-20	11
⇒ 4-12-20	68
⇒ 4-16-20	139
⇒ 4-30-20	1057
⇒ 5-17-20	2096

While all of that was going on, the flood was threatening our COVID Incident Command Post and we had to do an emergency evacuation of it (while in the middle of relentless pressure to stand up the test site).

That all happened in about five hours.

Ultimately, we procured the Resch Center (an indoor arena) and established a four lane indoor drive up test center in less than 36 hours.

**What is an ICS Structure?**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) follows an Incident Management System (ICS) structure organized around Sections, under which are Branches (Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Administration/Finance), Divisions, and Groups, to facilitate the management of large scale events.

We have had our EOC open for 9 straight weeks (as of May 7, 2020).

First we used an area command set up but recently transitioned to Unified Command that involves the Brown County, City of De Pere, and the Oneida Nation.

Green Bay Fire has nine personnel working in the Unified Command structure 40 hours a week.

**COVID Precautions at Incidents**  
*By Rob Goplin*

At every fire scene that we're going on now, Law Enforcement agencies that we work with it have been phenomenal about getting people off the street.

Get away from the fire, don't come to watch the fire, go back in your house, stare out your windows all you want but do not come out on the street, don't congregate, all that kind of stuff.

It's definitely something to you have to keep in mind in that regard. Human nature still takes over and people want to hover together and watch.

Make sure you are putting a plan together in advance of needing it.

If you see MABAS described in your local community news, please let us know at: [mabaswinews@gmail.com](mailto:mabaswinews@gmail.com)

## COVID BATTLE FATIGUE BY MATT DAVIES, WI SEOC ESF 4/9, WI NG JOINT STAFF, RAPID INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM COORDINATOR

The other night during my updates to SEOC stakeholders, it was suggested that I send this out again as it may be even more applicable now. Original credit goes to the Director of Physiological Health for the 115<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing. It was written for a military audience but it really is not a stretch to think of Fire and EMS while reading it. Take another look and please share far and wide with your folks and anyone else who has been affected by this mess. Take it easy and stay safe.

### Battle fatigue.

Being in the military, you are familiar with this term. A bit outdated now, it is a great descriptor for what you and your colleagues may be experiencing at this point in the pandemic. A battle can be described as 'a prolonged and determined effort to achieve something in a difficult situation or to change a bad situation'. Fatigue can be described as 'a physical and mental weariness or exhaustion that results from a prolonged and determined effort'.

You have been selfless in your commitment to fight this battle and to ensure that our mission to serve and protect the public is met. You have bravely put yourself in harm's way and tirelessly showed up day after day to do your jobs. At the same time, some of you have families to take care of at the end of the day. Others are isolated when they go home, whose contact with family and friends consists of phone calls and texts. In either situation, taking care of yourself is often at the top of your priority list, and at the bottom of your to-do list.

You've been going like this for weeks now and **it is time to do a self-check**. Prolonged stress can lead to both **physical and mental fatigue**. You may be experiencing:

- Slowing down of thought or reaction time.
- Difficulty prioritizing or initiating tasks.
- Indecision, difficulty adapting to change, lack of focus or concentration.
- Headaches or abdominal distress.
- Inability to relax or changes in appetite and sleep patterns.
- Unusual sadness or irritability.
- Heightened sense of threat or fear.

**Whether you experience these sometimes or frequently, they deserve your attention.** There are many more weeks to go and maintaining your natural resilience is key to enduring this battle. In order to take care of others, you must first take care of yourself. And no, it is not selfish to do so, it is your responsibility because of the important mission you support, at work and at home.

You likely already know what helps you maintain your resilience; although you may find you have to adapt your usual routine to these unusual circumstances. If self-care is new for you, the internet is a great place to explore options. To start you off, consider the following:

**Set boundaries at home.** Tell yourself or your family that you need a period of transition upon returning home after work. Call it a breather and let them know how much time you will need. Rest and refresh, change your clothes, take a shower, stretch your body, slow down your thoughts, drink water.

If you have young children who need to be near you the moment you walk in the door, set their expectations. Make a plan with them for what you can do together after you take care of yourself or have them join you while you rest and mirror what you do. This will help teach them how to slow down from their own day.

Set expectations with a partner or spouse who wants to talk or ask you how your day was as soon as you get home. Establish a time after your transition when the two of you can each talk about your day. If talking about your day causes stress, then limit your conversation to moments you felt successful or inspired.

Limit your exposure to news or social media to 'need-to-know'. Avoid information overload and misinformation.

Keep your home picked up. Clutter causes stress. Make it easy for your children to help by keeping baskets or other containers in each room with their name on it. Teach them how to pick up a room and use the baskets to stash their possessions.

**Set boundaries at work.** Take care of urgent business as needed and set one or more periods during the day for non-urgent business so it doesn't accumulate. When appropriate, let others know when the best time is to contact or meet with you.

If you notice signs of physical or mental fatigue, take a break and refresh. Get up from your desk and shake it out, look away from your computer and phone, take a short walk outside if you can. Reduce stimulation by turning down lights or clearing un-needed materials off your desk.

When talking to colleagues about work, use the time to solve problems, rather than recycling the problem. itself. Make the problem the problem, not a person the problem. Avoid getting hooked into problems that aren't within your area.

Finally we need to finally kick the stigma surrounding asking for help right out the door once and for all. All of us have needed help of some kind in the past – and all of us have gladly given help on something in the past. Mental health help is no different. Please ask.

### 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.*

## 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 DBMS Login 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 September 1, 2019 thru December 31, 2019**

Date & Time	Location	Div.	Host Agency	Box Type
9/1/2019 16:52	399 N Main Street	119	THIENSVILLE FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
9/2/2019 13:44	1671 BEECH LANE	119	FREDONIA FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
9/3/2019 11:30	W1755 Kamine Rd. Marinette	144	PESHTIGO TN FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
9/4/2019 10:39	3900 Vinburn Rd	115	DE FOREST AREA FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
9/6/2019 14:11	1605 NAVAJO STREET	119	GRAFTON VOL FIRE DEPT INC	Structure - Hydrant
9/12/2019 23:25	1802 Shepherd Ct	106	WAUKESHA FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
9/19/2019 0:26	7263 Cth A	115	BELLEVILLE VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
9/25/2019 7:51	4533 Thurston Ln Apt 8	115	FITCHBURG FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
9/28/2019 20:10	S1938 Cty Rd U	148	WAUMANDEE-MONTANA VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
9/28/2019 21:44	1896 130th Avenue	143	UNITED FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT	Structure - Non Hydrant
9/30/2019 0:00	N7490 Menominee River Drive	144	GROVER-PORTERFIELD FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
10/1/2019 22:05	River St / Third Ave	115	BELLEVILLE VOL FIRE DEPT	Disaster
10/3/2019 21:17	2501 Cth Mn	115	COTTAGE GROVE VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
10/3/2019 23:42	1840 SCHUSTER RD	115	FITCHBURG FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
10/16/2019 20:39	3810 Sunburst Rd	115	SUN PRAIRIE VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
10/24/2019 17:53	1012 Criglas Rd	106	WALES GENESEE FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
10/29/2019 13:55	740 N Meadows Parkway	117	MENOMONIE FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
10/31/2019 7:32	N3351 Jefferson Road	111	HARTFORD VOL FIRE DEPT	Life Safety
11/5/2019 21:46	4984 Irish Ln	115	FITCHBURG FIRE DEPT	Commercial - Non Hydrant
11/20/2019 5:04	1327 WISCONSIN AVE	119	GRAFTON VOL FIRE DEPT INC	Structure - Hydrant
11/22/2019 10:43	107 Hillside Drive, Wheeler, WI	117	BOYCEVILLE VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
11/26/2019 20:06	226088 Hollywood Rd	130	SOUTH AREA FIRE-EMERGENCY	Structure - Non Hydrant
11/28/2019 3:51	1220 Severson Dr	115	SUN PRAIRIE VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
12/2/2019 2:32	555 Oconto Ave.	144	PESHTIGO CITY FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
12/4/2019 16:58	585 HIGH BLUFF DRIVE	119	GRAFTON VOL FIRE DEPT INC	Structure - Non Hydrant
12/10/2019 10:13	961 County Hwy. "U"	124	NULL	Structure - Non Hydrant
12/13/2019 4:29	7922 CEDAR CREEK ROAD	119	CEDARBURG VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
12/14/2019 2:55	222 W Arndt St	120	FOND DU LAC CITY FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant
12/23/2019 19:19	1361 State Street Houlton WI	143	ST JOSEPH VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Non Hydrant
12/28/2019 1:07	1330 W GRAND AVE	119	PORT WASHINGTON VOL FIRE DEPT	Structure - Hydrant

Wisconsin is fortunate to have developed a state wide system of **Incident Management Teams (IMT)**. Currently the southeast, southwest, northeast and north central regions have active teams along with teams in the State Patrol, Department of Corrections and Natural Resources.

These teams are comprised of incident command specialists from disciplines such as the fire service, law enforcement, EMS and hospitals and public works. An IMT can be requested through your local emergency manager and are free.

A team does not take command but assists where needed. In a large scale or long duration incident, that may be tracking resources or logistics, running staging or work in an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).



# MABAS - Wisconsin

## Mutual Aid Box Alarm System

Organized 2004

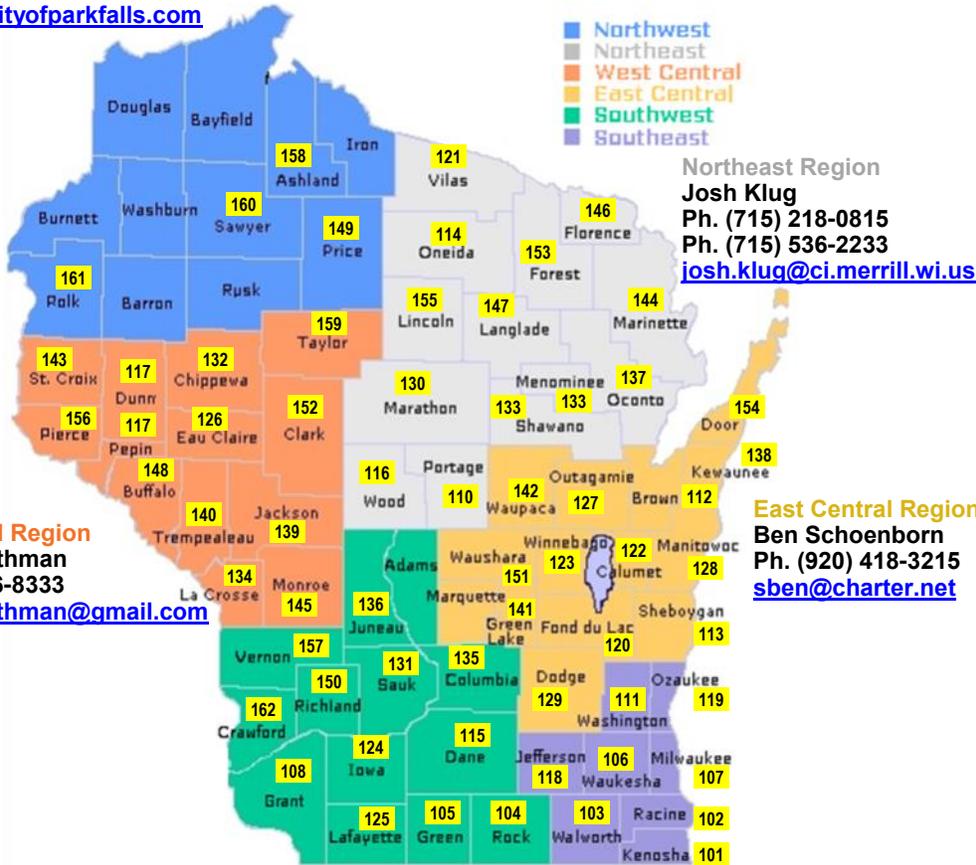
### MABAS Wisconsin Regional Coordinators

#### Northwest Region

Phil Bochler

Ph. (715) 492-7235

[assessor@cityofparkfalls.com](mailto:assessor@cityofparkfalls.com)



#### Red Center -

WEM Duty Officer

Ph. 800-943-0003 (Press 3)

#### Fire Service Coordinator

Tim Haas

Ph. (608) 220-6049

#### Wisconsin Homeland Security Council

Kevin Bierce

Ph. (262) 691-5610

#### MABAS OPERATING FREQUENCIES

IFERN	MABAS Alerting & Intra-Divisional Responses
IFERN2	Alternate Intra-Divisional Responses
MABAS1 (WISCOM)	Inter-Divisional Responses
	Contact with Wisconsin Red Center
MABAS2 (WISCOM)	Regional Coordinators - WEM Coordination

#### MABAS WI Divisions

- 101 – Kenosha County
- 102 – Racine County
- 103 – Walworth County
- 104 – Rock County
- 105 – Green County
- 106 – Waukesha County
- 107 – Milwaukee County
- 108 – Grant County
- 110 – Portage County
- 111 – Washington County
- 112 – Brown County
- 113 – Sheboygan County
- 114 – Oneida County
- 115 – Dane County
- 116 – Wood County
- 117 – Dunn/Pepin County
- 118 – Jefferson County
- 119 – Ozaukee County
- 120 – Fond du Lac County
- 121 – Vilas County
- 122 – Calumet County
- 123 – Winnebago County
- 124 – Iowa County
- 125 – Lafayette County
- 126 – Eau Claire County
- 127 – Outagamie County
- 128 – Manitowoc County
- 129 – Dodge County
- 130 – Marathon County
- 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
- 161 – Polk County
- 162 – Crawford County