

BIG HORN COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

317 N Custer Ave
BHC Sheriff's Office-
conference room
Hardin, MT, 59034



Members

BIG HORN COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES February 2, 2026 1:00 PM

1. Introductions

The Big Horn County Local Emergency Planning Committee meeting began at 1:06pm on February 2nd, 2026.

Introductions:

LEPC Coordinator: Sylvan Covers Up - BHC DES Director

LEPC Co-Coordinator: Jeramie Middlestead - BHC Sheriff

Caroline Chavers - Heorot Power Compliance/Safety Support Manager

Samantha Samples - Red Cross Community Disaster Program Manager

Heather Ready — Big Horn Deputy County Attorney

Marcus Moulton - COP BIA

Alyssa Pitsch - Big Horn County PHEP Coordinator/Admin. Assistant

Chuck Vandersloot - Westmoreland Site Team Lead

Nathan McConnell - City of Hardin Building Inspector / Flood Plain

Dionne Pretty On Top - Crow/Northern Cheyenne IHS Safety Officer

Kelsey Roebling - Big Horn County Public Health Director / Nurse

Will Lamb - Red Cross

Meighan Barnes - Big Horn County Deputy Elections Administrator/Secretary for Superintendent of Schools

Virtual Participation

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87675507310?pwd=P6lBMnrRdcv6C547viwuTVlp1TlBYK.1>

Meeting ID: 876 7550 7310

Passcode: 093437

One tap mobile

+17193594580,,87675507310#,,, *093437# US

2. Approve Minutes and Supporting Documents

A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Sylvan Coversup and seconded by Jeramie Middlestead. The motion carried at 1:12 p.m.

3. Communications / Mail Slot

Jeramie reported that there has been no update from State Trunking. A revised price quote, including an additional 5,000 has been submitted. Sylvan has developed a list of bullet points for the Mitigation

Plan. Recent seismic activity, including a 4.2-magnitude earthquake in the Great Falls area and a hydrothermal eruption at Yellowstone National Park, prompted discussion regarding the Hazard Assessment. As a result, the earthquake hazard rating was adjusted from low to moderate. It was further recommended that retrofitting be incorporated into the county's mitigation planning efforts.

4. Reports of Subcommittees

Sylvan Covers Up - Big Horn County DES Director report:

Discussion was held regarding the use of a door prize for the ICS 400 course to encourage participation. The ICS 400 course will be conducted on April 22nd and 23rd by TEEEX at no cost to attendees. The county is transitioning to Everbridge; additional information will be emailed to Alyssa for distribution to the committee. EOPs are needed from the school district to complete the school shooter project planned for this summer. A Zoom meeting is scheduled for tomorrow with the BHC Sheriff and the COP-BIA to review related matters. Sylvan is looking to list Big Horn county for a base camp during fire season.. Nick with NOAA provided a weather update, noting significant cold weather expected over the next two weeks; snowfall accumulation remains uncertain. Adequate moisture will be needed ahead of fire season.

Jeramie Middlestead - Big Horn County Sheriff report:

The building for the Lodge Grass substation is scheduled for delivery on Monday, February 9. REA will be responsible for connecting power. The former Pryor clinic will serve as the Pryor substation location. Coordination is underway with BIA to house an officer, pending agreement from Jeramie. Recruitment efforts continue for Fort Smith and Wyola residency positions. Applicant testing is scheduled for Monday, February 9, with hiring to occur on Tuesday, February 10.

Caroline Chavers - Heorot Power Compliance/Safety Support Manager report:

In-person attendance noted. Report was skipped.

Samantha Samples - American Red Cross Community Disaster Program Manager report:

Ms. Samples, new to the area, reported that work is underway with the Lodge Grass shelter to support its opening. The American Red Cross is offering Ready Rating services at no cost to assist with EOP development. A copy of the county mitigation plan was requested to help identify and address gaps. Notification was requested once Everbridge becomes operational. Volunteer recruitment is ongoing, and efforts are being made to bring additional resources to the area. Plans are in progress to obtain a shelter trailer for immediate deployment; if unavailable, storage options may be coordinated with Sylvan. Shelter supplies will support approximately 50 individuals, with orders to be sent to the Boise warehouse. With the shelter trailer and supplies in place, Big Horn County will be added to the call list for the Thunderbolt Exercise, which simulates a no-notice shelter activation. Coordination with Sylvan is required regarding multi-building contact in Crow Agency. Current shelter locations identified include: Fort Smith Elementary (pending further notice), Lodge Grass Community Center, Pryor School/Community Center, Saint Xavier Community Center, Wyola Community Center, and the Big Horn County Fairgrounds in Hardin.

Heather Ready — Big Horn Deputy County Attorney report:

No updates. Helping Sylvan with EOP and mitigation plan.

Marcus Moulton - COP BIA report:

Onboarding efforts are ongoing, with four new officers hired (two fully operational and two attending the academy). The increase in staffing is expected to significantly improve response times. Discussions are underway regarding potential updates to the tribal jail facility.

Alyssa Pitsch - Big Horn County PHEP Coordinator/Admin. Assistant report:

The transport plan will be added to the next month's agenda due to concerns arising from the vacant Sanitarian position. It was recommended to utilize the backup Sanitarian until the position is filled; however, the backup Sanitarian has not responded to calls. A dispatch call list handout, as part of the 24/7 communications plan, was distributed to committee members. A list of officers and updated bylaws was sent to Dulcie for posting on the county website. The bylaws have been updated by Heather, signed by the LEPC officers, and emailed to the County Commissioners for review and approval.

Chuck Vandersloot - Westmoreland Site Team Lead report:

The EOP has been submitted and will be resent to Sylvan. Safety officers are reviewing and updating contact information within the EOP. Standard Operating Procedures are included in the EOP.

Nathan McConnell - City of Hardin Building Inspector / Flood Plain report:

No updates at this time. Mr. McConnell is new to the position and continues to attend training sessions. Updated floodplain maps have been requested by Sylvan. FEMA is currently processing and preparing updated maps; DNRC does not have applicable maps available. A meeting is planned with Sylvan to review flood-prone areas.

Dionne Pretty On Top - Crow/Northern Cheyenne IHS Safety Officer report:

Interim protocols have been implemented to address issues related to hospital piping. Fire watch procedures are in place, and firewall repairs are required. The AAR for the mold incident has been completed. Pipe replacement is scheduled to be done in June 2026. Ongoing efforts are addressing additional water leak concerns.

Kelsey Roebling - Big Horn County Public Health Director / Nurse report:

Influenza A and B cases are being reported. No influenza-related hospitalizations have occurred in the past two weeks. Six COVID-19 cases were reported during the previous week. An active case of Varicella (chickenpox) is present within Big Horn County. Work continues on the county EOP in coordination with Sylvan. Dionne will provide follow-up regarding bed capacity at IHS.

Will Lamb - American Red Cross report:

Report provided jointly with Samantha Samples.

Meighan Barnes - Big Horn County Deputy Elections Administrator/Secretary for Superintendent of Schools report:

No updates at this time.

5. Hazardous Materials Discussion

Sylvan is planning a Hazardous Material Awareness class. It will go over the spills, leaks and environmental effects of hazardous materials. Attendees will receive a certificate upon completion. More information to come.

6. Unified Health Command & Incident Stress Management

The Unified Health Command started during COVID. Upon the AAR of COVID it was decided by the team to continue effects as a group. Since then, the group has requested to move these meetings to the agenda of the LEPC. No update on the Incident Stress Management but as a reminder by Sylvan to responders; take time for yourself. There are many resources in the community to use if you or someone you may know, needs them. Please reach out.

7. Special Presentations

Public Health Annual Review – Transport of Specimens/Samples of Immediate Concern Plan:

Presentation of the plan was tabled until the next meeting.

Public Health Annual Review of: Transport of Specimens/Samples of Immediate Concern Plan

8. Old Business

Sylvan reminded the committee of the importance of ongoing collaboration to effectively respond to incidents. The committee's bylaws have been updated by Heather Ready and signed by the Officers. The signed bylaws have been emailed to the County Commissioners, who may schedule to review them at their Thursday meeting.

9. New Business

No new business.

10. Public Comments

Outreach needs:

Jeramie proposed collaborating with Kelsey to develop a STI/Gang Awareness plan for the summer. Additionally, the MIP awareness plan from the mitigation plan will be coordinated with the BIA MMU. Meighan will prepare a draft and circulate it via email to the schools. Alyssa suggested consulting with Chandale, Public Health Outreach Coordinator, to incorporate outreach efforts into the Family Fun Day event. Jeramie also proposed a "Sheriff for a Day" competition to select three high school students. Committee members were encouraged to share any additional ideas or suggestions.

11. Details of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Big Horn County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is scheduled for March 2, 2026, at 1:00 PM in the Big Horn County Sheriff's Office Conference Room. Nicholas Spadt and Jeramie Middlestead are noted as unable to attend.

12. Adjourn

Sylvan Coversup moved to adjourn the BHC LEPC meeting; the motion was seconded by Jeramie Middlestead. The BHC LEPC meeting was adjourned on February 2, 2026, at 2:06 p.m.