

Damascus Emergency Preparedness Team Meeting of 8 July

This is the first of two reports to update those folks interested in the efforts of the citizens of Damascus to self organize and prepare to better meet our community's needs during an emergency or crisis. This report concerns the meeting held before Celebrate Damascus on Thursday night, 8 July. In addition to interested citizens, the leadership of the Damascus Citizen's Alliance, the Damascus Rotary Club, the Damascus Lions Club, the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department, and the American Legion were also represented at the meeting. Several decisions were taken:

First, the group constituted itself as the Damascus Emergency Preparedness Team, and decided to investigate possible legal status for insurance liability purposes.

Secondly, as one of the primary purposes of this meeting was to plan and prepare for community outreach during Celebrate Damascus, it was resolved that a volunteer application would be prepared and that an attempt would be made at the booth to organize and sign up interested citizens for the Damascus effort.

Third, it was decided that the issue of emergency preparedness for Damascus was so important, that the attendees present agreed unanimously to continue to meet and work regardless of whatever citizen support was perceived during Celebrate Damascus. Of course... as we now know that support was great.

Fourth, several categories were identified where work could begin:

- 1) The Damascus Volunteer fire department took on the task of contacting WSSC to ask that experts be sent to speak to us regarding the Damascus water system with special emphasis on whether or not a generator could be installed at the water tank site to enable the water to continue to flow during a power outage.
- 2) George Moy volunteered to contact and work with Allegheny Power to find out what they know that we in Damascus might want to know about our local grid and how to cooperate with WSSC on (1) above.
- 3) The Damascus Rotary Club offered to contact the local pharmacies to ascertain the extent to which they have emergency preparedness plans, back up power for both refrigeration and computers necessary to document disbursement, local employees able to respond and disburse medications should the grid be down, etc.
- 4) The Damascus Citizen's Alliance has offered to contact the grocery stores in our area to ask similar questions to (3) above.

Fifth, it was determined that another meeting would be called for Monday, 19 July, to be held at the Damascus Library at 7:30.