



# CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Updated January 2023

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# Crisis Communications Plan

## University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science

The following steps are intended to serve as a guide to manage communications swiftly and effectively in the event of a crisis, and are a supplement to the UMCES Emergency Preparedness Plan. The intent is to get out in front of any communications around a crisis related to the organization, to be as transparent and responsive as possible, and to ensure communications are factual and consistent. Even a crisis can be an opportunity to positively position the organization in the public eye.

A crisis situation could involve a number of scenarios, including explosion/fire, death or accidental injury, chemical spill, natural disaster, bomb threat, active shooter, etc.

The following steps should be used by the President, Chief of Staff, Vice President for Administration, Assistant Vice President of Communications, and Laboratory Directors to oversee and evaluate communications around a crisis.

- 1) In case of emergency, call 9-1-1 and ensure staff and public safety.
- 2) Report all crises to the Laboratory Director, President, Chief of Staff, and Assistant Vice President of Communications.
- 3) The Chief of Staff will convene a Crisis Communications Team (Laboratory Director, Vice President for Administration, Assistant Vice President of Communications, Facility Manager(s), Human Resources—if applicable) to review the situation, determine next steps, identify a spokesperson, and manage communications.

Depending on the issue, the team may also include—or immediately inform—other senior staff, legal counsel, and/or the Chancellor’s office. The Assistant Vice President of Communications should maintain a complete contact list of members of the team. (The Crisis Communications Team may not be the same team that will manage the crisis from an operational perspective.)

Please see **Crisis Communications Team Contact Information** section for a list of Crisis Communications Team members and their contact information.

- 4) The Crisis Communications Team will:
  - a. Determine lead contact for the Crisis Communications Team. This person will keep track of action steps determined by the team.
  - b. Gather information about the situation
    - i. What occurred, where, why, how—the facts
    - ii. Who is affected/involved
    - iii. What is being done in response to the situation
    - iv. What additional information is needed; how can it be obtained
    - v. What could be misunderstood
    - vi. What cannot be said because of confidentiality, privacy, or other reasons
  - c. Determine what needs to happen next
    - i. Who needs to be involved
    - ii. Who needs to know about the situation— internally, partners, and publicly
    - iii. What needs to be shared? Brainstorm likely questions and develop answers. (Does any information need to remain private, perhaps for legal and/or personnel reasons?)
    - iv. Gauge the level of potential public interest/awareness of the situation
    - v. Monitor social media
  - d. Determine who will be the public spokesperson.

- e. Once the team determines if outreach to the media is warranted, decide whether to use:
  - i. Individual outreach
  - ii. Press release/statement
  - iii. Press conference or conference call
  - iv. Social media outlets
- f. Prepare a statement that may include one or more of the following points:
  - i. Sympathy for the victim
  - ii. How help will be given
  - iii. Where we stand/what we are doing
- g. Coordinate response with appropriate outside authorities.

Should media reach out before all facts are known and responses prepared, indicate that calls will be returned (or if/when a statement will be released) as soon as we know more. Be swift, but respond only when prepared with the facts and your messaging. ***Do not speculate, don't say "no comment," and know you're always on the record.***

- 5) The Assistant Vice President of Communications, with support from Crisis Communications Team members, will draft all necessary messaging. All communications should be carefully vetted for accuracy. Depending on the situation and intended audiences, these items may include:
  - a. Talking points for senior staff/crisis communications team. This includes anticipating questions that might arise and drafting answers.
  - b. Email for employees or talking points for an employee meeting. (Remind employees that all media inquiries must be forwarded to the Assistant Vice President of Communications.)
  - c. Talking points for employees to use with people outside the organization
  - d. Email and talking points for the Chancellor's Office, Board of Regents and/or Board of Visitors
  - e. Press release/official statement for website
  - f. Fact sheet
  - g. Script for front desk and others who answer incoming calls
  - h. Social media copy and additional considerations around social media:
    - i. Designate a single person to communicate via UMCES social media accounts.
    - ii. Immediately suspend any pre-scheduled posts so as to not appear insensitive to the urgent situation.
    - iii. Use Twitter as primary communication for updates, press conferences, etc.
    - iv. Post public information on the UMCES website's Emergency Updates page ([www.umces.edu/emergency](http://www.umces.edu/emergency)); direct people there through social media for updates.
    - v. Designate single person to monitor social media responses and report regularly.
    - vi. Be as transparent as possible, stay on message and be responsive.
    - vii. Don't delete critical or negative comments—that could create a hostile situation or make it appear as if there is something to hide.

Effort will be made to monitor news coverage in key media and correct significant inaccuracies. Director of Communications will facilitate access to key knowledgeable individuals and respond quickly to as many requests as possible. Communication with the media must occur frequently as new information is known.

- 6) Take action based on the plan created in step 4 and using the messaging tools created in step 5.
- 7) Post-Crisis: Hold a post-communications review to evaluate the effectiveness of the crisis communications:
  - a. Review media coverage. Is there a need for clarification? Was outreach effective?
  - b. Assess the effectiveness of the process, update the checklist
  - c. Save notes and materials and document issues that arose for future reference

## **COMMUNICATIONS TEAM CONTACT INFORMATION**

In case of emergency, call 9-1-1 and ensure staff and public safety. Report all crises to the Laboratory Director, President, Chief of Staff, and Assistant Vice President for Communications.

### **Core Communications Team**

#### **President – Peter Goodwin**

Office: 410-221-2001 / [pgoodwin@umces.edu](mailto:pgoodwin@umces.edu)

#### **Chief of Staff – Dave Nemazie**

Office: 410-221-2006 / [nemazie@umces.edu](mailto:nemazie@umces.edu)

#### **Assistant Vice President for Communications – Amy Pelsinsky**

Cell: 410-330-1389 / [apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

#### **Laboratory Director (see contact information below)**

### **Additional Team Members (as needed)**

#### **Board of Visitors President – Charlie Monk**

#### **Appalachian Laboratory Director – Dave Nelson**

Office: 301-689-7171 / [dnelson@umces.edu](mailto:dnelson@umces.edu)

#### **Chesapeake Biological Laboratory Director – Tom Miller**

Office: 410-326-7276 / [miller@umces.edu](mailto:miller@umces.edu)

#### **Horn Point Laboratory Director – Mike Sieracki**

Office: 410-221-8425 / [msieracki@umces.edu](mailto:msieracki@umces.edu)

#### **Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology Director – Russell Hill**

Office: 410-234-8802 / [hill@umces.edu](mailto:hill@umces.edu)

#### **Maryland Sea Grant Director – Fredrika Moser**

Office: 301-405-7500 / [moser@mdsg.umd.edu](mailto:moser@mdsg.umd.edu)

#### **Vice President for Education – Larry Sanford**

Office: 410-221-8429 / [lsanford@umces.edu](mailto:lsanford@umces.edu)

#### **Assistant Vice President for Human Resources – Lisa Ross**

Office: 410-221-2017 / [lross@umces.edu](mailto:lross@umces.edu)

#### **Chief Information Officer – Kurt Florez**

Office 410.221.2022 / [kflorez@umces.edu](mailto:kflorez@umces.edu)

*Backup:* **Senior IT Engineer Jason Beveridge**

Office: 410-221-8374 / [jbeveridge@umces.edu](mailto:jbeveridge@umces.edu)

#### **Senior Counsel for Advice, Maryland Attorney General's Office – Elena Langrill**

## APPALACHIAN LABORATORY

301 Braddock Road, Frostburg, MD 21532  
301-689-7100

### Appalachian Laboratory Director – Dave Nelson

Office: 301-689-7171 / dnelson@umces.edu

### Assistant Director – Heather Johnson

Office: 301-689-7111 / hjohnson@umces.edu

### Chemical Hygiene Officer – Katie Kline

Office: 301-689-7122 / kkline@umces.edu

### Coordinator of External Affairs – Rhonda Schwinabart

Office: 301-689-7102 / rschwinabart@umces.edu

### Facilities Manager – John Piasecki

Office: 301-689-7192 / jpiasecki@umces.edu

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## CHESAPEAKE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY

146 Williams Street, Solomons, MD 20688  
410-326-4281 / After Hours Emergency Number: 410-326-7333

### Laboratory Director – Tom Miller

Office: 410-326-7276 / miller@umces.edu

### Associate Director, Administration – Stacy Hutchinson

Office: 410-326-7364 / shutchinson@umces.edu

### Facilities Manager – Brian Duke

Office: 410-326-7352 / duke@umces.edu

### Information Technology Manager – Mike Santangelo

Office: 410-326-7237 / mike@umces.edu

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## RESEARCH FLEET / RESEARCH VESSEL RACHEL CARSON

### Director of Marine Operations – Capt. Michael Hulme

Office: 410-326-7358 / hulme@umces.edu Wheelhouse in port:  
410-326-7350

### Mate/Engineer – Rob Nilsen

Office: 410-326-7256 / crnilsen@umces.edu

### U.S. Coast Guard – Sector Baltimore

Primary phone: 410-576-2693 / Emergency phone: 410-576-2518  
Incident Management phone: 410-576-2587  
<http://homeport.uscg.mil/baltimore>

### Maryland Department of Natural Resources Police

800-628-9944

## EXTERNAL EMERGENCY NUMBERS

**Frostburg State University Campus Police** (MOU provides 24-hour on-call protection/response to emergencies) 301-687-4222

### Frostburg State University Director of News & Media Relations - Liz Medcalf

301-687-4751 / emedcalf@frostburg.edu

### Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

410-537-3000

### Maryland Department of Natural Resources

24-hour emergency dispatch: 410-260-8888

### Center for Disease Control and Prevention

404-639-3311

## EXTERNAL EMERGENCY CONTACTS

### Calvert County Sheriff's Department

Non-emergency: 410-535-2800

### Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant

Security office: 410-264-9540

### Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

Emergency: 866-633-4686

Baltimore hazardous water: 410-537-3344

### Maryland Department of Natural Resources

24-hour emergency dispatch: 410-260-8888

### Solomons Volunteer Fire Department

410-326-6657

### Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO)

1-888-232-4636

### Center for Disease Control

800-232-04636

### Department of Homeland Security

202-282-8000

### Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

202-646-2500

### U.S. Coast Guard

800-418-7314

**HORN POINT LABORATORY**

2022 Horns Point Road, Cambridge, MD 21613  
410-228-8200

**Laboratory Director – Mike Sieracki**

Office: 410-221-8425 / msieracki@umces.edu

**Assistant Director – Curtis Henry**

Office: 410-221-8417/ chenry@umces.edu

**Assistant Director of Facilities – Jeff Miley**

Office: 410-221-8464 / jmiley@umces.edu

**Chief Information Officer – Kurt Florez**

Office 410-221-2022 / kflorez@umces.edu

**OUTSIDE EMERGENCY CONTACTS****Dorchester County Emergency Management Agency**

829 Fieldcrest Road / Office: 410-228-1818

**Rescue Fire Department**

8 Washington Street / 410-228-1670

**Dorchester County Sheriff’s Office**

829 Fieldcrest Road, Cambridge / 410-228-4141

**Neck District Fire Department**

954 Cooks Point Road / 410-228-2434

**Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region III**

1-800-621-3362

**Dorchester County Health Department**

410-228-3223

**Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)**

410-537-3000

**Maryland Department of Natural Resources**

1-877-620-8DNR (8367) (Weekdays 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.)  
24-hour emergency dispatch: 410-260-8888

**Center for Disease Control and Prevention**

404-639-3311/ 800-232-4636

**U.S. Coast Guard 800-418-7314****INSTITUTE OF MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY**

701 E. Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 / 410-234-8800

**Director – Russell Hill**

Office: 410-234-8802/ hill@umces.edu

**IMET Assistant Director – Nina Lamba**

Office: 410-234-8811 / nlamba@umces.edu

**Associate Director, Administration****COLUMBUS CENTER****Administrative Director –**

Office:

**Columbus Center Facilities Director – Michael Yates**

Office: 410-385-6355 / yates@umbc.edu

**INTEGRATION AND APPLICATION NETWORK / ANNAPOLIS OFFICE**

429 Fourth Street, Annapolis, MD 21403 / 410-330-5133

**UMCES Vice President for Science Applications – Bill Dennison**

Office: 410-221-2004 / dennison@umces.edu

**Program Director – Health Kelsey**

hkelsey@umces.edu

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**MARYLAND SEA GRANT COLLEGE**

5825 University Research Court, Suite 1350, College Park, MD 20740 / 301-405-7500

**Maryland Sea Grant Director – Fredrika Moser**

Office: 301-405-7500 / moser@mdsg.umd.edu

**Associate Director of Research & Administration – Michael Allen**

Office: 301-405-6372 / mallen@mdsg.umd.edu

**Assistant Director for Communications**

.....  
**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND**

**Chancellor – Jay Perman**

Office: 301-445-1901

**Vice Chancellor of Communications and Marketing – Tim McDonough**

Baltimore 410-576-5749 / Adelphi 301-445-2722 / tmcdonough@usmd.edu

.....  
**STATE ENVIRONMENT AGENCIES**

**Maryland Department of the Environment**

**Director Communications – Mark Shaffer**

Office: 410-537-3056 / Mark.shaffer1@maryland.gov

**Deputy Director, Communications – Jay Apperson**

Office: 410-537-3012 / Jay.apperson@maryland.gov

**Maryland Department of Natural Resources**

**Director of Communications – Eric Shirk**

Office: 410-260-8021 / eric.shirk@maryland.gov

**Media Relations / Gregg Bortz**

Office: 410-260-8001 / Gregg.Bortz1@Maryland.gov

## **Behavioral Assessment Team**

The Behavioral Assessment Team is an interdisciplinary team with members from various university units that responds to concerns regarding threatening, aggressive, or violent behavior. Team members may also be tapped as a rapid response team for cross-campus crisis response.

*Rapid Response Team: [CrisisComm@umces.edu](mailto:CrisisComm@umces.edu)*

### *Chair/Co-Chairs*

Dave Nemazie, Chief of Staff  
nemazie@umces.edu

Amy Pelsinsky, Assistant Vice President for  
Communications / apelsinsky@umces.edu

### *Human Resources*

Lisa Ross, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources  
lross@umces.edu

### *Chief Information Officer/Staff Council*

Kurt Florez, Chief Information Officer  
kflorez@umces.edu

### *Graduate Education*

Larry Sanford, VP for Education  
lsanford@umces.edu

### *Faculty Senate*

Andrew Elmore, Faculty Senate  
Representative aelmore@umces.edu

### *Graduate Student Council*

Isabel Sanchez-Viruet, Graduate Student Council  
isanchez@umces.edu

Abdulmajid Alrefaie, Graduate Student Council, Co-Chair  
aalrefaie@umces.edu

### *Appalachian Laboratory*

Heather Johnson, Associate Director  
hjohnson@umces.edu

### *Chesapeake Biological Laboratory*

Stacy Hutchinson, Associate Director for  
Administration  
shutchinson@umces.edu

### *Horn Point Laboratory*

Jeff Miley, Assistant Director for Facilities  
jmiley@umces.edu

### *Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology*

Associate Director for Administration

### *Integration & Application Network*

Heath Kelsey, Program Director  
hkelsey@umces.edu

### *Maryland Sea Grant College*

Mike Allen, Associate Director  
mallen@mdsg.umd.edu



# **COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS**



University of Maryland  
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

## University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) is a leading research and educational institution working to understand and manage the world's resources. From a network of laboratories spanning from the Allegheny Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, UMCES scientists provide sound advice to help state and national leaders manage the environment and prepare future scientists to meet the global challenges of the 21st century.

Since its founding nearly 100 years ago, UMCES has been on the forefront of Chesapeake Bay restoration. From the earliest documentation in the 1920s of the declining oyster fishery to more recent studies on harmful algal blooms and dead zones, UMCES has led the way in collaborative research in the Chesapeake and set the standard in environmental science of the Bay.

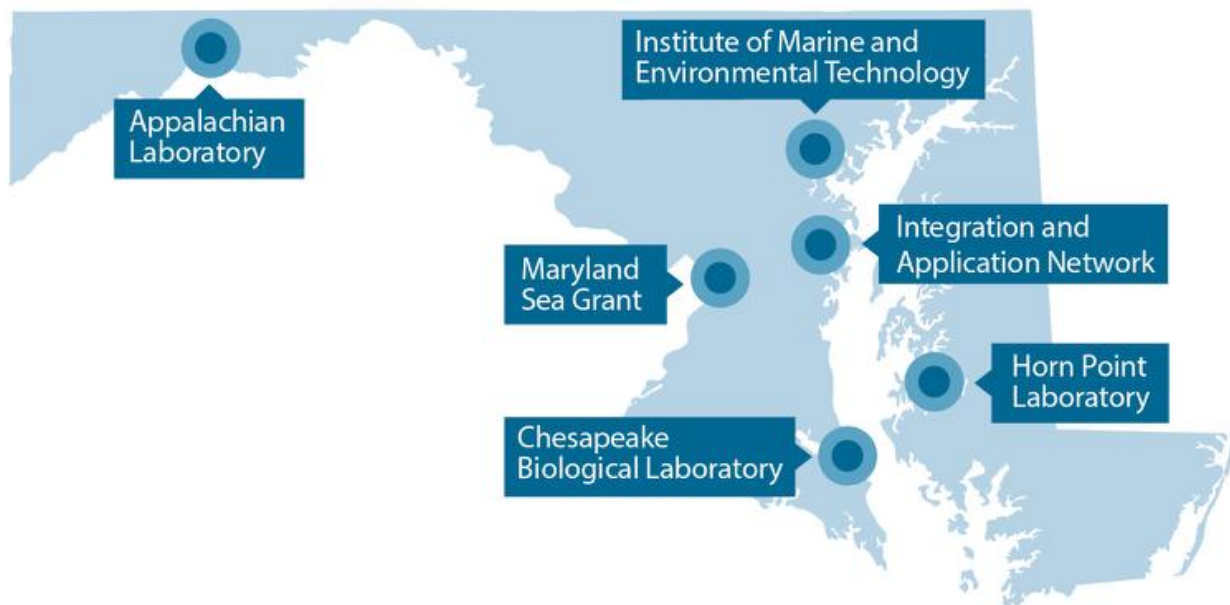
**Headquarters:** Cambridge, Maryland

**Year founded:** 1925

**Faculty members:** 70

**Graduate students:** 95

**Research locations:** 6



## **UMCES/Campus Descriptions**

*The following are standard descriptions of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and its laboratories that should be used for consistency in materials for the general public.*

### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) is a leading research and educational institution working to understand and manage the world's resources. From a network of laboratories spanning from the Allegheny Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, UMCES scientists provide sound advice to help state and national leaders manage the environment and prepare future scientists to meet the global challenges of the 21st century.

### **CAMPUS DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **APPALACHIAN LABORATORY**

Located in the headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay, scientists at the Appalachian Laboratory conduct research on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, including air and water quality, wildlife management, and land conservation throughout the world, with an emphasis on the rich and diverse environments of Western Maryland and the broader Appalachian region.

#### **CHESAPEAKE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY**

Located where the Patuxent River meets the Chesapeake Bay, the oldest publicly supported marine laboratory on the East Coast is a national leader in research on fisheries, estuarine ecology, environmental chemistry and toxicology research of the Chesapeake Bay and aquatic ecosystem around the globe.

#### **HORN POINT LABORATORY**

From the banks of the Choptank River on Maryland's Eastern Shore, scientists at the Horn Point Laboratory engage in world-renowned research in oceanography, water quality, restoration of sea grasses, marshes and shellfish, and expertise in ecosystem modeling.

#### **INSTITUTE OF MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY**

Located in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, scientists at the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology pursue cutting-edge research in microbiology, molecular biology and biotechnology, using marine microbes to develop alternative energy, and supporting sustainable aquaculture and fisheries.

#### **Integration and Application Network**

The Integration and Application Network (IAN) is an initiative of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science charged to inspire, manage and produce timely syntheses and assessments on key environmental issues, with a special emphasis on Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

#### **Maryland Sea Grant College**

Maryland Sea Grant College, a university-based partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is a service organization administered by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science to fund research, education, and outreach throughout the state of Maryland.

**Peter Goodwin**  
**President, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science**



Dr. Peter Goodwin is professor and president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, a graduate university that provides independent sound advice to help state and national leaders manage the environment and prepares future scientists to meet the global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

He also serves as Vice Chancellor for Environmental Sustainability for the University System of Maryland, leading the Environmental Sustainability Initiative for USM's 12 institutions.

As part of UMCES' longtime role to advise the state on Chesapeake Bay management and restoration programs, Goodwin serves on the Governor's Chesapeake Bay Cabinet, as well as the Chesapeake Research Consortium (CRC), the Maryland Commission on Climate Change and Scientific and Technical Workgroup, and the Coast Smart Council.

Goodwin is an internationally known expert in ecosystem restoration, ecohydraulics, and enhancement of river, wetland and estuarine systems, and he has spent 30 years in higher education.

He is recognized for his research in the field of modeling flows, sediment transport, and changes in river morphology. He has participated in river and tidal wetland restoration, coastal wetland sustainability, flood rise reduction, and sediment management projects around the world and from coast to coast. He has written books on river conservation, environmental aspects of integrated flood management, wetland management, and hydraulic and environmental modeling of coastal, estuarine, and river waters.

Goodwin also serves as president of the International Association for Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research, one of the oldest international research organizations focusing on water and the environment.

He was the founding director of the Center for Ecohydraulics Research at the University of Idaho and director of Idaho's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), a federal-state partnership to build research capacity and infrastructure. He served as the lead scientist for the Delta Science Program in California and was a scientific advisor for several government agencies related to river and wetland management issues, including chairing the Louisiana Coastal Area Science Board. A native of the United Kingdom, Goodwin received his B.Sc. in Civil Engineering from the University of Southampton and his M.S. in Hydraulic and Coastal Engineering and Ph.D. Hydraulic Engineering from University of California, Berkeley.

**President's Office**

410-221-2001

[pgoodwin@umces.edu](mailto:pgoodwin@umces.edu)

## **William Dennison**

**Vice President for Science Applications, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science**



Dr. Dennison is a Professor of Marine Science and the Vice President for Science Applications at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES).

He heads the Integration and Application Network (IAN) is an initiative of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science charged to inspire, manage and produce timely syntheses and assessments on key environmental issues, with a special emphasis on Chesapeake Bay and its waters.

He has published hundreds of papers and books and has presented at multiple international, national, and regional meetings, and at various universities, research institutions, and government agencies.

He continues to serve and has served in the capacity of President, Chair, Co-Chair, Deputy Director, Leader and Member on more than three dozen separate environmental councils, committees, groups and societies.

He has provided graduate student supervision to numerous "up and coming" scientists through the Ph.D., Masters and Honors programs at both the UMCES and the University of Queensland.

Bill rejoined UMCES in 2002 following a 10-year-stint at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. While there he developed an active Marine Botany group with strong links to the Healthy Waterways Campaign for Moreton Bay.

Bill obtained his academic training from Western Michigan University (B.A., Biology & Environmental Science), the University of Alaska (M.S., Biological Oceanography), the University of Chicago (Ph.D., Biology), and the State University of New York at Stony Brook (Postdoc, Coastal Marine Scholar).

### **Office**

410-221-2004  
dennison@umces.edu

**David Nelson**  
**Director, Appalachian Laboratory**  
**University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science**



Dr. David Nelson is professor and director of the Appalachian Laboratory of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science in Frostburg, Maryland.

Nelson is a broadly trained ecologist who uses chemical signatures called stable isotopes to investigate the effects of environmental changes on ecological and biogeochemical processes. He has worked on a variety of taxa (plants, animals, microbes) and systems (grasslands, forests, lakes, streams) across various temporal scales throughout the world.

He founded and directs the Central Appalachians Stable Isotope Facility, which is housed at UMCES' Appalachian Laboratory. Nelson has served as vice-chair and chair of the paleoecology section of the Ecological Society of America, as well as vice-chair of the UMCES faculty senate. He serves on the editorial boards of the journals *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* and *PeerJ*. He is actively involved in various science outreach activities in western Maryland and nearby West Virginia.

He received a B.A. in Biology from Trinity Christian College and a Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of Illinois. He held postdoctoral positions at the University of Illinois and Harvard University. He joined the faculty of the Appalachian Lab in 2009, and was a visiting scholar at Nagoya University in Japan in spring 2017.

**Director's Office**  
301-689-7171  
[dnelson@umces.edu](mailto:dnelson@umces.edu)

## **Russell T. Hill**

**Director, Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology  
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science**



Dr. Russell T. Hill, professor at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES), is director of the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET) in Baltimore, Maryland.

A microbiologist, Dr. Hill studies the diversity and functions of microbes associated with marine invertebrates. His research interests include the biodiversity of marine microbes and the potential of marine microbes as sources of new drugs, in particular the role of microbial symbionts in production of important bioactive compounds. He also has an interest in marine microalgae and associated bacteria as a source of biofuel.

Since 2012, he has served as director of the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET), a joint University System of Maryland facility that brings together scientists from UMCES, University of Maryland Baltimore, and the University of Maryland Baltimore County to engage in cutting-edge research in microbiology, molecular biology, and biotechnology to sustainably use natural resources and enhance environmental and human health.

Dr. Hill is a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology and the Society for Industrial Microbiology. He has served as president of the Maryland Branch of the American Society for Microbiology, a member of the Editorial Boards of *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*, *Marine Biotechnology*, and *Frontiers of Microbial Symbioses*. He is a board member of the International Marine Biotechnology Association. He has published more than 100 research papers on marine microbiology and biotechnology.

He has held faculty positions at the Center of Marine Biotechnology (COMB), University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, where he served as professor and associate director, and the Australian Institute of Marine Science. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Cape Town in 1988.

### **Director's Office**

410-234-8802

hill@umces.edu

**Thomas J. Miller**  
**Director, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory**  
**University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science**



Dr. Thomas J. Miller is a professor of fisheries science and director of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's founding campus, the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory in Solomons, Maryland.

He has been a leader in the development of approaches to manage several Chesapeake Bay species, including crabs and striped bass, combining laboratory, field and modeling approaches to address questions of interest to society. Most recently, his research has focused on both the effects of ocean acidification on blue crab, recruitment issues in menhaden and striped bass and stakeholder involvement in recreational fisheries.

Dr. Miller serves on the US National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine's Ocean Studies Board. He is vice-chair of the Scientific and Statistical Committee for the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. He is a Governor's Appointee to the Patuxent River Commission, and the Board of the Chesapeake Bay Trust. He has been the recipient of the President's Award for the Application of Science at UMCES and received the 2015 USM Regents' Faculty Award for Public Service, the highest honor that the Board bestows to recognize exemplary faculty achievement.

He teaches courses on applied environmental science, fisheries ecology, and responsible conduct of research. Dr. Miller is a two-time recipient of the Graduate Education Award for excellence in teaching from the Marine Estuarine Environmental Sciences program at the University of Maryland.

Dr. Miller joined the faculty at the UMCES Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, an influential center for fisheries research, as Assistant Professor in 1994. He has been Professor since 2006, and Director of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory since 2011.

He holds a B.Sc. degree from the University of York in England, and completed his Master's in ecology and Ph.D. in zoology at North Carolina State University. He was a post-doctoral fellow at McGill University, in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

**Director's Office**

410-326-7276  
miller@umces.edu  
@TomatCBL



**Michael Sieracki**  
**Director, Horn Point Laboratory**  
**University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science**



Oceanographer Mike Sieracki is Director of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's Horn Point Laboratory. He was previously the lead program director for the biological oceanography program at the National Science Foundation and a senior research scientist at the Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences in Maine, where he served as acting director, directed the J. J. MacIsaac Flow Cytometry Facility, and studied microbial plankton ecology, including the phytoplankton spring bloom and harmful algal blooms.

He invented automated microscope systems for analyzing microplankton populations in the oceans and innovated single cell genomics methods for characterizing individual marine microbes. He has participated in over 25 research cruises with over 180 days at sea, including serving on the coordinator team of the Tara Oceans Expedition to map the biodiversity of plankton in the world's oceans. He has taught courses around the world and has over 60 published scientific papers.

Dr. Sieracki holds a Ph.D. in biological oceanography and an M.S. in Microbiology from the University of Rhode Island, and a B.A. in Biological Sciences from the University of Delaware.

**Director's Office**  
410-221-8425  
msieracki@umces.edu

**Fredrika Moser**  
**Director, Maryland Sea Grant**



Dr. Fredrika Moser is director of Maryland Sea Grant College, one of 34 university-based programs in coastal and Great Lakes states that support research, education, and public outreach on marine and coastal issues. A marine research leader and policy analyst, Moser has been director since 2012.

As Maryland Sea Grant’s research leader from 2001 to 2011, Dr. Moser helped develop several of the program’s signature efforts to assist policy makers and natural resource officials in making management decisions in the Chesapeake Bay and Mid-Atlantic regions. One such multi-state project convened scientific workshops to improve understanding and management of aquatic invasive species, including zebra mussels, Chinese mitten crabs, and unwanted “hitchhiker species” spread by the live bait

trade. She has also led a long-running NSF funded Research Experience for Undergraduates and spearheaded innovative programming to increase participation of underrepresented and underserved students in marine science education and careers.

Before coming to Maryland Sea Grant in 2001, she served as a marine science policy analyst at the U.S. Department of State while she was a diplomacy fellow with the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Earlier, she was a manager for environmental assessment at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection where she oversaw programs to inform policy decisions on dioxin contamination, ocean pollution, dredged sediments, and other environmental problems.

She was a consultant to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, focusing on aquatic invasive species and sediment management. The commission advised the President and Congress in 2004 on measures to halt the decline of the nation’s oceans and coasts.

She earned a doctoral degree at the Institute for Coastal and Marine Science at Rutgers University and a master’s degree in geological sciences, also from Rutgers. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in earth sciences and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

**Director’s Office**

301-405-7500  
moser@mdsg.umd.edu

# **COMMUNICATIONS TEMPLATES**

# *NEWS RELEASE*

*To release official statement*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **CONTACT:**

Amy Pelsinsky

410-330-1389

[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

### **Headline should be bolded, lower case**

**LOCATION (September 1, 2023)**—The lead should expand on the headline by answering who, what, when, where, and why?

The second paragraph should provide additional facts relevant to the situation.

“The third paragraph should be a quote from the most relevant source,” says University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science President Peter Goodwin. “Offer new information. Every word should count.”

Under most circumstances the news release should be a maximum of 250 words.

“Finish it off with another quote,” says Goodwin. “You can use the same speaker or a different source to highlight various aspects of the crisis, but make sure these folks are available for further comment.”

The boilerplate is usually found at the end of the press release and briefly describes the organization. The short paragraph consists of a just a few sentences and is generally used on every press release. Boilerplates should be up-to-date, clearly written, and short.

###

# ***MEDIA ADVISORY***

*To be used to give reporters details on upcoming press conference/briefing*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **CONTACT:**

Amy Pelsinsky

410-330-1389

[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

### **Headline should be bolded, lower case**

**LOCATION (September 1, 2023)**—The opening paragraph should provide the basics of the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, and why) but stimulate media to learn more. Mention any persons of interest, such as dignitaries and elected officials who are key to the event.

What: Describe the event.

When: September 15, 2022, 11 a.m.

Where: Address, location of event, parking directions

Who: A list of important people who will be attending your event

Why: State the reason for the event and, in brief, what will be covered. Do not, however, provide specific information, as that may deter media from attending.

For more information, visit [www.umces.edu](http://www.umces.edu).

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###

# **HOLDING STATEMENT**

*Will inform the press that a crisis situation has broken and more information will be provided when available. Will inform the media that you are presently working to determine the nature of the scenario and that matters are currently under investigation.*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **CONTACT:**

Amy Pelsinsky  
410-330-1389  
[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

### **Incident at (place of crisis)**

**LOCATION (September 1, 2023)**—The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science has just been informed that .....

Paragraph two should give as many of the 5Ws that are known at the present time. Make sure that you are aware of legal requirements and not releasing confidential information at this time.

“The third paragraph should be a quote from the most relevant source,” says University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science President Peter Goodwin.

Let the media know what actions are currently being undertaken by your organization to address the current situation and address who might be affected by this issue and what they should do.

Inform the media that additional information will be provided when it is available at a press conference (where and when), through further news releases, or on your website: [www.umces.edu](http://www.umces.edu).

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###

# EMPATHY STATEMENT

**CONTACT:**

Amy Pelsinsky  
410-330-1389  
[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Incident at (place of crisis)

**LOCATION (September 1, 2023)**—The following statement was released by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science following the (short description of incident and location).

LOCATION: We understand the concerns, fears, and questions you may have about the (incident) that took place (time frame). Our Thoughts and prayers are with our employees and their families.

At this time we are doing everything we can to (actions being taken).

“The safety and well being our (those affected) is our first priority,” says University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science President Peter Goodwin.

Inform the media that additional information will be provided when it is available at a press conference (where and when), through further news releases, or on your website: [www.umces.edu](http://www.umces.edu).

###

# **DRAFT SCENARIOS: SAMPLE STATEMENTS**



# SAMPLE HOLDING STATEMENT 1

## **Active shooter on Chesapeake Biological Laboratory campus**

**LOCATION, MD (September 1, 2023)**—An active shooter has been reported on the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory campus in Solomons, Maryland. A report came in at 3:25 p.m. that shots were fired and a man scene running down Farren Avenue with a gun. No injuries have been reported. Employees are sheltering in place. Follow @UMCES for regular updates on the situation.

### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science is a leading research and educational institution working to understand and manage the world's resources. From a network of laboratories spanning from the Allegheny Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, UMCES scientists provide sound advice to help state and national leaders manage the environment and prepare future scientists to meet the global challenges of the 21st century. [www.umces.edu](http://www.umces.edu)

###

# SAMPLE HOLDING STATEMENT 2

## **Chesapeake Biological Laboratory evacuation in progress**

**LOCATION, MD (September 1, 2023)**—The Chesapeake Biological Laboratory is being evacuated due to (INSERT NATURAL DISASTER HERE). All faculty, staff and students are in transit or being transported to xxxxxxxxxxxx. MORE ON THE NATURAL DISTASTER THAT CAUSED THIS SITUATION. Follow @UMCES for regular updates on the situation.

### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

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###

# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CONTACT:

Amy Pelsinsk

410-330-1389

[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

## UMCES announces passing of xxxxx xxxxxx

**LOCATION (September 1, 2023)**— It is with profound sadness that we share the news INSERT NAME HERE died early in the morning on INSERT DATE, 2018. ONE-LINE STATEMENT ABOUT DEATH ABOUT THIS PERSON'S ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION/IMPACT.

"We extend our deepest sympathies to NAME family, friends and colleagues; our thoughts are with them all," said LEADERSHIP NAME.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS OR INSTRUCTIONS.

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###

## SAMPLE TWEET/FACBOOK POST:

It is with profound sadness that we share the news INSERT NAME died early this morning. We extend our deepest sympathies to NAME'S, family, friends and colleagues; our thoughts are with them all.

# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CONTACT:

Amy Pelsinsky

410-330-1389

[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

## UMCES announces passing of xxxxx xxxxxxxx

**LOCATION (September 1, 2023)**—The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science community is deeply saddened by the death of XXXXXX John McGee who passed away over the weekend. A member of the xxxx community, McGee served as xxxxxxx for 14 years.

XXXX was leader in the field of xxxx. INSERT BIO INFO HERE

“Our hearts go out to the family of Dr. McGee at this extremely difficult time,” University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science President Peter Goodwin. “We have a tight-knit community here, and this is a great blow to us.”

Under most circumstances the news release should be a maximum of 250 words.

“Finish it off with another quote,” says Goodwin. “You can use the same speaker or a different source to highlight various aspects of the crisis, but make sure these folks are available for further comment.”

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###

# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CONTACT:

Amy Pelsinsky

410-330-1389

[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

## Boating accident on Choptank River injures 3

**LOCATION, MD (September 1, 2023)**—A boating accident during a research cruise has left three University of Maryland Center for Environmental scientists injured. The accident occurred at 8 am today near the Horn Point Laboratory on the Choptank River.

The researchers were conducting a routine study of the water quality in the Choptank. The boat was struck by a private boat on the river and broken into pieces. The Coast Guard responded within 20 minutes and were able to pull all of the men from the water and transport them to Salisbury General Hospital for treatment.

“We are grateful our colleagues were found and are currently receiving treatment,” says University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science President Peter Goodwin. “Offer new information here. Every word should count.”

Under most circumstances the news release should be a maximum of 250 words.

“Finish it off with another quote,” says Goodwin. “You can use the same speaker or a different source to highlight various aspects of the crisis, but make sure these folks are available for further comment.”

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###

# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CONTACT:

Amy Pelsinsky

410-330-1389

[apelsinsky@umces.edu](mailto:apelsinsky@umces.edu)

## Chemical explosion in lab send three students to hospital

**LOCATION (September 1, 2023)**—[WHAT HAPPENED] Three students were rushed to a hospital Saturday afternoon with non-life-threatening injuries after a chemical explosion at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's xxxxxx Laboratory.

The explosion occurred in the basement of a building on campus as the graduate students worked in a chemistry lab. A mixture of chemicals and acidic waste may have caused the blast.

A university spokeswoman said students may have suffered acidic burns. Fire officials said all three students were immediately decontaminated. They were rushed to a hospital.

Emergency crews recovered pieces of a container that contained a mixture of hydrochloric, nitric and sulfuric acids. A small fire was extinguished and the building was eventually reopened.

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