

NEBRASKA

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Good Life. Great Strength.

# Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

## Annual Report 2017



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Nebraska Emergency Management Agency is charged by state statute with reducing the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of Nebraska from damage, injury and loss of life or property resulting from natural, technological and man-made disasters.



*A June tornado caused damage to storage units in La Platte.*

## Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles



Heavy rain from August thunderstorms flooded the Seward Area.

On the cover: NEMA staff and local emergency managers work at the annual fire school in Grand Island to register firefighters for training using the Salamander credentialing system.

We envision safer, less vulnerable communities in Nebraska, made possible through effective collaborative partnerships committed to saving lives and reducing the impact of disasters. Our mission is to coordinate, support and serve Nebraska through an effective and relevant emergency management agency. Our guiding principles are:

1. All emergencies begin at the local level. NEMA collaborates with local, state, tribal and federal officials to provide coordinated assistance to Nebraska communities that augment local capabilities when appropriate.
2. NEMA activities are grounded in principles of emergency management. Emergency management must be comprehensive, progressive, risk-driven, cost-effective and flexible.
3. Respectful, collaborative relationships and professional leadership are integral to quality emergency management. Emergency management activities must be inclusive and involve the whole community.



In an effort to efficiently serve the citizens of Nebraska, Gov. Pete Ricketts implemented initiatives in 2017 to make agencies better, faster and more productive.

Reducing waste, improving performance and streamlining processes are statewide goals and Nebraska Emergency Management Agency staff has renewed their focus on measuring goals and activities in an effort to further improve how we interact with our stakeholders and ultimately the citizens of Nebraska. Monthly reports to the governor provide a window into our efforts to accomplish the goals laid out in our five-year strategic plan.

Our performance objectives measure how effectively we perform our annual statutory duties, which include:

- Monitoring assets and resources available to support statewide preparedness efforts;
- Demonstrating the capability to sustain operations for extended periods of time and supporting more than one disaster location or type of event simultaneously; and
- Demonstrating the capacity to deploy state incident management teams (Type 3) to assist with disasters.



A survey of satisfaction completed by local emergency management staff and emergency support function representatives in spring 2017 provided insight allowed us to measure and improve our performance in the following areas: leadership, responsiveness/accountability, decision making, communication, partnership and being quality driven. We were pleased with the results, but saw areas where improvement could be achieved.

NEMA staff were among the 12,625 state employees who earned “white belt” certification in the Lean Six Sigma training which is a methodology that relies on a collaborative team effort to improve performance by systematically removing waste and reducing variation. While originally a program to improve manufacturing processes, in state government it is being used to reduce waste and inefficiencies.

At NEMA, we are working to focus on increasing efficiencies to improve turn-around time to produce information and to deliver services. We are doing this in our day-to-day operations to ultimately improve our emergency response.



Major General  
Daryl Bohac,  
Director



Bryan Tuma,  
Assistant Director



Clockwise from far left: NEMA offers training classes throughout the year;

The state of Nebraska stood up the State Emergency Operations Center to respond to an influx of visitors for the eclipse;

The annual investment justification workshop gave emergency managers an opportunity to prioritize needs;

June storms left mountains of debris in it's wake; and

Preliminary damage assessment teams view damage caused by June tornadoes.



# Agency Overview, Administration

As part of the Nebraska Military Department, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) works to protect lives and property of Nebraskans by preparing for, responding to, recovering from and mitigating against disasters, threats, hazards and emergencies.

As the smallest of the Nebraska state agencies that reports directly to the Governor, NEMA relies extensively on full- and part-time emergency management representatives in Nebraska's 93 counties to carry out programs at the local level. It is this partnership with local directors that is a key reason why the state can respond effectively in times of emergency.

While NEMA has responsibility to assist local governments when they require support after a disaster, another key to the agency's ability to respond is through the

support of the state's emergency support function agencies and organizations. With a staff of only 40 emergency management professionals and one program specialist from the University of Nebraska Lincoln's Public Policy Center, NEMA must rely on the support of other state agency staff and other organizations to coordinate a disaster response.

In his role as adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac is director of the agency, with day-to-day operations administered by Assistant Director Bryan Tuma.

NEMA supports Nebraska's lieutenant governor as state homeland security director, acts as the state administrative agency for the state's homeland security program and is the point of contact for integration of emergency management and

homeland security programs with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

As the state administrative agency, NEMA has responsibility for overall funding, fiscal accountability, program management and integration with other state agencies to carry out the state homeland security program.

The Nebraska Homeland Security Strategy and the agency strategic plan are updated regularly by NEMA and are in place to lead and guide the agency's performance.

At the national level, NEMA interacts with the National Emergency Management Association to keep up with issues that affect all states. Statewide, NEMA actively supports the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management and its professional membership.



High winds overturned pivots across the state in June.



Tree damage was extensive during the June storms.



The June tornado caused roof damage in Cass County.



Tornado damage affected rural Gage County.

## ADMINISTRATION

NEMA's administration section completes travel documents, purchases supplies and maintains records and accounts payables. The section works in concert with the agency's business manager who reports directly to the assistant director. When a field team deploys to disasters across the state, administration is responsible for purchasing response supplies.

# Preparedness Section

NEMA's Preparedness Section has responsibility for grants associated with emergency management preparedness, and as the state administrative agent (SAA), Preparedness Section staff work with emergency managers, regions, state agencies, and first responders statewide on local emergency operations plans in order to be ready in case disaster strikes. Additionally, they maintain involvement with the public through Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps programs, all the while emphasizing the importance of planning, exercise and training (PET) in their emergency management activities.

## PLANNING UNIT

The NEMA Planning Unit oversees the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP), State Preparedness Report, State Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), statewide communications interoperability implementation and revisions of county local emergency operation plans (LEOPs).

NEMA adheres to a five-year planning calendar and processes full revisions of LEOPs. Twenty full revisions of LEOPs were completed this year.

Working with the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (PPC), NEMA has established planning capabilities for the integrated planning process in the eight PET/communication regions.

The planning unit coordinates the development of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grant investment justifications and the planning unit held Nebraska's annual Investment Justification Workshop with the Homeland Security Planning Team. Then, NEMA representatives met with the Homeland Security Policy Group and Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) to complete the project award process.

The unit also serves as the agency liaison to Omaha's Metropolitan Medical Response Systems and coordinates the Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps programs.

The planning staff completed a full revision of the SEOP in March. In addition, the THIRA and State Preparedness Report were completed and submitted to DHS.



Debris from June tornadoes quickly accumulated.

## DEBRIS MANAGEMENT

Taking a proactive approach to coordinating and managing debris removal operations is part of a successful emergency management plan.

In 2017, NEMA selected a planning specialist to review local debris management plans, and throughout the year, NEMA reviewed 17 debris management plans. Four of the plans received FEMA approval and the others are well on their way to getting approval.

FEMA approval requires that several stringent requirements are met and also allows for an applicant to claim an additional one time 2 percent cost incentive for debris removal in the first 90 days of an incident.

NEMA also began the preliminary planning process of developing a statewide debris management plan.



NEMA Planning Specialist Patrick Rooney gives a presentation on the State Emergency Operation Plan in the NEMA Operations Center.

## SINGLE ENGINE AIR TANKER (SEAT)

The NEMA Planning Unit has assigned a program specialist to monitor the state's yearly single engine air tanker contract and to assist in daily operations at the SEAT bases, along with staff from the Nebraska Forest Service.

When a wildfire starts up in Nebraska, local fire chiefs can make a direct request to the Great Plains Dispatch Center to get the SEAT up in the air and dropping retardant on fires as soon as possible. This helps reduce the spread of fire and can reduce the number of acres burned.

Since 2013, Nebraska contracted the aircraft to fill-in where local aerial applicators are scarce. Having the SEAT as a dedicated resource in Nebraska during fire season has help reduce the number of acres burned.

The 2017 SEAT season opened July 15 and the aircraft was deployed on day two of its contract to a fire in South Dakota. It flew seven sorties and dropped more than 3,000 gallons of retardant over the next two days. South Dakota and Nebraska have signed a compact agreement to share resources during fire season.



NEMA Program Specialist Leo Larkin works at the SEAT base in Valentine.

Throughout the season the SEAT flew on 13 fires, four mission currency flights and two Nebraska airport fly-ins to demonstrate and explain capabilities of the aircraft. Nearly 18,000 gallons of retardant were expended during the 2017 season.

# Preparedness Section

## GRANTS UNIT

NEMA receives grants from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Department of Transportation (DoT)/Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to support efforts in Nebraska.

As the State Administrative Agency (SAA), NEMA is the only Nebraska agency eligible to apply directly for these funds, and in turn ensures that local emergency management programs are established and maintained. The SAA is responsible for filing the applications on the state's behalf, distributing program guidelines to state and local jurisdictions (sub-recipients), receiving applications from sub-recipients for funding, maintaining oversight and compliance through monitoring, and facilitating the distribution of these non-disaster grants funds.

NEMA's Grant Unit receives and administers the following grants:

- State Homeland Security Program Grant (SHSP)
- Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)
- Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant (HMEP)

Like other federal grant programs, the Homeland Security Grant has seen decreases in funding over the past five years. This, along with an increase of federal expectations and grant requirements, was the catalyst for a restructuring of the grant process two years ago. The process wasn't without its hurdles or growing pains; however, out of this came a refinement. With less money being awarded each year, State and local entities are now being asked to share in the costs for projects that historically have been 'stand-alone' or individually funded.

In prior years, grant guidance allowed for more flexibility in terms of the scope of the project. The focus has now narrowed to maintenance and sustainment of existing projects, in other words — a project-driven approach. No longer are sub-recipients given an award to work from based on a formula, now the awards are projects based.

An investment justification workshop for the State Homeland Security Grant on April 13 allowed the state planning

team, regional PET representatives, and state agency staff, to deliver project presentations after reviewing project rankings from subject matter experts. A peer-review voting process closed-out the workshop.

The Senior Advisory Committee discussed the projects and processes that could be eliminated based on the threat hazard identification and risk analysis/state preparedness report results (THIRA/SPR). Their recommendations were forwarded to the next level, the lieutenant governor and the Homeland Security Policy Group for review and approval. Based on this, project funds were awarded to the State's eight planning, exercise, and training (PET) regions, the 11 hazmat teams, Citizen Corps, MMRS and state agencies.

As a result of this process, NEMA submitted projects that directly aid in reducing vulnerabilities and increase the level of preparedness of its emergency managers, regions, first responders, and state agencies.

Over the 'period of performance', NEMA then continues to monitor its grants as required by DHS/FEMA. Grants are monitored for compliance in: employee reimbursement, equipment, fiscal, local emergency operation plan compliance, National Incident Management System compliance, other direct costs, personnel and direct labor, PET expenses, reporting requirements, supplies and materials, special conditions, and travel/vehicle mileage. A total of 65 grants were monitored and compliant in 2016.

As a result of the monitoring visits conducted in 2013, the grants unit met throughout 2014 to revamp the Grants Management Handbook for grant recipients. Once the process began, the need for a more user-friendly product was identified. The resulting handbook was posted in February 2015, with a subsequent update posted in June 2016. As grant requirements and guidance change, the handbook for sub-recipients will continue to be updated and improved.



*Nebraska's annual preparedness workshop included threat, hazard identification and risk assessment and finalization of the training and exercise calendar.*

## COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM GRANT

In 2017, NEMA received a \$300,000 countering violent extremism grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The grant will be used to identify barriers that keep peers or family members from reporting potential signs of radicalization using a public-health approach. The project will be used in rural or small to mid-sized city public health departments. In addition to identifying barriers to reporting, the program will develop strategies to address them. Other goals include increasing awareness of observable behaviors associated with the process of radicalization and enhancing the connection between state level threat assessment resources and local trusted resources receiving reports.

NEMA was the only emergency management agency to receive a grant. NEMA and University of Nebraska Public Policy Center will lead and manage the project. Other state participants include Nebraska State Patrol's Fusion Center, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and Nebraska Department of Education. Local public health efforts are led by Two Rivers Public Health Department, which serves seven counties in rural Nebraska.

# Preparedness Section

## CITIZEN CORPS

The Nebraska Citizen Corps Program (CCP) works with emergency management, public health, first responders and other preparedness partners to provide public education, training and volunteer opportunities for Nebraskans. CCP focuses on disaster preparedness and response for individuals, families and communities.

The State Homeland Security grant helped fund projects aimed at making sure Nebraskans are better prepared for, and able to respond to, disasters. CCP distributed Bad Day Bags, first aid kits, and disaster preparedness information to students at UNL's Ready Campus event again this fall. This event allows CCP to interact with students to educate them about preparedness initiatives and training opportunities.

CCP partnered with Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health for their annual conference. CCP sponsored Psychological First Aid (PFA) training for volunteers at the conference. Local Citizen Corps programs have also provided PFA training as well as community emergency response team (CERT) courses, Stop-the-Bleed and Hands-Only CPR classes throughout the year. This training helps communities become more resilient.

Volunteers with local Citizen Corps programs like CERT and Medical Reserve Corps had numerous opportunities to participate in events throughout the year. Volunteers provided first aid for large events like the Nebraska State Fair, Special Olympics, and the Cornhusker State Games. They also assisted local public health departments, emergency managers, and first responders to provide support for local events. The State Homeland Security grant was used to help purchase equipment that volunteers used for local responses.

The State Homeland Security grant funds the State Citizen Corps coordinator position. This position provides technical assistance to local programs, works with local, state and federal agencies to strengthen partnerships, and assists with the development of the State Citizen Corps Council.



As a part of National Preparedness Month, Lt. Gov. Mike Foley presented the Be Prepared Awards, recognizing volunteers and community organizations for excellence in emergency preparedness and disaster response on Sept. 15 at the Nebraska State Capitol. Those honored included: Mike Clark of Gretna; Mike Harimon of Bayard; Chelsea Smith of Seward, Sarpy County Emergency Management; Southeast Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps; and Tri-County Community Emergency Response Team.



The State Emergency Response Commission meets quarterly and support hazardous materials planning and training in Nebraska.

## SERC

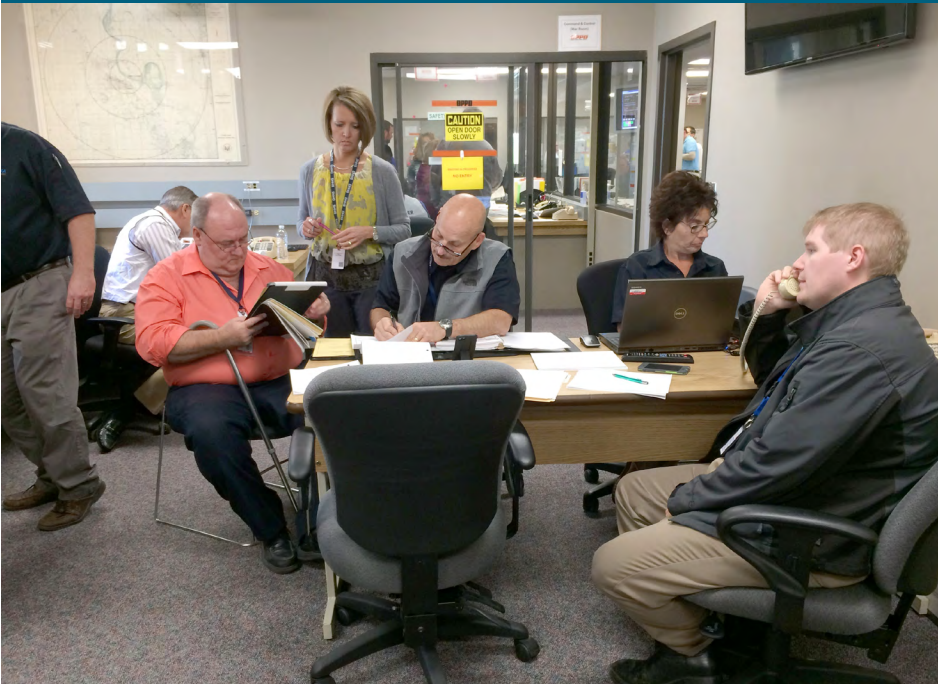
The State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) is the 19-member governor-appointed commission tasked with supporting hazardous materials planning and training in Nebraska. NEMA is the designated coordinating agency for all SERC activities. SERC has designated the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) as the point of contact for hazardous materials releases and reporting.

SERC is the coordinating body for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant. HMEP monies are used to fund transportation related hazardous materials planning and training activities, as well as printing the local emergency operations plans for each of Nebraska's 93 counties.

Nebraska has a variety of hazardous materials response resources across the state, supervised and coordinated by SERC. The primary response to hazardous materials comes in the form of local fire departments. Utilizing HMEP funding, the State Fire Marshal's Office provides hazardous materials awareness, operations, and technician training to local paid and volunteer departments. With the State Homeland Security Grant, ten fire departments have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the State of Nebraska to be provided funding for training and planning. In return, these departments exist as State Emergency Response Teams for hazardous materials incidents. These fire departments are located in Beatrice, Columbus, Grand Island, Hastings, Red Willow Rural, Norfolk, North Platte, Omaha, Papillion and Scottsbluff.

Members of SERC, LEPCs and fire departments attended several trainings and conferences, representing Nebraska on a local, regional and national basis. A composite team of hazardous materials technicians competed in the annual Hazmat Challenge in Los Alamos, New Mexico. Members of SERC and the LEPCs attended the EPA Region 7 LEPC/SERC Conference in Kansas City. The SERC chairman and coordinator both attended the Nebraska Safety Council Trade Show, promoting safe practices for hazardous materials response.

# Preparedness Section



State of Nebraska officials participate in the final Ft. Calhoun Nuclear Station exercise in October. The plant has stopped power generation and will go into safe store status in April 2018.



The NEMA calibrations lab moved in June from its West Van Dorn location to the Joint Forces Headquarters where the rest of NEMA staff is housed.

## TECHNICAL HAZARDS UNIT

The Technical Hazards Unit (THU) covers four distinct programs for the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency: the SERC (covered in its own section of this report), Radiological emergency planning for Nebraska's two nuclear power plants, radioactive material transportation response training, and the agency's radiological equipment calibrations lab.

These programs work together to mitigate radiological risks and ensure an effective response if an incident were to occur.

Radiological emergency preparedness (REP) is largely focused on Nebraska's two nuclear power plants, Cooper Nuclear Station and Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station. NEMA's two REP planners ensure that

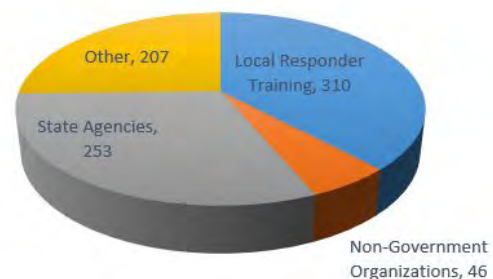
the communities surrounding the nuclear power plants are prepared for an incident. NEMA assists with the local REP plans, providing training and exercise support. NEMA staff participates in the quarterly drills at each plant. The Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station has stopped power generation and is on schedule to go into safe store status in April 2018. On Oct. 18, Fort Calhoun held its final FEMA evaluated exercise.

THU is also involved in the planning and training of local responders for a response to an accident involving radioactive materials crossing the state. THU maintains a situational awareness of dates and routes of any radioactive waste shipments moving through the state.

The final program of the Technical Hazards Unit is the radiological calibration laboratory. The "cal lab" calibrates and maintains the radiological monitoring equipment. NRC and FEMA regulations require annual calibration and quarterly performance checks on equipment positioned around the two nuclear stations. NEMA's radiological calibration specialist ensures that the state's radiological monitoring equipment is maintained within performance specifications and meets regulatory requirements. In June, the calibrations lab made the laborious move from the West Van Dorn facility to the Lincoln National Guard Base joining the rest of NEMA at the Joint Force Headquarters.

**The Technical Hazard programs work to mitigate radiological risks and ensure an effective response, thus significantly reducing vulnerabilities and the potential for negative consequences if an incident were to ever occur.**

## 2017 THU-Led Training



■ Local Responder Training ■ Non-Government Organizations ■ State Agencies ■ Other



# Operations Section

The NEMA Operations Section works to provide an effective, efficient and timely response in support of local governments affected by disaster. The section continues its work on development of a type 3 incident management team (IMT) by teaming with local and state personnel on credentialing of staff to fill various team positions. The IMT will deploy to the site of a disaster when requested to work with local officials on the response. Operations includes the NEMA Watch Center, public information, the Training and Exercise Unit and Information Technology and Communications Unit.



## NON-GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

In the aftermath of any disaster, government resources are not always available to assist individuals who have been impacted. Volunteer and non-governmental organizations work collaboratively to help meet individual needs. NEMA coordinates with non-governmental organizations and volunteers to help find resources for individuals. Nebraska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NEVOAD) is an organization of voluntary agencies that provides relief in times of disaster. The cornerstones of the group are cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration. Through NEVOAD, agencies are able to effectively deploy personnel and resources while avoiding duplication of effort.

Another source for assistance comes from long-term recovery groups. Voluntary organizations, state and local government, community leaders, local churches and local businesses work to help meet the needs of individuals and families who do not qualify for other forms of assistance. Local representatives from voluntary agencies, government and other interested parties working to prepare a coordinated disaster response within their community, county or region.

## WATCH CENTER

The NEMA Watch Center is now staffed with a supervisor and watch center planning specialist.

A watch brief is now being distributed to NEMA staff, agency partners and stakeholders across the state each Monday through Friday and on weekends and holidays as the situation warrants. The daily briefs help provide situational awareness about weather, events and available assets in the state. The brief is also sent to surrounding states and federal partner agencies as a heads-up to activities across the state.

In 2018, a daily dashboard summary will be added to the brief to give leadership a quick "just the facts" one page document that allows a quick assessment of events and issues.

The Watch Center is responsible for monitoring events in the state and integrating with other stakeholders from other state agencies and the emergency managers across the state that represent each of Nebraska's counties.

Through a Watch Officer system, NEMA staff rotate on call to monitor the state and maintain 24/7 awareness of the potential need for a state response.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION

Delivering the right message to the right people at the right time is a vital function in disaster operations. Accurate and timely information provided to the public before, during and after disasters contributes greatly to saving lives and protecting property.

Working with local, state and federal communicators, the NEMA public information officer (PIO) can activate a joint information center (JIC) following a disaster or event that affects citizens of the state.

JIC staff includes PIOs from other state agencies, as well as representatives from local and federal entities involved

in the response to an event.

In 2017, NEMA hosted a workshop for state PIOs on developing key messages and revising the state's Joint Information System/Joint Information Center Plan. Training and exercises will continue throughout 2018 to increase the state PIOs' readiness for disaster response.

NEMA hosted a Basic Public Information Officer course in spring 2017, and the PIO works with local emergency managers to promote preparedness via social media campaigns, the annual severe weather awareness poster contest (pictured below) and other events.



# Operations Section

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

In 2017, NEMA's Information Technology and Communications Unit continued its work to strengthen partnerships among local government entities that use the Nebraska Regional Interoperability Network (NRIN).

NRIN is a locally-owned IP-based microwave network that uses towers across the state to connect public safety answering points (PSAP) and 911 centers. NEMA staff was able to identify many potential cost-saving opportunities for local PSAPs.

Communication personnel have established a communications unit to be deployed as part of a type 3 incident management team (IMT) for the state of Nebraska. Members of the unit have expertise in a variety of communications systems that can be deployed to an incident anywhere in the state. Members are completing position task books that are required in order to be on a type 3 IMT.

The unit created interactive geographic information systems (GIS) maps for the NEMA Watch Center, NRIN Governance Board and radiological emergency preparedness staff. The maps have the capability to display multiple layers, for instance, emergency planning zones and evacuation routes could be included on one map to allow for effective planning and response.

By working closely with local governments, sharing mapping capabilities and the promotion of new radio systems has knocked down communication barriers and created many opportunities for improvement at all levels.



## STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (SEOC)

The State Emergency Operations Center (pictured above) is housed at NEMA and is activated when a disaster or planned event necessitates coordination of state resources and response.

Emergency response is divided into functional areas which provide organization and support of operations. Common emergency support functions include: transportation, communications, public works, firefighting, law enforcement, emergency management, mass care, public health and military support. Representatives of each of the function areas work together in the SEOC when activated for an event.

This facilitates coordination of resources in support of incident command as part of the National Incident Management System.



*Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) deployments of Nebraska National Guard resources to Texas, Florida and the Virgin Islands were a centerpiece of activity from mid-summer to early fall. These resources and personnel performed supply distribution and movement, assisted in local operations center planning and resourcing, security and assisted with cleaning schools that had been damaged from the hurricanes.*

# Operations Section



NEMA staff led a hazardous materials spill tabletop exercise in May 11 for zoo staff, the Omaha metro and surrounding areas at the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium.

## TRAINING AND EXERCISE UNIT

The NEMA Training and Exercise unit presents an active program, integrated into Nebraska's eight planning exercise and training (PET) regions. Activities are conducted at all levels, from assistance to local jurisdictions through regional and state level training and exercise.

NEMA offers support to state agencies, local jurisdictions and the eight regions in the form of basic certification academies and targeted courses for emergency management personnel.

In 2017, the unit tracked and coordinated training for 9,586 individual offerings of independent study courses taken by Nebraskans, along with 19 offerings of training in traditional classroom style courses.

NEMA continues to establish a level of training in compliance with requirements identified by the Department of Homeland

Security and Nebraska statute.

NEMA also conducts an annual state-level exercise each year to test readiness of local, county and state agencies and their ability to work together in a large scale incident. In 2016, this exercise was a communications-focused full-scale exercise using a wildfire scenario in the Crawford area, conducted at Ft. Robinson State Park.

The 2017 exercise was designed to exercise the local public power districts emergency plans for a Long Term Power Outage. The table top exercise took the power grid in Nebraska off line for a period of six weeks. This presented many challenges and brought into play the discussion of cyber security. The long term power outage table top exercise presented many opportunities for increased planning and preparedness.

## ECLIPSE

Throughout 2017, officials at many state agencies focused on preparing for the solar eclipse that eventually brought hundreds of thousands of people to Nebraska which was a prime location for viewing the country's first coast-to-coast solar eclipse in 99 years. All-in-all, it was a successful exercise of emergency management plans and procedures during a real event.



## TERREX '17



A long-term power outage tabletop exercise in July focused on how Nebraska would respond to a terrorist event. The event was held at NEMA and sponsored by the National Emergency Management Association and the U.S. Department of Energy. Representatives from power companies all over the state participated.

## NATIONAL GUARD EXERCISE



Saunders County Emergency Management Director Terry Miller checks in members of the National Guard during a full-scale exercise at Mead in August. A team of local emergency managers and NEMA staff used the state's Salamander credentialing system to track participants and other resources in the four-day exercise.

## CIVIL AIR PATROL

During 2017, the Civil Air Patrol responded to 12 requests for Firewatch missions through NEMA. Firewatch aircraft are located in Chadron and Valentine and when a fire chief or Nebraska Forest Service personnel request an observation flight, NEMA works with the National Operation Center for the Civil Air Patrol to put a plane in the air.

Observation flights can locate a potential fire after lightning strike in early stages and are beneficial in keeping fires small.

# Recovery Section

The Recovery Section at NEMA manages disaster recovery and provides assistance to state entities, local governments, Native American tribal governments, special districts and certain nonprofit organizations impacted by disasters, as requested. Throughout the recovery process, the NEMA Recovery staff works to ensure that state and federal support is provided in an efficient and timely manner. The section administers multiple federally-funded disaster assistance programs which are managed by two units: public assistance and hazard mitigation. To successfully respond and recover in times of disaster, NEMA also administers the Governor's Emergency Fund, which was established to provide assistance to political subdivisions that have suffered from a disaster or emergency.



*A tornado damaged Bellevue's Rising View neighborhood during June storms.*



*Sarpy County damage included destruction at Papillion's Waste Water Treatment Plant.*

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

NEMA's Public Assistance Unit staff work to provide assistance to state, tribal and local governments as well as certain types of private non-profits throughout the recovery process, whether it is for a federal or state-declared disaster.

Through the Public Assistance Program, FEMA provides supplemental federal disaster grant assistance for debris removal, emergency protective measures and the repair, replacement or restoration

of disaster-damaged, publicly-owned facilities and the facilities of certain private non-profit (PNP) organizations.

The program also encourages protection of these damaged facilities from future events by making assistance available for hazard mitigation measures on disaster damaged elements during the recovery process. The state of Nebraska manages this program for all sub-grants awarded to local eligible jurisdictions and agencies within the State of Nebraska.

During 2017, there were two separate events which resulted in federal disaster declarations.

On April, a severe late winter storm began impacting the southwest corner of the state and traveled northeast for the next three days. In its wake were hundreds of broken power poles, downed power lines and many communities and residents without power.

Then, on June 12, a week-long severe storm event began that produced several tornadoes, high wind, heavy rain and flooding. Tornadoes struck in the panhandle including one that significantly impacted the northeast corner of the Village of Bayard.

The storm system continued across the state and ended with tornadoes on the ground in Bellevue and other locations on the eastern side of the state.

Throughout the year there were many other storm events across the state that while significant, did not rise to the level of requesting other federal disaster declarations.

FEMA opened a Joint Field Office (JFO) following the two disaster declarations, however, due to multiple significant hurricanes affected other parts of the United States the JFO was closed. FEMA continues to work on the two federally-declared disasters with a limited staff.



*Nebraska State Patrol Aviation documented damage to a farm northeast of Bayard.*

# Recovery Section

## HAZARD MITIGATION

The Hazard Mitigation Unit staff work with eligible public entities to reduce the risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards by providing federal funding for long-term mitigation measures that will reduce or eliminate the severe effects of future disasters.

Hazard mitigation saves taxpayer dollars through measures such as the reduction of power outages due to storms, property buyouts of frequently flooded homes, flood reduction projects, tornado safe rooms, backup power to critical facilities and emergency warning systems along with a host of other activities.

After two federal disaster declarations were approved for the state in 2017, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds were available for local governments to develop long-term initiatives that will potentially reduce loss of life and property.

The requests for funding available as a result of these two disasters far exceeded the funds available. The mitigation task force, a group of representatives from several state and federal agencies, met to review the requests for mitigation funding and prioritize the projects submitted. The goal of the task force is to ensure that as many hazard mitigation projects as possible are submitted to, and approved, by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The task force prioritized the projects statewide for disaster funding.

While continuing work on the previously approved projects and the new disaster project requests, the NEMA mitigation staff also work to coordinate planning efforts and project ideas with communities, to prepare for any funding that might become available in the future.

On an annual basis, mitigation funding is also available from two other non-disaster FEMA programs, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant program and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant program. Both of these programs are annual appropriations from FEMA for mitigation planning and projects.

In 2017, five of these grant applications were submitted to FEMA for consideration in the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program.

The mitigation unit provides technical assistance throughout the entire mitigation project life from assisting with



*Minatare Public Schools earned a hazard mitigation grant to build a safe room. It was completed in 2017.*

the identification of viable projects that will alleviate future damages, through providing oversight of the development of a project application ensuring compliance with program policy, to conducting site visits during construction to ensure all approved project plans are being followed through a final project inspection and closeout.

NEMA's hazard mitigation staff is also working on the next State Hazard Mitigation Plan revision which is

due in the spring of 2019. With many programmatic changes and the recent approval of nearly all of the state's local hazard mitigation plans by FEMA, NEMA will be analyzing the myriad of risk assessments and local strategies to combat the greatest risks to its citizens and communities. In doing so, they will be accounting for as many known variables as possible to reduce the effects of the unknown, to include climate adaption and variability effects on our natural hazards.



*Left: NEMA Recovery Section Manager Donny Christensen updates applicants at a Sarpy County applicants briefing. It was one of six briefings scheduled to provide information on applying for assistance for communities that incurred damage from severe storms, tornadoes and straight line winds, June 12-17.*



*A June tornado damaged homes in Bellevue.*

# NEMA Funding 2017

## STATE HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM

**\$3,752,000**

Total received from the State Homeland Security Grant Program

Regions	CCP	Hazmat Teams	LETPP	Comm	PET	Total Award
East Central	10,150	20,000	19,000	73,400	32,200	134,750
North Central	10,788			95,000	44,378	150,166
Northeast		19,917		101,500	14,000	115,500
Panhandle	13,000	20,000		89,946	32,000	134,946
South Central	16,000	60,000	60,000	100,000	39,395	205,795
Southeast	3,843	20,000		14,700	44,000	62,543
Southwest	3,000	20,000		75,000	19,500	97,500
Tri-County	49,000	66,000	81,250	51,200	58,400	239,850

STATEWIDE INITIATIVES						
<b>Agriculture</b>	Through memorandum of understanding via southeast region				46,000	
<b>Citizen Corps Program</b>	Through MOU via north central region				123,775	
<b>Fusion Center</b>	Through MOU via Panhandle region				292,050	
<b>Nebraska Hazardous Incident Team</b>	20,000	Through MOU via south central region				
<b>Nebraska Regional Interoperable Network</b>	Through MOU via south central and northeast region					489,000
<b>NRIN Governance Board</b>	Funds awarded to South Central as it is the fiduciary agent for the group					102,708

### TOTAL AWARD TO LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT

**\$2,987,600**

*The remaining 20 percent is kept at the state level-per grant guidance*

\$750,400

**NEMA:** funds allocated to the PET program and management and administration

\$562,800

**NSP:** funds allocated to build and sustain the Nebraska Fusion Information Network

\$187,600

**Total Award to Nebraska:**

**\$3,752,000**

### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT

**\$3,850,082 total grant**

LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES RECEIVE

**62 percent**

of the EMPG grant or **\$2.4 million**

### EXPENDITURES

#### GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY FUND

Federal	\$9,927,672
State	\$152,812
Cash	\$0

State Appropriation: \$1,234,678

Federal Grants: \$6,898,530

Radiological Emergency

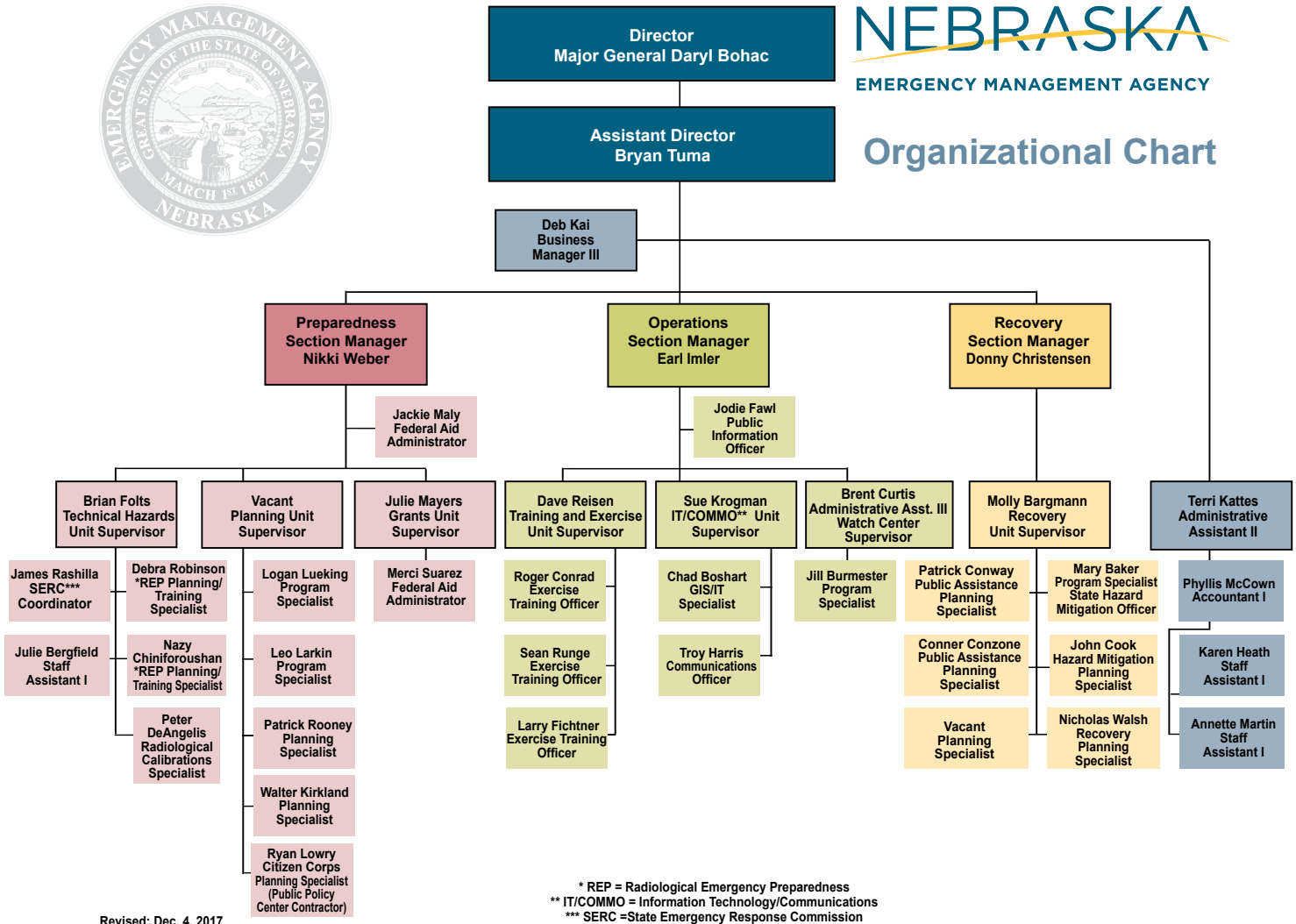
Preparedness: \$434,576

# Organizational Chart



**NEBRASKA**  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## Organizational Chart



Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, presents Roger Conrad, an exercise training officer at NEMA, with the runner up award in the 2017 Excellence in leadership award for the Nebraska Military Department.



Dry conditions caused fires in western Nebraska during 2017 including the Pine Glen Fire north of Long Pine in July as seen from the single engine air tanker (SEAT). The SEAT helps extinguish fires by dropping fire retardant in the early hours of a fire. Four SEAT bases are set up in Nebraska at Chadron, Valentine, Alliance and Scottsbluff which became operational in 2017. In addition, a mobile SEAT base is available for fires in other locations.

# NEBRASKA

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Good Life. Great Strength.

**NEMA** is responsible for coordinating the state response in any major emergency or disaster, including the support of local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with FEMA and other federal partners.

*Nebraska Emergency Management Agency's 2017 Annual Report was produced by Public Information Officer Jodie Fawl. For additional information about the report, other agency publications or to be added to the agency email list for news releases and publications, call 402-471-7428 or email: [jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov](mailto:jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov).*

