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Photo by Win Hendersong, FEMA

Donny Christensen, public assistance officer, discusses the process for applying for assistance.



Photo by Win Hendersong, FEMA

Earl Imler, public assistance officer, distributes application materials to applicants in Sarpy County.

NEMA holds applicant briefings

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) officials held a series of applicant briefings in July and August to help local governments and eligible private nonprofit organizations apply for federal disaster recovery assistance.

The briefings were open to representatives of the declared counties affected by the severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that began on June 1.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Public Assistance (PA) Program provides federal funds to reimburse a minimum of 75 percent of the costs for removing debris, conducting emergency measures and repairing levees, roads, bridges, public utilities, water

control facilities, public buildings and parks. The State of Nebraska and the applying agency cover the remaining costs.

Government entities eligible to participate include local, county and state governments, Indian Tribal organizations and eligible nonprofit organizations. Eligible nonprofits may include educational facilities, emergency, medical, rehabilitation, temporary and permanent custodial care facilities (including those for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities). Museums, zoos, community centers, libraries, shelter workshops, homeless shelters and any health and safety service of a governmental nature, may also be eligible.

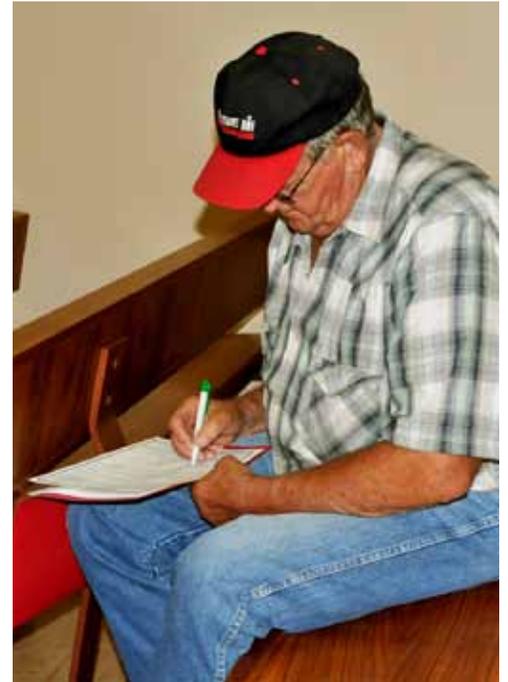


Photo by Win Hendersong, FEMA

An applicant in Cuming County fills out paperwork.

On the Cover:

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency public assistance officers talk to potential federal assistance applicants in Sarpy County



Staff update

Jarad Hamik

Disaster Public Assistance (402) 471-7216

Hamik recently joined NEMA to work in the Public Assistance section. A finance student with a Spanish minor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Hamik is taking a semester off to work prior to beginning his senior year. He is a graduate of Lincoln Pius X High School.

Nebraska Regional Interoperable Network contract signed

The long-awaited contract for the Nebraska Regional Interoperable Network (NRIN) has been signed and Communications Services Inc. (CSI) has begun network analysis, tower mapping and engineering assessments that will build out regional networks across the state.

“The network will connect the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs),” said **Dan Hiller**, planning supervisor at NEMA. “It will connect dispatch centers in the eight PET/Commo Regions across the state. CSI will be identifying towers to be used for point-to-point data transportation.”

The engineering will include as-

essment on towers to determine capabilities for holding equipment, Hiller said.

“We are outlining the process that NEMA will need to do as far as coordination with the OCIO (Office of the Chief Information Officer) and CSI to expedite the regional network build out within a short time frame of two years,” he said.

The network will allow dispatch centers in a local jurisdiction to send voice and data to other dispatch centers in other jurisdictions within the regions, reports **Rod Hutt**, wireless network coordinator.

“It has potential to establish voice data with the NPPD/State

Radio System.” Hutt said. The main part of the contract is the microwave data network build out at more than 200 locations.

The data network will control the future mutual aid network and in the future may carry the national warning system (NAWAS) messages, according to **Bob Eastwood**, communications specialist.

“In the future it could be the backbone of the new digital Ham Radio D-Star System,” Eastwood said. The data system could link D Star repeaters allowing them to be a truly statewide amateur radio system as a support to public safety.”

Mold Poses A Potential Health Threat

Mold growing in recently flooded buildings can cause health problems, state and federal emergency management officials warn.

Water-damaged rooms are moist environments ideal for mold to flourish. People with respiratory problems such as allergies or asthma should not spend time in houses that might contain mold. Mold often is visible as a fuzzy growth or discoloration on surfaces. It usually has a musty, earthy odor.

Those sensitive to mold spores may experience wheezing, difficulty breathing, nasal and sinus congestion, burning and watering eyes, dry cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or skin irritation.

Mold can cause significant health problems. It is urgent that residents and business owners clean their homes and work environments as quickly as possible and not risk serious, long-lasting health effects.

Watch for scams and fraud following storms, flooding, tornadoes

Survivors recovering from severe storms, flooding and tornadoes that struck Nebraska beginning in June are urged by state and federal officials to beware of scam artists who prey on others' misfortunes.

Common types of fraud after disaster strikes are scam artists, contractor fraud and identity theft.

Keep in mind the following suggestions to be safe from scam artists or unscrupulous contractors:

- Do business only with licensed and insured contractors.
- Use known contractors first.
- Ask for references and a written estimate.
- Get a copy of the final, signed contract.
- Do not give personal information such as your bank account numbers, social security number, or other information to those without proper identification.
- Do not sign off before the job is finished.

To report suspected fraud in Nebraska, call the Office of the Attorney General, Consumer Protection Division toll-free at (800) 727-6432.

Disaster Recovery Resources for Nebraska Citizens

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)	www.nema.ne.gov
Traveler Information Portal, road conditions and closures	www.511nebraska.org
	Or call 511 or 800-906-9069
National Weather Service River Forecast	water.weather.gov
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	www.dhhs.ne.gov
	Or call 2-1-1
	402-444-6666.
University of Nebraska Extension Disaster Education Network	www.extension.org
Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA)	www.agr.ne.gov
CropWatch for flood & storm crop damage information	www.cropwatch.unl.edu
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	www.ndeq.state.ne.us
	Or call toll free: 1-877-253-2603
American Red Cross	www.redcross.org
Salvation Army	www.givesalvationarmy.org
	Or call or visit your local chapter
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	www.fema.gov
	www.disabilitypreparedness.gov
National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)	www.floodsmart.gov
	Or call 1-800-427-4661
Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	http://emergency.cdc.gov
U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)	www.usfa.dhs.gov
United States Department of Agriculture	www.fsa.usda.gov
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	www.ready.gov

September is National Preparedness Month

Take action now to make sure your family, neighborhood and community are ready for emergencies and disasters of all types:

- ✓ Put together an emergency supply kit
- ✓ Make a family emergency plan
- ✓ Be prepared to help your neighbor
- ✓ Work as a team to keep everyone safe

To learn more about how you can prepare for emergencies visit ready.gov or call **1-800-BE-READY, TTY 1-800-462-7585**



Plan Now. Work Together. Be Ready.



NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH
September 2010 | ready.gov



FEMA



September is National Preparedness Month ~ Be a Part of the Preparedness Team

**By Darryl J. Madden,
Director, Ready Campaign**

How often do you think about emergencies or disasters? Probably not very often. Maybe after it happens to someone else. However, taking just a few steps can give you the tools to ensure you and your family's safety in an emergency.

According to the 2009 Citizen Corps National Survey, only 36 percent of individuals believed there was a high likelihood of a natural disaster to EVER happen in their community. But disasters happen every day in many different forms – from hurricanes to snowstorms, even localized events such as floods and power outages.

Many people think that it will be easy to grab items from your pantry if disaster strikes. But what if

you aren't at home? What if your family is separated? What if you have to leave quickly? What about your elderly neighbor? The Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps encourage you to take a few extra minutes this month to plan for any emergency.

September is National Preparedness Month (NPM) and a good reminder that we all have a responsibility to protect ourselves, our families, and our communities. Emergencies will happen, but taking action now can help us minimize the impact they will have on our lives.

This year, NPM focuses on encouraging you and other Americans to take active steps toward getting involved and becoming prepared. Preparedness is everyone's respon-

sibility. We have to work together, as a team, to ensure that individuals, families, and communities are ready. Make a plan, Put together an emergency supply kit. Stay Informed. Work as a team to keep everyone safe.

Throughout September, activities and events will take place across this country to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and promote individual involvement, such as first aid trainings, town hall meetings and much more. Look for opportunities to participate in these events in your community.

For more information on NPM or for help getting your family, business or community prepared, call 1-800-BE-READY, TTY 1-800-462-7585 or visit ready.gov, listo.gov or www.citizencorps.gov, where you'll find free preparedness resources such as Family Emergency Plan templates, Emergency Supply Kit Checklists, and much more. The Ready Web site also has a special section for kids, ages 8-12, (Ready Kids) and small- to medium-sized businesses (Ready Business). Emergencies can happen at any time and to anyone. Are you Ready?



The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is charged by Nebraska statute to reduce the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of Nebraska in terms of injury, loss of life and property damage resulting from natural, technological or man-made disasters and emergencies. 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 the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other federal partners.

The Beacon is published monthly by NEMA to share news about the agency and emergency management activities throughout the state. Story ideas can be forwarded to: Jodie Fawl, Public Information Officer, NEMA, 1300 Military Road, Lincoln, NE 68508; (402) 471-7428; or jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov.