

THE BEACON



Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

December 2010

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Adjutant General Judd Lyons, right, thanks Federal Emergency Management Agency representatives for a job well done in Nebraska. Also pictured, from left are AI Berndt of NEMA and Stephen Thompson and Larry Maupin of FEMA .

NEMA director thanks FEMA representatives

The Adjutant General Judd Lyons in his role as NEMA Director and **NEMA Assistant Director AI Berndt** thanked Federal Emergency Management Agency representatives for their work in Nebraska on four recent disaster declarations.

General Lyons presented his personalized TAG coin in recognition for a job well done for **Federal Coordinating Officer Stephen Thompson** and **Operations Section Chief Larry Maupin** of FEMA in a meeting Dec. 13.

FEMA opened a Joint Field Office in Lincoln on Jan. 4 and FEMA staff have been working on federally declared disasters ever since.

“FEMA staff have done exemplary work for the state of Nebraska on these four disasters during the last year,” said Berndt. “We appreciate the effort they have made on our behalf.”

FEMA’s Joint Field Office in Lincoln began demobilization during the first week of December and will be closed by Dec. 16.



On the Cover:

From left, Nebraska Adjutant General Judd Lyons recognizes FEMA’s Stephen Thompson and Larry Maupin as NEMA’s AI Berndt looks on.

2010: An active year for the state's emergency managers



As we close out 2010, my wish and hope for all of you is a happy holiday season. Nebraskans working in emergency management certainly deserve some relaxation and enjoyment after an extremely busy year. There are currently 14 open disasters in the state. Also, 80 of 93 counties were affected by at least one of the last five disasters — all of which occurred in the last 14 months.

Severe winter weather and snowstorms began in December 2009 and continued through Jan. 8. The record or near record snowfalls in the Eastern part of the state left the area blanketed in snow. Blizzard conditions and low temperatures hampered snow removal. When the presidential declaration came Feb. 25, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Joint Field Office was already open following the Dec. 16 federal declaration for storms in November 2009 in the Southeast part of the state.

Throughout March, storms, ice jams and flooding resulted in another federal disaster declaration to supplement state and local recovery efforts; but we weren't done yet. Severe storms, flooding and tornadoes from June 1 through Aug. 29 resulted in a presidential disaster declaration for 61 counties. And again, severe storms, flooding, a tornado and straight-line winds hit seven counties in southeast Nebraska in September.

Assessment teams working with local emergency managers across the state did outstanding work in determining damages and recovery needs of the four disasters.

It goes without saying that the solid, dedicated support NEMA receives at the local level from local directors is a major contribution to the success of our agency and the state when it comes to emergency preparedness, disaster response and recovery. We can reflect with pride on our work together in emergency management. Together, we continue to maintain and grow our emergency management programs. The capabilities and professional attitudes of our state and local emergency managers are recognized and appreciated as a large part of our success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Al Berndt', written in a cursive style.

Al Berndt, Assistant Director
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



ICE meeting held

The Lower Platte River Ice Preparedness Meeting was held Dec. 10 at the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District Office in Omaha. Pictured clockwise from above: Sheila Hascall, hazard mitigation officer with NEMA welcomes participants; Bill Jones of the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources speaks; Curtis Miller of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers discussed ice and reporting procedures; Pam Graham of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers discussed requirements of flood assistance; Amanda Grint of Papio-Missouri River NRD discusses explosives procedures and contract update; Dan Nietfeld of the National Weather Services gives a weather outlook.





All-hazards position specific training offered

Incident Management Team training for seven of eight command staff positions was held in North Platte the week of Nov. 29 to Dec. 3. Clockwise from above: Incident commander class participants make decisions during an exercise; operations chief class participants Steve Dolezal and Jeanne Pashalek of Lincoln Fire and Rescue and Casey McCoy of Nebraska Forest Service discuss needed resources during the training exercise; Donny Christensen of NEMA works with T cards on the planning team. Instructors for the class were from Incident Management teams in Colorado; and participants gather for a class photo following the exercise.





A State Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting was held at NEMA, Dec. 15. The purpose of the meeting was to continue in the update process of the 2011 State of Nebraska Hazard Mitigation Plan. Those in attendance were representatives from various agencies in the state including the Nebraska Department of Roads, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Nebraska Public Power District, Nebraska State Historical Society, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, RVW Inc., Department of Health and Human Services, Nebraska Department of Agriculture and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

Nebraska Council of Regions meets to discuss projects

The Nebraska Council of Regions (NCOR) met Dec. 10 in Lincoln to discuss updates on the following projects:

- Regional Interoperability Network
- Mutual Aid

- Interop Solutions/Paraclete
- Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan/Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan Revision
- Standard Operating Procedures/

Memorandum of Understanding Development

NCOR provides oversight and integration for the eight local public safety communication regions of Nebraska.



Nebraska Council of Regions (NCOR) met at the State Office Building on Dec. 10.



County emergency managers and NEMA employees attend a training class on Dec 8. The class covered the use of the Nebraska Grant Management System (NeGMS), which gives grant personnel the ability to track Homeland Security grant funds.



Emergency management personnel from across the state attend Incident Command System 300/400 classes in Lincoln during the week of Dec. 13.

Cindy Newsham named administrative assistant

Cindy Newsham has been named Administrative Assistant III for NEMA replacing **Larry Nedrow** who retired in February.



Newsham served as Response and Recovery Division Manager prior to accepting her new position. She has been with the agency since June 1986.



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.