

THE BEACON



Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



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NEMA dusts Platte River

Following governor's emergency declaration

In an effort to prevent ice jams on the lower Platte River and its tributaries, the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency completed ice dusting in nine locations on the Platte River, Feb. 18.

Gov. Dave Heineman declared a state of emergency Feb. 4 due to potential flooding, and that allowed NEMA to work with state and federal partners to address excessive ice on the Platte River.

“Ice jams have been a problem on the Platte River in the past,” Gov. Heineman said. “We are especially concerned about the potential for ice jam flooding this year because of below normal temperatures and above average precipitation several areas of the state have received. The emergency declaration helps us be pro-active by working with local and regional authorities now.”



From left, Henry Tamasi of NEMA, Tony Krause of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, Major Thad Fineran, aviation representative for the Nebraska National Guard, Ron Gray, Wahoo Airport Manager and Dave Reisen of NEMA plan a river marking flight operation at the Mobile Operations Center stationed at the Wahoo Airport on Feb. 16. in preparation for the ice dusting which took place Feb. 18.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recommended ice dusting as a mitigation measure following the intense winter weather including heavy snow, ice, freezing rain throughout the regions. The weather has left the area with an increased risk for ice jams and

flooding along the Platte, Elkhorn and Loup rivers.

The corps recommended ice dusting at nine sites along the Platte River from Sarpy County to North Bend. The greatest risk is the area where the Platte and Elk-

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Above: NEMA's Dave Reisen loads marker bags on a National Guard Black Hawk helicopter. The bags were used to mark the river for ice dusting. Right: The Platte River at Highway 6 looking Northeast.



On the cover

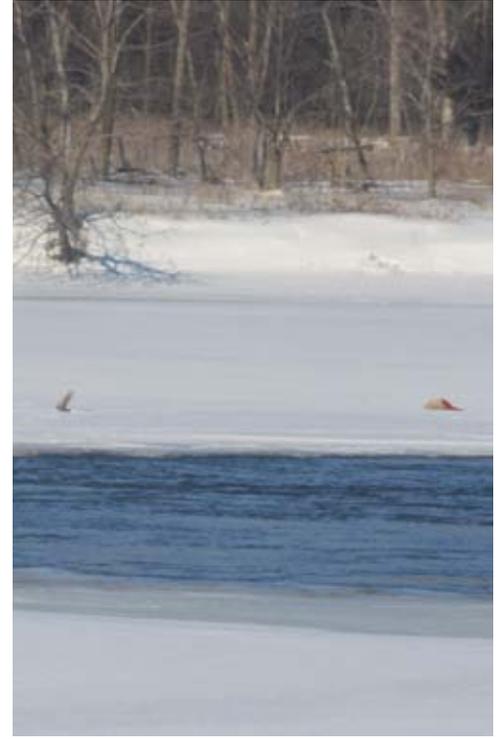
A crop duster spreads ash on the Platte River east of Camp Ashland and north of Highway 6 in an effort to prevent the formation of ice jams that could lead to flooding.



Spc. Cody Howell of the Nebraska National Guard drops a marker bag on the Platte.



A marker bag drops from the Black Hawk along the Platte River.



Marker bags were dropped on the Platte along nine spots prior to ice dusting.

horn Rivers meet in western Sarpy County.

The ash soaks up the sun's heat and accelerates the melting process.

The ash used in the dusting operation came from the Nebraska Public Power district coal plant near Hallam and has been tested and approved for use by the Department of Environmental Quality.

Use of the bottom ash is a closely regulated practice and NDEQ has worked with NEMA on this issue over the years, according to **Brian McManus**, Public Information Officer for NDEQ.

The use of coal ash for this purpose requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit which is renewed every five years, McManus said.

"Analysis of the coal ash used in this process indicates that the material is mostly carbon, with what is determined to be an insignificant amount of metals," McManis reports. "When applied to ice on the Platte River and released into the waters of the Platte through the natural melting process, the



Snow and ice begin to form a precursor to a potential ice jam was spotted along the river on Feb. 17.

gradual release occurs into a water column ranging from approximately five feet in depth at Louisville to approximately 16.81 feet at Ashland. Flows are measured on the order of 6,000 cubic feet per second, provid-

ing a very dilute dispersion.

"Additionally, most of the material released into the waters is in particulate form that is not bio-available and will not harm aquatic life."

[More pictures on page 4](#)



Clockwise from above: ash ready for loading at the Wahoo airport; Al Berndt, assistant director of NEMA, answers media questions prior to ash dusting operation on the Platte River; and, the ash is loaded into the auger truck to be loaded on the plane.



An auger truck loads ash into the crop dusting plane.

Paul Johnston of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers speaks with representatives of the media at the Wahoo airport.



Andrew Osaki of KETV interviews Ashland-Greenwood students who were covering the ash dusting operation near Camp Ashland for their school.



Bottom ash is spread on the Platte River, Feb. 18.

Larry Nedrow retires from agency

NEMA Administrative Assistant Larry Nedrow retired from NEMA Feb. 14 following 26 years of service which began on May 16, 1983.

“We are grateful to Larry for his many years of dedicated service to the state,” said Al Berndt, assistant director. “His work has provided continuity to NEMA in service to the citizens of Nebraska.”

Nedrow began working for the then Civil Defense Department as a field services representative. He traveled the state and supported local emergency managers and spent time talking to county commissioners. He reminded them that it was state law that the county have a full-time emergency manager.

“I so enjoyed my interaction with locals whether it was emergency managers or county officials,” Nedrow said.

“Emergency management is the best insurance policy a local government can have against disaster, but it’s a hard sell because citizens don’t believe anything bad is going to happen to them,” Nedrow said. “The only thing worse than a disaster is the secondary disaster caused by the inability of government not to direct response and recovery. Local emergency managers are our strength. Locals are key!”



Larry Nedrow was recognized by NEMA staff at a luncheon in his honor Feb. 10.

Local EMs recall Nedrow’s service

James Gerweck *Richardson County*

“Larry was a person who believed in and helped make emergency management what it is today in Nebraska. He gave professional perspective and really exposed emergency management to people across the state. He put the real meaning in it--so we fit in.

“Larry helped emergency managers prepare and train for the worst before it was in front of us. He was the one who was always there when you needed him. You could trust his answer, even if you didn’t like to hear it. You could depend on Larry. He was as close to a local manager as you could get.

“Larry used to say there were two types of people: pioneers and settlers. He said emergency managers were the pioneers, moving ahead while the settlers were those who are just settled in and took things as they come. Larry made things happen and truly believed in what emergency management really is. He helped us be pioneers who recognize emergency management needs and carry out all that planning and effort.”



Doug Ahlberg *Lancaster County*

“Larry will forget more about emergency management than the rest of us will ever know. If you called Larry with a question or concern and if he didn’t know the answer (which was very seldom) he would find out and get back to you almost immediately with the correct information. We lost a tremendous resource at the local level. Larry was a total professional. Period. If you looked in the dictionary under professional Larry’s picture would be there.”

Bill Cover *Cass County*

“Larry was the one responsible for our office having a full-time emergency manager. He came out and talked to our commissioners and I have no doubt that it was his comments as field services officer that made all the difference. He told them about the responsibilities of emergency managers and that the law required a full-time manager.”



Larry Nedrow accepts a congratulatory hug from NEMA co-worker Sue Krogman.

Adjutant General visits Joint Field Office in Lincoln

Brigadier General Judd Lyons toured the Joint Field Office in Lincoln for Disaster No. 1864 on Jan. 28. He met with Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel working there. Pictured with the general are: (clockwise from left) Mary Ellen Mango, FEMA external affairs officer, Dawn Haywood, executive assistant, and Stephen Thompson, federal coordinating officer (FCO); Joe Boyd, deputy federal coordinating officer; Ron Conus, planning section chief, Larry Maupin infrastructure branch chief; and FCO Stephen Thompson.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alex R. Salmon, Nebraska Guard Public Affairs

Alan Doll, (right) Dodge County highway superintendent, points out areas of Dodge County that were most severely affected by recent snow storms to (from left) FEMA Project Specialist Lynn Allison and Sgt. Michael Hicks, a truck driver with the 1195th Transportation Company in Kearney as Jean And looks on.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alex R. Salmon, Nebraska Guard Public Affairs

Nebraska National Guard, FEMA and NEMA representatives perform an after-action review on preliminary damage assessments following December winter storms. The assessment led to a request from Gov. Dave Heineman to the president for a disaster declaration.



Al Berndt, assistant director of NEMA, addresses participants during the Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (T&EPW) Jan. 27-28 in North Platte.



Hank Lawson of the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) was facilitator for the workshop.



Paul Johnson of Douglas County contemplates where to rank an exercise in the Target Capabilities List.

Nebraska Severe Weather Awareness Week ~ March 22-26

Severe Weather Awareness Week in Nebraska is March 22-26.

Severe Weather Awareness Week offers an opportunity to increase awareness of, and response to, severe weather hazards.

On Wednesday, March 24, a tornado drill will be conducted in conjunction with the week's activities.

Now is the time to prepare for the upcoming severe weather season.

According to the National Weather Service there were 39 tornadoes in Nebraska during 2009. Those tornados resulted in injuries to eight people and millions of dollars in damage.

Nebraskans also experience se-

vere thunderstorms which include damaging winds, hail and flooding.

Studies show an informed and prepared public suffers fewer fatalities and less property damage than those who are not ready.

Review disaster preparedness plans at home, work, school and prior to traveling. Be prepared.

NEMA staff begins planning for TERREX 10



Alisia LaMay, exercise training officer at NEMA and facilitator for the TERREX '10 (left standing) and Dave Reisen, exercise training officer at NEMA, (right, standing) talk with participants in a TERREX '10 concept and objectives meeting at the Southeast Community College fire training classroom.

NEMA helps establish new FEMA course

Gaining a deeper understanding of the work that goes into writing plans during a disaster is behind a new course entitled: *Advanced Planning Concepts: Developing Incident Action Plans*.

"This a brand new class that we got Department of Homeland Security approval for," said Aaron Alward, exercise training officer for NEMA. "The course covers every ICS form in depth and was developed by The Blue Cell.

Twenty-one Nebraskans participated in the new course held at the Nebraska Information Analysis

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Calendar

March 10

Proclamation Signing for Severe Weather Awareness Week and recognition of Poster Contest Winners
State Capitol, Lincoln
10:30 a.m.

March 16

TERREX Initial Planning Conference
Contact: Alisia LaMay, 472-7179

March 22-23

Nebraska SCIP/TICP Workshop
Hampton Inn, Lincoln
Contact: Bob Eastwood, 471-7417

March 22-23

NE Infrastructure Protection Conference
Embassy Suites Old Market
555 S. 10th St., Omaha
To Register: www.nipc.us/

March 26-28

2010 Nebraska Hazardous Materials Symposium, Hastings Quality Hotel
Contact: www.nebraskahazmat.org

March 22-26

Severe Weather Awareness Week

March 24

Severe Weather Week Tornado Drill

March 27

Weatherfest,
10th Annual Central Plains Severe Weather Symposium and Family Weatherfest
9 .m. to 4 p.m. 2210 Holdrege St.
www.cpsws.unl.edu/

March 30-April 1

Nebraska COML training, Location to be determined
Contact: Bob Eastwood, 471-7417

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Center of the State Patrol, Feb. 2-3.

“It was a challenging and fast-paced course,” said Russ Wren of the Department of Health and Human Services.

“The Advanced Planning Course provided everyone the opportunity to really understand who is responsible for which ICS forms within the Incident Command System and which forms actually need to be in the Incident Action Plan,” said NEMA’s Jon Schwarz. “Then in an exercise environment, we had a chance to work with the ICS forms themselves and comprehend the relationships between the ICS forms and why each is necessary.”



New utility repair guidance outlined

Representatives from Nebraska power districts, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency and Federal Emergency Management Agency met Jan. 28 at NEMA to hear from Charles Chaffin (right), a public assistance representative from FEMA Region VII who discussed public assistance in relationship to new electric utility repair guidance.

NEMA Training

**80-Hour
Hazmat Technician Course
April 19-29 in Grand island**

Participants must provide proof of operations level hazmat training.

Instructors: Fairmont Fire Protection District Training Team
Course Manager: Tonya Ngotel
(402) 471-7176
tonya.ngotel@nebraska.gov



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.