

2013 ANNUAL REPORT  
**WORKING TOGETHER**

# Working Together



**Coordinated Efforts**

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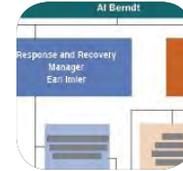
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**Emergency Management**

*NEMA staff and other Nebraska state agency representatives work together at the State Emergency Operations Center to respond to disasters affecting the state.*





## Mission

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



## Coordinated Efforts

When disaster strikes, the most effective response is a whole-community approach that includes coordinating the efforts of citizens, first responders, local emergency managers, non-government organizations, state representatives and federal officials. That model was displayed effectively during Nebraska's federally declared-disaster affecting 10 counties in 2013.

Communities across the state worked together on response and recovery efforts related to damages caused by just one weather system that produced tornadoes, floods and blizzards in a span of just a few days in October.

In September, Nebraskans along the South Platte River worked together to mitigate and respond to flooding as water rose following extensive rain in Colorado.

While employees of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency work together with their counterparts at the local, state and federal level to support all facets of emergency management in the state, it is gratifying to see all Nebraskans increasing their awareness of the need for individual preparedness. Community members are discovering that they are vital partners in the effort to enhance the resilience and security of our state by their proactive participation in preparedness.

In 2014, NEMA will continue to focus on the four phases of emergency management—preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation—with an emphasis on addressing the needs of the whole community.

**Major General Daryl Bohac, Director**  
**Al Berndt, Assistant Director**



# Agency Overview

Housed under the Nebraska Military Department, NEMA is comprised of four sections: administration, response and recovery, preparedness and technical hazards.

NEMA works to protect lives and property of Nebraskans by effectively preparing for, responding to, recovering from and mitigating against disasters, threats, hazards and emergencies.

In his role as **Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac** is director of the agency with day-to-day operations administered by **Assistant Director Al Berndt**.

NEMA is staffed with 36 full-time employees, a program specialist from the Public Policy Center and two temporary employees working in the response and recovery section.

NEMA relies extensively on full- and part-time emergency management rep-

resentatives 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 Nebraskans have been able to effectively respond in times of emergency.

NEMA also supports Nebraska **Lt. Gov. Lavon Heidemann** as state homeland security director, acts as the state administrative agency for the state's homeland security program and 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 interact and carry out the state homeland security program.



**Administration** Oversight of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency is the responsibility of the administration section. The *State Homeland Security Strategy* and the *Agency Strategic Plan* are also this section's responsibility and are in place to lead and guide agency performance.

At the national level, NEMA interacts with the National Emergency Management Association. Statewide, NEMA actively supports the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management and its professional membership.

**IT/COMMO** The information technology and communications unit, which is part of administration, provides geographic information system maps for support staff during emergency response. Communications staff continue to work on statewide interoperable communications and with local emergency managers on the Paraclete system, which is being used for improved mutual aid communication.

## Assistance to Local Government

The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) provides direct support for essential expenses, such as salaries, benefits, equipment, supplies, maintenance of facilities and other necessary costs of state and local emergency management departments and agencies.

Local emergency managers play an integral, if not leading role, in the various Planning, Exercise and Training (PET) regions. Nebraska's 93 counties are organized in to eight PET regions. In addition to traditional emergency management duties, local emergency managers now focus on a variety of activities to improve emergency management in the state.

The six project EMPG areas from which each jurisdiction is asked to identify activities they want to accomplish are:

- ▶ Administration of emergency management program
- ▶ Planning
- ▶ Training and exercise
- ▶ Disaster response and hazard mitigation
- ▶ Technical hazards
- ▶ Public education and outreach.

# Preparedness

NEMA's Preparedness Section is responsible for the administration of the State Homeland Security Grant Program, working with first responders statewide and emergency managers on local emergency operations plans, the emergency preparedness training and exercise program and the involvement of the public through Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps.

## Grants

The purpose of the federal grants program is to support local emergency management agencies in the enhancement of their programs. NEMA is the designated State Administrative Agency (SAA) for all Homeland Security grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

### Highlights of 2013:

- ▶ NEMA held an Investment Justification Workshop with the State Homeland Security Planning Team and local officials. The function of the workshop was to complete grant applications supporting programs such as: Citizen Corps, Interoperable Communications and Agricultural Preparedness.
- ▶ Funds were allocated to the state's eight Planning, Exercise, Training (PET) Regions. Based on the total award from DHS, the workshop's recommendations were forwarded

to the Homeland Security Policy Group. **Nebraska Lt. Gov. Lavon Heidemann** made awards based on the recommendations from the policy group.

- ▶ NEMA continued the grant monitoring program as required by DHS. Sixty-Five counties and regions were visited this past year, for a total of 98 grants being monitored. The monitoring visits include interviews of sub-recipients and visual as well as document verification in the following areas; equipment acquisition and inventory, personnel/direct labor, employee reimbursement, travel/vehicle mileage, training/meeting/conference expenses, supplies and materials, pass-through funds, single audit review, and National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance.
- ▶ As a result of the monitoring visits, the Grants Unit began updating the Grants Management Handbook for grant recipients, to be available on the NEMA website in early 2014.

In fiscal year 2013, the State of Nebraska applied for, and received, the following grants:

- ▶ State Homeland Security Grant
- ▶ Emergency Management Performance Grant
- ▶ Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant



## Planning

The 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 (LEOP).

Working with the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (PPC), NEMA has established planning capabilities for the integrated planning process for the eight planning exercise and training (PET)/communication regions. A comprehensive program of planning support education has been developed to assist in integrating local planning

needs into the SEOP/LEOP planning program. This support will allow LEOPs to address the Core Capabilities which are critical elements necessary to achieve the National Preparedness Goal setup by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

The planning unit coordinates the development of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant investment justifications, serves as the agency liaison to Lincoln and Omaha's Metropolitan Medical Response Systems and coordinates the Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps programs.

The unit also coordinates the Homeland Security Senior Advisory Group, and the Homeland Security Planning Team.



Nebraska Citizen Corps works to prepare individuals and communities for self-sufficiency during natural disasters and terrorist incidents.

A full-time coordinator organizes and advocates for Citizen Corps Councils across the state. In 2013, Citizen Corps funds were used for state management of the Nebraska Citizen Corps Program, for technical assistance to local Citizen Corps councils, to strengthen the Citizen Corps councils, for training and exercise opportunities, and to assist with the continuing development of a State Citizen Corps Council.

Federal funds were sub-granted to the Citizen Corps Program regions to:

- ▶ Strengthen Citizen Corps councils in Nebraska
- ▶ Strengthen intra-regional and inter-regional collaboration

### CERT NUMBERS

- 8 Regions
- 13 Citizen Corps Councils
- 12 Community Emergency Response Teams
- 8 Volunteers in Police Service units
- 8 Fire Corps units
- 7 Medical Reserve Corps
- 231 Neighborhood Watch units



- ▶ Promote community preparedness and National Preparedness Month
- ▶ Support partner programs with funds for training materials and exercises
- ▶ Organize and plan an annual Nebraska Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) conference

- ▶ Purchase equipment for local Citizen Corps councils to help sustain their programs.

In 2013, Citizen Corps focused on outreach to citizens as well as training and exercise opportunities for volunteers.



## Training and Exercise

presents an active program, integrated into Nebraska's eight PET regions. Activities are conducted at all levels, from assistance to local jurisdictions through regional training and state level drills, exercises and training.

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

The basic academy supports certification as required under Nebraska law. Attendees acquire the basic skills necessary to function as a certified emergency manager in the state.

Thousands of individuals in Nebraska completed online independent studies in the NIMS 100, 200, 700 and 800 courses, along with specialized training in areas specific to agriculture, health and human services, hazardous materials and other fields. 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 the readiness of local, county and state agencies, and their ability to work together in a large-scale incident. In 2013, the state exercise tested the Nebraska Military Department's continuity of operations plan with a full-scale exercise which involved relocating to alternate emergency operations sites.



# Response and Recovery

The core missions of NEMA's Response and Recovery Section are to be ready to coordinate a timely and efficient state response in support of local government and to effectively administer both state and federal recovery programs to speed local jurisdictions' return to normal following a disaster.



The Response and Recovery Section had a busy and multi-faceted year in 2013.

Public assistance and hazard mitigation staff worked to close out mul-

multiple federal disasters that reached the end of their period of performance.

As a result of the passage of the Wildfire Management Act of 2013, NEMA, the State Fire Marshal's Office and the Nebraska Forest Service began an integrated program to fight wildfires, which included contracting for the use of a single engine air tanker during the fire season.

Late September brought the South Platte River flooding that required field teams from Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, Nebraska State Patrol, Nebraska National Guard and Nebraska Department of Roads to respond to the region to coordinate and support

local governments.

The first week of October brought major weather events to the state, a blizzard in the panhandle, thunderstorms and flooding in central Nebraska and tornadoes in the east.

The result of the early October weather events was major disaster declaration 4156-DR-NE, from the President, for Greeley, Sherman, Howard, Wayne, Adams, Valley, Fillmore, Dawes, Sioux, Box Butte, Sheridan and Thurston counties.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel are currently working in Nebraska, contacting local government entities to formulate

projects that will provide needed funding for the recovery of those areas.

Response and Recovery staff are coordinating and monitoring these activities with FEMA. Once the projects are written and obligated, NEMA staff will administer the funding and ensure proper completion of projects, to meet programmatic guidelines.

NEMA also maintains a duty officer system with two staff on call 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week. Duty Officers monitor conditions in the state and when severe weather or disasters occur, the duty officer system allows for rapid response of the State Emergency Operations Plan.





## Public Assistance

Quick and efficient response is the goal of NEMA's public assistance unit staff, whether it is for a federal or state declared disaster. In 2013, public assistance staff wrote projects for two state disasters and continued to close remaining eight federal disasters. In the last 50 years, Nebraska has had 55 federally-declared disasters and emergencies, and 23 of those disasters were declared in the last eight years.

NEMA has worked to assist state and local government through floods, tornadoes, wildfires, hail, ice and snow storms.

To successfully respond in times of disaster, NEMA administers the Governor's Emergency Fund, which was established to provide assistance to political subdivisions that have suffered from a disaster or emergency.



## Hazard Mitigation

NEMA hazard

mitigation staff work to reduce the impact of disasters on lives and property across Nebraska. Guidance and assistance is provided to communities to mitigate for everything from tornadoes, fires and floods to any other natural hazard.

After a federal disaster declaration has been approved for the state, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds are available for local governments to develop long-term initiatives that will reduce loss of life and property.

Gov. Dave Heineman convenes a taskforce, led by NEMA's Hazard Mitigation Officer, to prioritize the projects statewide for disaster funding. The task force's goal is to ensure that as many projects are submitted and approved by FEMA as possible.

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 infrastructures and warning systems.

**Technical Hazards** Two nuclear power stations in eastern Nebraska, and interstate movement of radioactive material and radioactive waste across the state, make preparing for radiological emergencies a priority for NEMA.

The agency's Technical Hazards Section includes radiological emergency preparedness, public information and support for the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), designated Nebraska emergency response teams and the Nebraska Hazardous Incident Team. Planning, preparing and training for technical hazards events that could harm or negatively affect Nebraskans is a major part of the work undertaken in this section. Taking action before and after an incident could significantly reduce negative consequences of an incident in the state.

## Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP)

The radiological emergency preparedness (REP) unit works to assure that Nebraskans are safe in the event of a radiological emergency.

The unit updates local radiological emergency response plans (RERP) for counties near the state's nuclear power stations.

The section notifies local emergency response managers of radiological shipments through their jurisdictions.

Staff calibrates radiological equipment and exchanges this equipment, on a four-year cycle, with equipment kept by local emergency first responder agencies. The section maintains a database of these exchanges and provides a listing to local emergency management directors.

The nuclear power stations routinely conduct drills and exercises in which NEMA participates. In 2013, NEMA was involved in four nuclear power station drills and three functional exercises.

REP staff members are certified radiological instructors and offer free training to all emergency first responder agencies throughout Nebraska upon request.



## Public Information

Getting accurate and timely information to the public in times of disaster is the number one goal of NEMA's public information officer (PIO). Working with local, state and federal communicators the PIO activates a Joint Information Center (JIC) following a disaster or event that affects citizens of the state. In 2013 the PIO deployed with a NEMA field team to Ogallala, North Platte and Wayne to get vital information to the public as quickly as possible. The PIO also fulfills the federal requirement that nuclear power station incidents activate a JIC in the event of an incident at one of the state's two nuclear power stations.

NEMA's PIO, along with PIOs from other state agencies, taught the two-day Basic PIO course designed to orient participants to the public information function and the role of the PIO in the emergency management environment.



## State Emergency Response Commission

NEMA provides support to the State Emergency Response Commission, (SERC) which supervises and coordinates activities of the local emergency planning committees (LEPCs) across the state. LEPCs help update local emergency operations plans (LEOP) and provide training to specific localized chemicals and exercise response plans.

SERC is tasked with ensuring that proper chemical reporting is completed across the state. Facilities and businesses storing hazardous materials or chemicals are required to report inventories of substances or products that meet or exceed reporting thresholds.

## Planning

**17** full revisions and **12** updates of local emergency operation plans

**Also revised:**

**State Emergency Operation Plan and the Homeland Security Strategy**

## Emergency Management Performance Grant

**\$3,656,035**

Total Grant Amount **68%** to local emergency management agencies

or **\$2,495,665**

## Training and Exercise

**10,717**

Nebraskans completed emergency management independent study courses

**79** NEMA-sponsored courses with **2,119** participants

## Technical Hazards

**10,827** radiological instruments calibrated or checked

## State Homeland Security Grant Program

**\$3,459,364** Total received from the State Homeland Security Grant Program

Region	Hazmat MOU Team	IED/Fusion	Com/PET	Total Award
Southeast	20,000	93,494	128,769	222,263
South Central	60,000	78,031	107,472	185,503
East Central	20,000	40,207	55,376	95,583
Northeast	20,000	44,304	61,020	105,324
Panhandle	20,000	61,134	84,200	145,334
North Central		95,422	131,424	226,846
Southwest	20,000	23,690	32,627	56,317
Tri-County	40,000	106,720	266,985	373,705
NHIT	20,000			
*NRIN			906,778	
*MMRS			120,000	
*CCP			109,838	
	\$220,000	\$543,002	\$2,004,489	

Total Award to Local Units of Government

\$2,767,491

\*NRIN through MOU via EC Region, CCP and MMRS through MOU via SE Region

# NEMA 2013 NUMBERS

## Hazard Mitigation

**31** Plans under review and revision

**11** Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMPG) disasters

**\$35,749,322** obligated to local hazard mitigation projects

## Public Assistance

**8**

Open Disasters Totalling

**\$266,744,841** In approved costs with

**911**

applicants for assistance on

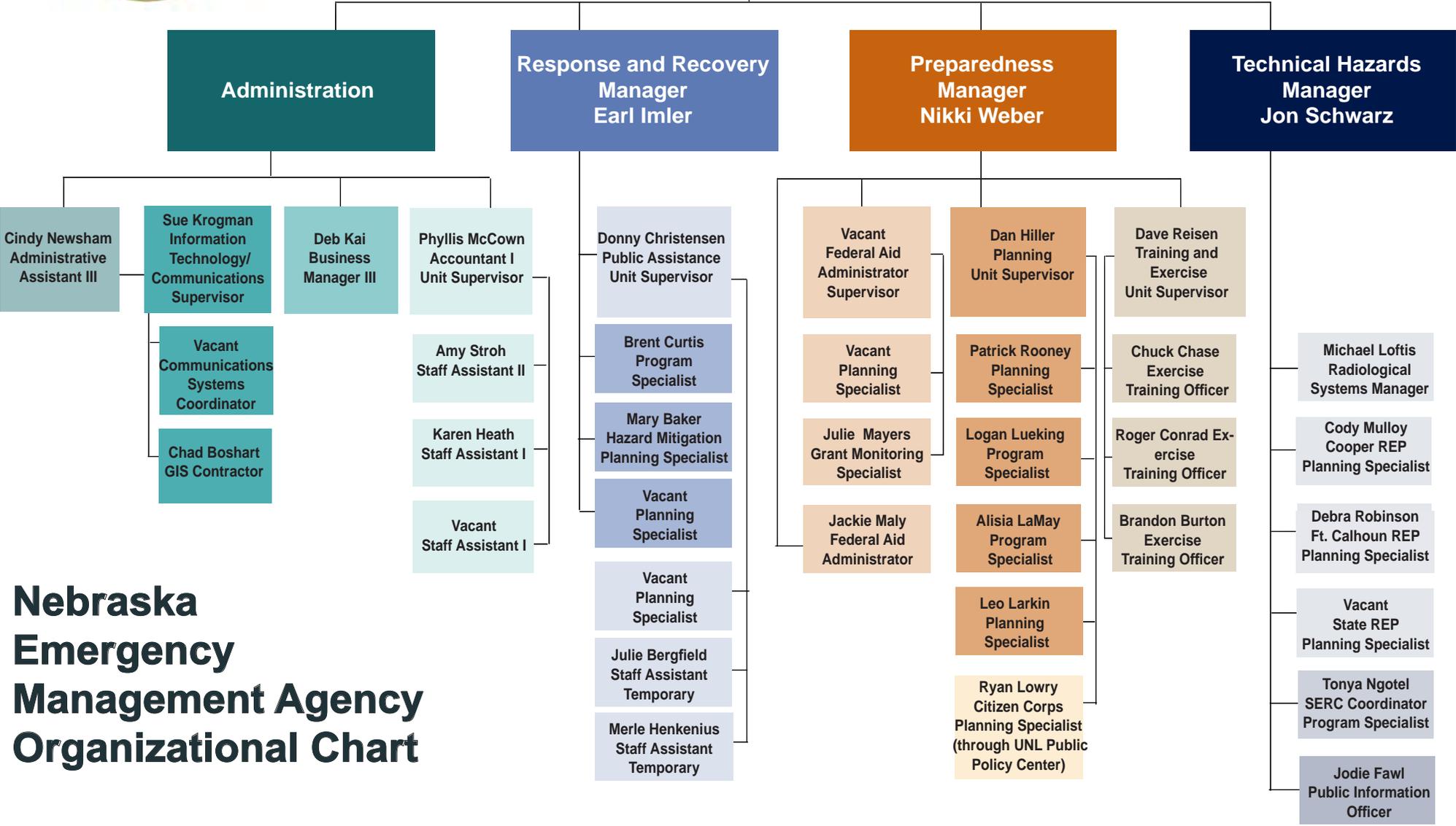
**2,781** projects



**Homeland Security Director**  
Lt. Gov. Lavon Heidemann

**Director**  
Adjutant General Daryl Bohac

**Assistant Director**  
Al Berndt



# Nebraska Emergency Management Agency Organizational Chart



The top four finishers in the 2013 Severe Weather Poster Contest are from left: Brynn Wortmann, first; Jerome Silva, second; Cleopatra Thomas, third and Izak Spann; fourth.



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**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.

NEMA's 2013 Annual Report was produced by Public Information Officer Jodie Fawl. For additional information about the report or other agency publications contact her at: 402-471-742, [jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov](mailto:jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov)



Gov. Dave Heineman recognizes NEMA's Nikki Weber as supervisor of the year for the Nebraska Military Department, at a ceremony at the State Capitol.