



# Coordinate Support Serve



**2015 Annual Report**

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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, loss of life and property resulting from natural, technological and man-made disasters.*

## Vision, Mission, Guiding Principals

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 principals are:

1. All emergencies begin at the local level. NEMA collaborates with local, state, tribal and national 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.



*Richardson County Flooding. Photo Courtesy of Brian Dixon*

# Measuring Agency Performance

Gov. Pete Ricketts has emphasized performance metrics in conjunction with continuous process improvement strategies for state agencies during 2015, and Nebraska Emergency Management Agency identified three performance metrics associated with its mission requirements to support the emergency management community.

1. The Governor's Emergency Fund provides fiscal support to government entities and communities during emergencies or times of disaster. NEMA's goal is to maintain a \$5 million balance in the fund which represents a ready cash reserve available to address emergency issues. NEMA identified a \$1 million balance as the cut-off to stop payments from the fund.
2. NEMA monitors the number of local emergency management officials who have participated in its Basic Academy.
3. By 2015, 81 percent of local emergency management officials had completed this training program. NEMA is charged by state statute to monitor and certify the training required for emergency management officials to ensure they are qualified and knowledgeable to address their duties and responsibilities.
4. Significant effort has been directed to community outreach. NEMA has implemented a performance metric to monitor agency contacts across the state.

The agency met a significant milestone this year by achieving re-accreditation, for another five years, from the Emergency Management Accreditation Program. The agency also underwent an internal reorganization effort in the past year. The response and recovery section was restructured into two different sections. The recovery section will focus primarily on public assistance and hazard mitigation. The operations section was formed to better position the agency for response requirements and to emphasize planning, training and exercise issues to support the response mission.

NEMA, along with local, state and federal partners, responded to severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, flooding, avian flu and fire. NEMA staff have been working in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), at a joint field office (JFO) in Lincoln, to coordinate the recovery from the federally-declared disaster, DR-4225, involving severe weather and floods in May and June. Gov. Ricketts also signed a state of emergency declaration to address an avian influenza outbreak in Nebraska's poultry sector. While the Nebraska Department of Agriculture took the lead on the response, NEMA conducted coordination meetings of state agencies as outlined in the State Emergency Operations Plan.

A single engine air tanker (SEAT) was deployed to the panhandle of the state during the late summer. While 2015 proved to be a relatively slow year for wildfire activity across the state, the aircraft was deployed to a large grass fire near Whitney, on Sept. 15. The deployment of this firefighting asset resulted in the fire being contained early on and mitigated the potential spread of the fire during a period of extreme fire danger.

Exercises play an important role in making sure emergency managers are ready for any disaster and this year's exercises included:

- A four-day continuity of operations exercise with the Nebraska Military Department designed to test our ability to work from remote locations;
- The annual TERREX exercise which focused on a shale crude oil response with seminars and tabletop exercises allowing local responders to walk through a response to a shale oil rail incident, should it occur in their community; and
- A hostile-action-based exercise with the Ft. Calhoun Nuclear Power Station allowed us to practice a response to a terrorism event with local law enforcement.

2015 was an eventful year for the staff of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, and we will continue to work to effectively prepare for, respond to, recover from and mitigate against disasters in Nebraska ensuring that all stakeholders and communities are ready for any hazard in 2016.



**Major General  
Daryl Bohac  
Director**



**Bryan Tuma  
Assistant  
Director**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Bohac'.

**Major General Daryl Bohac, Director**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Tuma'.

**Bryan Tuma, Assistant Director**

# Agency Overview

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) transitioned this year from four sections to five when response and recovery reorganized into the operations section and recovery section. The administration Section, preparedness section and technical hazards section are the other three divisions at the agency.

As part of the Nebraska Military Department, NEMA works to protect lives and property of Nebraskans by 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 Bryan Tuma**. NEMA is staffed with 40 full-time employees, a program specialist from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Public Policy Center and three temporary employees working in the recovery section.

NEMA relies extensively on full- and part-time emergency management representatives in Nebras-

ka'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'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 interact and 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 Na-

tional Emergency Management Association to keep up with issues that affects all states. Statewide, NEMA actively supports the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management and its professional membership.

## Administration

NEMA's administration section is responsible for the day-to-day paperwork required for arranging travel for agency staff, purchase of supplies, record-keeping for vehicle usage and accounts payables. The section works in concert with the agency's business manager who reports directly to the assistant director.

When the NEMA field team deploys to disasters across the state, administration staff are responsible for making travel arrangements for team members and for purchasing any needed supplies to support response efforts.



*Emergency support function representatives meet in the State Emergency Operations Center to coordinate the avian influenza outbreak response.*

# Operations

The core mission of NEMA's operations section is to be ready to coordinate a timely and efficient state response in support of local government entities.

A primary duty of the section is coordinating with the Nebraska Forest Service during operations of the single engine air-tanker (SEAT) that is stationed at one of the three bases in western and north central Nebraska. The bases were established for quick and efficient initial attack on wildfires.

In 2015, the SEAT was stationed at the base in Chadron and suppressed one small fire near Whitney on Sept. 15. The annual report of the SEAT usage was filed with **Gov. Pete Ricketts** and the Nebraska Legislature in November 2015.

The Great Plains Interstate Wildfire Compact (GPIWC) included the addition of the province of Saskatchewan, Canada, making the GPIWC the first international compact in the nation.

The section also maintains the state duty officer system, with two staff on call 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week, on a rotational basis. Duty officers monitor conditions and activities throughout the state. When severe weather, or other hazardous circumstances threaten the life or property of people in Nebraska, the duty officer system provides for a rapid response of the State Emergency Operations Plan.

NEMA is retro-fitting a second mobile operations center (MOC), adding communications and IT equipment to the vehicle. It should be ready for deployment in early 2016. This second MOC will give NEMA two self-contained platforms to serve the citizens of Nebraska in times of need.



# Information Technology and Communications Unit (IT/Commo)

The information technology/communications (IT/commo) unit's inclusion in the operation's section afforded its staff an opportunity to be more situationally aware of emergency response capabilities and needs.

The IT/commo staff works closely with the Nebraska National Guard, Nebraska State Patrol and Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) to ensure all IT and communications systems are compatible, functional and deployable in the event of a disaster.

Joint tests and exercises were conducted to push the capabilities of communications and technology to their limits. These on-going tests will continue to be a part of agency functions and will allow all of the involved state agencies to enhance shared capabilities.

The unit has also installed new computers for

agency staff as well as multiple wireless technology capabilities and are in the process of streamlining the IT capabilities and functions that will allow staff allow as much technological opportunities as possible.

NEMA's geographic information systems (GIS) officer, a member of the state GIS council, is involved in a project with other state and local GIS personnel to create easily accessible resources during day-to-day activities as well as emergencies. This project will enhance response capabilities and incorporate many of the state agency functions, such as the downloadable link to the Nebraska State Patrol helicopter. Other GIS data is starting to be shared more openly and NEMA is working on a system that will give the general public a mapping capability from the NEMA website.

NEMA's communications radio specialist has

upgraded most of the radios in the agency to the newest and best technology. NEMA works with the Office of the Chief Information Officer on radio issues and is an active participant in the State Radio System architecture.

The commo unit has designed and installed radio connectivity in the agency's new mobile response vehicle and has created deployment kits for disaster response. Part of this unit's responsibility is the State Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) and the state and local tactical interoperability communication plans (TICP) both which were updated in 2015. The unit has also created a NIFOG (National Interoperable Field Operations Guide) – that will be specific for Nebraska. This is an essential guide for field deployment teams. This unit continues to support all components of emergency management at the state, regional and local level.

# Training and Exercise

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

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 National Incident Management System (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 2015, the state exercise developed awareness at the local level surrounding

shale crude oil shipments through the state and then provided an opportunity for first responders to participate in a table top exercise with a shale crude transportation accident scenario.

NEMA also participated in a Military Department-wide continuity of operations exercise which required the entire Joint Force Headquarters/ NEMA building to relocate to alternate work locations and demonstrate an ability to work from and provide mission requirements from alternate locations.

NEMA's training and exercise unit was part of the agency re-organization and moved from the preparedness section to the newly formed operations section, which is more in line with the agency's day-to-day and disaster operations model.

The training and exercise unit has offered training



***NEMA's annual TERREX involved a shale crude oil shipment accident and local communities' ability to respond.***

and other opportunities for four NEMA staff to earn accreditation as type 3 all-hazards incident management team (IMT) members. NEMA now has a public information officer, plans chief, logistics chief and communications leader/communications technician who are certified to serve on a type 3 IMT.



***A Nebraska Military Department's continuity of operations exercise included NEMA and involved relocating staff to alternate work sites.***



***NEMA offers a weeklong Basic Academy which provides basic certification in emergency management in Nebraska.***

## Non-Governmental Organizations

NEMA continued to coordinate with non-governmental organizations and volunteers that help find resources for individuals following disaster in the state.

Not all needed resources are available to individuals from government sources following a disaster, and volunteer and non-governmental organization work collaboratively to fill that gap as they prepare for, respond to, recover from and mitigate against disasters throughout the state.

The Nebraska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NEVOAD) is an umbrella organization of voluntary agencies that provide relief in times of disaster. The cornerstones of the NEVOAD are cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration. By uniting under the NEVOAD banner, these agencies are able to more effectively deploy personnel and resources to where they are needed, and avoid duplication of effort.

Long-term recovery groups (LTRGs) are representatives of voluntary organizations, state and local government, community leaders, local churches, and local businesses that come together after a disaster strikes to meet the needs of those individuals and families for whom there are no other forms of assistance available.

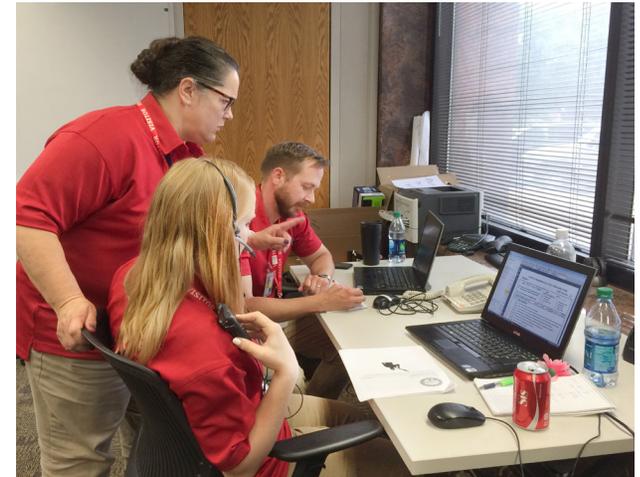
In 2015, there were two active LTRGs in Nebraska. The Northeast Nebraska Long-Term Recovery Team (NNLTRT) formed in the wake of the devastating tornadoes in northeast Nebraska in June 2014. NNLTRT coordinated the rebuilding of homes in and around the Pilger area, as well as provided other types of assistance throughout five affected counties in northeast Nebraska. As 2015 drew to a close, NNLTRT began transitioning to a more permanent coalition for all-hazard response.

The other LTRG operating in 2015 was the DeWitt Long-Term Recovery Team (DART), formed following the record floods of May 2015. DART has worked with civic organizations, schools and area businesses to replace flooded appliances, clean basements, and perform other flood-related clean-up assistance.

Community organizations active in disaster (COADs) are a more localized representation of the NEVOAD, with local representatives from voluntary agencies, government and other interested parties preparing for a coordinated disaster response within their community, county or region. Nebraska has several COADs active throughout the state, but 2015 saw the realization of two new COADs in Scottsbluff and Hall County.



*Nebraska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NEVOAD) representatives update participants at the annual Nebraska Association of Emergency Management Conference.*



*Public Information staff work together at the Joint Information Center for Ft. Calhoun Nuclear Station.*

## Public Information

Getting accurate and timely information to the public is a priority of NEMA's public information officer (PIO) before, during and after disasters.

Working with local, state and federal communicators, the PIO can activate a joint information center (JIC) following a disaster or event that affects citizens of the state. The JIC would include PIOs from other state agencies as well as representatives from local and federal entities involved in the response to an event.

In 2015, Nebraska was impacted by a series of severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds and flooding, from May 6 to 17, in counties dispersed across the state. The resulting federally-declared disaster meant NEMA's PIO coordinated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency External Affairs staff assigned to the disaster on news releases, congressional briefings and disbursement of public information.

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.

# Preparedness Section

NEMA's preparedness section has responsibility for administering grants associated with emergency management preparedness. Preparedness staff work with emergency managers and first responders statewide on local emergency operations plans, and the involvement of the public through Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps, all the while emphasizing the importance of planning, exercise and training (PET) in their emergency management programs.

## Grants

One of the core programs within NEMA is grants management. Grants are received from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Transportation (DoT)/Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

NEMA, as the state administrative agency (SAA), is the only Nebraska agency eligible to apply directly for these funds, and in turn ensures that local emergency management organizations are established and maintained with them. As the SAA, NEMA is responsible for filing the state applications, distributing program guidelines to the state and local agencies, receiving applications, maintaining oversight and compliance monitoring and facilitating the distribution of funds.

From these federal agencies, NEMA receives:

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

Like many other federal grant programs, the

Homeland Security grant shares the burden in the decrease in federal funding. This, coupled with the increase of federal level expectations and grant requirements sparks the need for evaluation and assessment of priorities. A restructure of the grant process was needed. The process this year wasn't without its hurdles or growing pains. 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 solely funded by the grant. This is never news that anyone likes to hear, much less deliver.

In prior years, grant guidance allowed for more flexibility in terms of the scope of the project. The focus now has narrowed to maintenance and sustainment of existing projects, in other words, a project-driven approach. This was largely an easy transition for the state and local partners. No longer are sub-recipients given an amount to start from, now the projects drive the award amount.

The Investment Justification Workshop for the State Homeland Security grant was held April 20 and included presentations from representatives of the state planning team, PET (planning, exercise and training) regions and state agencies. A peer review voting process recommended projects and the senior advisory committee then met to discuss and prioritize projects based on the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis/State Preparedness Report (THIRA/SPR) results. The workshop's recommendations were forwarded to the Homeland Security Policy Group for review and approval. Based on the DHS



*Preparedness staff were among the participants in the continuity of operations exercise which included testing alternative communication methods such as the state radio system.*

## 2015 Grant Unit Highlights

- ▶ A decrease in federal funding required a re-evaluation of priorities.
- ▶ The grant review and awarding process was restructured.
- ▶ State agencies and local entities must now share more of the costs of projects.
- ▶ A project-driven approach was adopted focusing on maintenance and sustainment of projects
- ▶ A peer-review-voting process determined the priority of projects considered for funding.

allocated amount, project funds were awarded to the state's eight PET regions, the 10 local hazmat teams identified to serve as state resources when needed, and state agencies.

As a result, the state of Nebraska submitted projects that directly help in reducing the vulnerabilities of the people of the state, and increasing the level of preparedness of its emergency management, first

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responder and state level agencies. We look forward to the positive impacts these projects will have and hope 2016 holds many growth and collaborative opportunities with our partners.

NEMA continued its grant monitoring program as required by DHS/FEMA. This year, the 2014 grants were monitored for compliance in the following areas: employee reimbursement, equipment, fiscal, local emergency operation plan (LEOP) compliance, National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance, other direct costs, personnel and direct labor, PET expenses, reporting requirements, supplies and materials, special conditions, and travel-vehicle mileage. The number of grants monitored breakdown as follows; four PET regions, 38 counties, four EMPG regions, one state agency, and one tribal entity, for a total of 48 grants monitored and compliant.

As a result of the monitoring visits conducted in 2013, the grants management unit met throughout 2014 to totally revamp the Grants Management Handbook for grant recipients. The original plan was to update the handbook and have it posted on the NEMA website by early 2014; however, once the process began, the need for a more user-friendly product was identified resulting in the new handbook not being posted until February 2015. As grant requirements and guidance changes, the Grants Management Handbook for sub-recipients will continue to be updated and improved.

## 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 Omaha's Metropolitan Medical Response System and coordinates the Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps programs.

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



*A workshop on updating local emergency operations plans (LEOP) was held in the State Emergency Operations Center in an effort to make all planners available to help local emergency management officials with updating their LEOPs.*



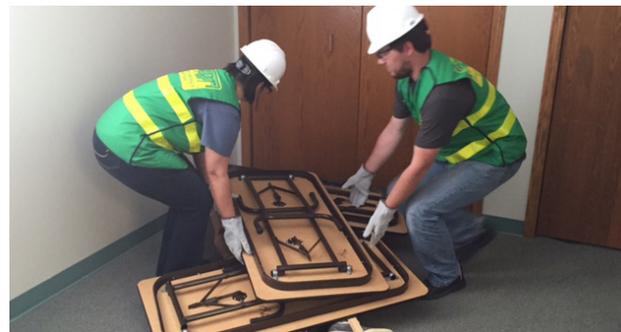
*Planners provide training as part of EM 101, a course to update emergency managers and local officials on emergency management issues.*

# Citizen Corps

The Nebraska Citizen Corps Program (CCP) works with citizens to create communities that are better prepared for, and have the ability to respond to, disasters or emergencies. The CCP promotes individual and community preparedness through public education, training, and volunteer opportunities. A full-time coordinator organizes and advocates for Citizen Corps councils and partner programs across the state. In 2015, State Homeland Security funds were used for a variety of projects aimed at making sure Nebraskans are more prepared for disasters and emergencies.

This year, the CCP worked with local stakeholders to provide preparedness information to Nebraskans throughout the state. These public education opportunities took place at such events as National Night Out in South Sioux City, the Community Health and Safety Fair in Louisville, Bank of the West Employee Preparedness Fair in Omaha, and during the Ready Campus event at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. The CCP distributed emergency go-kits, called Bad Day Bags, and taught individuals and families how to create personal preparedness plans.

Grant funds were also used to support statewide training opportunities for volunteers. The Nebraska Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Conference was held in Grand Island where volunteers had the opportunity to gain valuable skills that could be used in the event of a disaster or emergency.



*Cass County CERT volunteers participate in a disaster exercise.*

cy. The conference provided volunteers from Scottsbluff to Omaha an opportunity to receive training in debris removal and flood safety.

This year, grant funds were also used to support local Citizen Corps programs that provided a number of volunteer opportunities to Nebraskans. Volunteers with the Southeast and Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps programs helped staff first aid stations for the State Games of America and Special Olympics. Hall County Emergency Management formed a Teen CERT program to provide volunteer opportunities for high-schoolers. In the panhandle, Medical Reserve Corps volunteers presented public health information during worksite wellness events.



*Local emergency managers tour central Nebraska with the Medical Reserve Corps deployment trailer.*

Additionally, State Homeland Security funds support a full-time coordinator. This position provides technical assistance to local programs, works with local and state agencies to strengthen partnerships, and assists with the continued development of the State Citizen Corps Council.



*Citizen Corps participated in the National Night Out in South Sioux City.*



*The Nebraska Community Emergency Response Team Conference was held in Grand Island.*

# Recovery

The recovery section is comprised of personnel dedicated to carrying out and coordinating disaster assistance components. These include, but are not limited to, hazard mitigation, public assistance and Governor's Emergency Fund.



*NEMA Recovery Section Manager Donny Christensen consults with Joe Kauffman and Mark South of the Federal Emergency Management Agency at the Joint Field Office in Lincoln.*



*This year's public assistance projects included repairing the damage to this bridge in Thayer County.*

# Public Assistance

Quickly and efficiently working with Nebraska communities following federal or state declared disasters is the goal of the public assistance unit.

Following the May/June severe storms and flooding, NEMA staff assisted Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with preliminary damage assessments resulting in a federal disaster declaration (DR 4225).

Damage descriptions and plans for repairing the damaged public infrastructure are being formulated by FEMA project specialists in coordination with representatives of local public entities. Once the projects are written and funding obligated, the public

assistance unit administers the funding and ensures that proper completion of projects occurs to meet programmatic guidelines.

The coordination and review of federal disaster projects and the creation of the state disaster projects is ongoing. The review, coordination, payment process, inspections and ultimate closeout of previously declared disasters continued while responding to this spring's event.

During 2015, aside from DR 4225 being declared and all the work associated with the new disaster, the public assistance unit officially closed two previously declared disasters (1945 and 4014). Of

the remaining seven open disasters, there were 111 open applicants and 709 open projects. During 2015, 54 of the applicants were closed along with 289 projects. During 2016 there will be at least two more federal disasters that are officially closed.

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, wildfires and floods to any other natural or man-made 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. The most recent declarations brought opportunities for education outreach to the public on a variety of hazard mitigation-related issues such as safe rooms and flood plain education. It also provided educational opportunities for local officials and first responders.

Gov. Pete Ricketts convened a disaster recovery task force, 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



*Ice jams caused lowland flooding along the Platte River as temperature rose in the spring.*

possible. On Oct. 5, the task force convened at NEMA, reviewed and made recommendations on the current requests that will advance the state's efforts to minimize the risk profile of communities and their citizens. Pre-disaster mitigation funding was

also pursued and work is being done for approval of four mitigation planning projects under this annual appropriation.

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.

NEMA's hazard mitigation unit is also beginning to work on the next State Hazard Mitigation Plan revision, due in spring 2019. With many programmatic changes and the recent approval of nearly all of the state's local hazard mitigation plans by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, NEMA will be analyzing the myriad of risk assessments and local strategies to combat the greatest risks to its citizens and communities. In so doing, they will be accounting for as many variables as possible, to include climate adaptation and variability effects on natural hazards.



*Lancaster County officials learn how to apply for federal funds at an applicants briefing following the issuance of federal disaster declaration 4225.*

# Technical Hazards

The technical hazards section focuses on three primary areas of responsibility. They include radiological emergency preparedness, a calibration laboratory for radiological instruments and support for the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC).

The radiological emergency preparedness (REP) program is largely focused on the nuclear power plants in the state. Preparedness activities include both planning and training with and for our local communities and response partners for both natural or man-made disasters, including acts of sabotage or terrorism.

The goal of REP is to ensure that local, state and federal responders, partners and stakeholders have plans to work together and allow for an efficient and effective response. Plans and response capabilities are tested regularly for both Fort Calhoun Station and Cooper Nuclear Station through quarterly drills and an extensive exercise program mandated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The exercise program must include standard radiological and natural disaster exercises, hostile-ac-

tion-based (HAB) exercises (for acts of terrorism and/or sabotage), no notice drills/exercises, and an ingestion pathway exercise. This ensures that sufficient capabilities exist within the state to meet the full spectrum of possible events and that the citizens of Nebraska are safe and well-protected.

While the nuclear power plants are the primary focus for the state's radiological program, NEMA also provides training related to radiological transportation. Most of the radiological materials that pass through the state deal with nuclear medicine and nuclear therapies. These materials are transported on our highways and roads to hospitals and clinics across the state.

Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) personnel within the technical hazards section are trained and certified radiological instructors/trainers. Upon request, they provide free training to local and state emergency response personnel. They also work with local emergency management agencies to provide training to local volunteers and other agencies who may fill roles within the local response plans.

Nebraska is also involved in the interstate movement of radioactive waste. The state maintains situational awareness regarding dates, routes and contents. Local emergency managers are then notified of any unclassified radiological shipments that may pass through their jurisdiction. Radiological materials are also found in some standard commerce products that are shipped by common carriers across the state. Training and radiological monitoring equipment is provided to local and state



**Radiological emergency preparedness (REP) drills, like this one for Cooper Nuclear Station, include a governor's authorized representative from NEMA who works with local emergency managers and other state officials to determine what protective measures are needed to keep the public safe if an event were to occur at one of the two nuclear stations in Nebraska**



**Technical hazards sponsored spokesperson messaging training at Union College in 2015.**

first responders.

NEMA also houses a laboratory to maintain and calibrate the radiological monitoring equipment owned by the state and provided to local first responders. The radiological programs are highly regulated and include requirements for quarterly checks and annual calibrations. This program ensures that all the state's monitoring equipment is maintained within performance specifications and meets all regulatory requirements. The manager of the laboratory maintains a database of the equipment, their performance check and calibration requirements; and equipment exchange dates for the 93 counties in Nebraska.

These program elements work together to mitigate radiological risks within the state and ensure an efficient and effective response, significantly reducing vulnerabilities and the potential for negative consequences if an event were ever to occur.

# State Emergency Response Commission

The State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) is a 19-member governor-appointed commission tasked with supporting the local emergency planning committees (LEPCs) across the state. The SERC and LEPCs support hazmat planning at all levels. In 2015, SERC members held a strategic planning session and set goals for outlying years. Members attended state, regional and national hazmat conferences.

The LEPCs and SERC are tasked with ensuring that proper chemical reporting is completed and first responders have the knowledge, skills and abilities to respond to chemical specific incidents within their jurisdictions. Facilities and businesses storing hazardous materials or chemicals are required to report

inventories of substances or products that meet or exceed reporting thresholds to the LEPC, SERC and local fire department.

In 2015, there was a huge rush to transport shale crude oil in the northern section of the United States, a percentage of that oil was transported through Nebraska. First responders along the rail route updated their response plans, were trained to the specifics on crude oil and conducted exercises specific to the dangers of this volatile mixture.

SERC is supported by a grant through a U.S. Department of Transportation – Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, many state and federal counterparts and the first responders across the state.



Discussing response plans to a shale oil spill was a focus in 2015 and the topic of the agency's annual TERREX exercise.

# NEMA 2015 FUNDING

## Emergency Management Performance Grant

**\$3,849,115 total grant**

**60 percent goes to local emergency management agencies or**

**\$2.3 million**

## Expenditures

### Governor's Emergency Fund

Federal **\$46,993,364**  
 State **\$4,253,923**  
 Cash **\$0**

State Appropriation: **\$1,224,193**

Federal Grants: **\$7,557,717**

Radiological Emergency Preparedness Power Plant Funded **\$424,709**

## State Homeland Security Grant Program

**\$3,734,500** Total received from the State Homeland Security Grant Program

Region	Hazmat Team	IED/Fusion	Com/PET	Total Award
Southeast	20,000	240,519	153,600	414,119
South Central	60,000		175,000	235,000
East Central	20,000	41,338	128,300	189,638
Northeast	20,000	82,175	170,300	272,475
Panhandle	20,000	57,103	102,468	179,571
North Central		82,798	120,000	202,798
Southwest	20,000	98,674	3,000	121,674
Tri-County	40,000	207,250	242,500	489,750
*Nebraska Hazardous Incident Team (NHIT)	20,000			
**Nebraska Regional Interoperable Network (NRIN)			550,286	
Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) (Tri-County)			161,289	
***Citizen Corps Program (CCP)			151,000	

**Total Award to Local Units of Government: \$2,987,600**

\*NHIT through memorandum of understanding (MOU) via north central region.

\*\*NRIN through MOU via east central region

\*\*\*CCP through MOU via south central region

### Remaining 20 percent kept at the state level-per grant guidance

**NEMA:** Funds allocated to the PET program, management and administration **\$746,900**

**NSP:** Funds allocated to build and sustain Nebraska Fusion Information Network **\$560,175**

**Total Award to Nebraska: \$3,734,500**



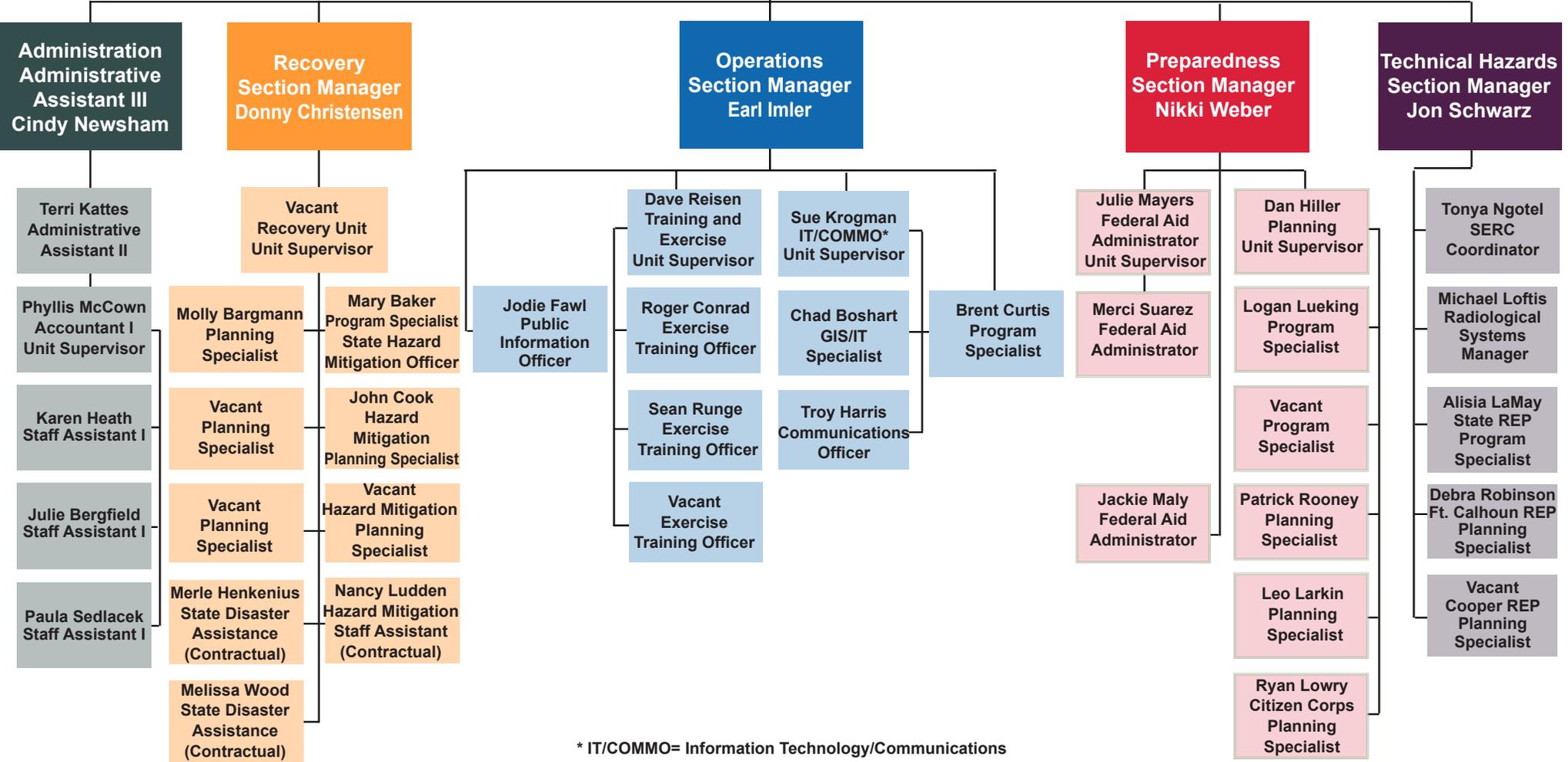
**Director**  
Major General Daryl Bohac

**Assistant Director**  
Bryan Tuma

Deb Kai  
Business  
Manager III



# Organizational Chart

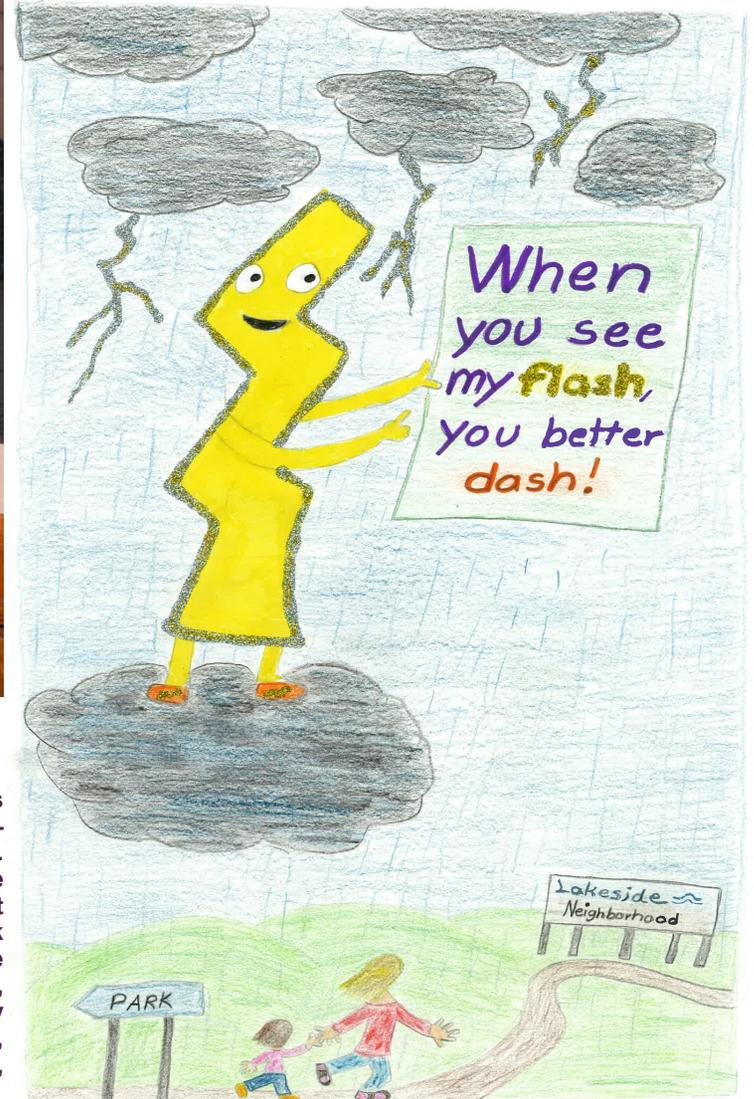


\* IT/COMMO= Information Technology/Communications



## Severe Weather Awareness Week

Severe Weather Awareness Week Poster Contest winners were honored by Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts at the State Capitol on March 18. The yearly celebration is observed to increase awareness of, and response to, severe weather hazards before the onset of the spring and summer severe weather season. The week includes a statewide tornado drill. (In 2016, the week will be celebrated March 21-25 with the Statewide Tornado Drill scheduled at 10 a.m. on March 23.) Pictured at the 2015 celebration are: front row, from left: Kaitlyn Emanuel, North Bend, fourth place; Emma Krusemark, Pender, third; Domanick Rexroad, Hebron, second; and Natalie McNamara, Papillion, Bellevue Elementary School, first; middle row; Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, director of NEMA, Emily Wageman, Region 5-6 Emergency Management, Tom Perez, Thurston County Emergency Management; Gov. Pete Ricketts; Laura Hintz, Knox County Emergency Management and the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management; Lynn Marshall, Sarpy County Emergency Management; back row, Brian Smith, National Weather Service; Dan Hiller, NEMA and Ryan Lowry, NEMA. Right: The winning poster.



# 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 2015 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)