National Preparedness Month begins Sept. 1

Disasters Happen. Prepare Now. Learn How.

Each week will highlight tips and steps to take an important preparedness action.

Take action this September to prepare your family, organization, or community. Register your preparedness activity and participate in the National Day of Action on Sept. 15. You can find more resources, including the NPM social media toolkit, at www.ready.gov/september.
A Message from NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma

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.

We got word on Monday, Aug. 27, that President Donald J. Trump approved a major disaster for Nebraska and ordered federal assistance to supplement state, tribal and local recovery efforts in 10 counties affected by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding from June 17 to July 1, 2018. That’s great news and we certainly appreciate how quickly the president approved Gov. Pete Ricketts request from Aug. 8. This declaration will allow affected communities to continue their recovery with assistance from the Public Assistance Grant Program.

The Public Assistance Grants Program is a FEMA’s largest grant program averaging $4.7 billion in grants each year, accounting for 51 percent of FEMA grant dollars. It was a major topic at the FEMA Region VII Recovery Summit earlier this month, a meeting that was well-worth the time for representatives from Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas who attended.

We reviewed the New Public Assistance Delivery Model which provides better grants management and fiscal responsibility from beginning to end. Nebraska now has eight open public assistance disasters and anything to streamline processes is appreciated.

With the president’s approval of public assistance through FEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration also announced that low-interest federal disaster loans are now available to certain private nonprofit organizations in Nebraska.

Source: www.FEMA.gov

Sincerely,

Bryan Tuma
NEMA Assistant Director

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**Nebraska’s Open Federally Declared Disasters as of August 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disaster No.</th>
<th>Incident Period</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Declaration Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DR-4179</td>
<td>May 11-12, 2014</td>
<td>Severe Storms, Tornadoes, Straight-line Winds, and Flooding Clay, Fillmore, Saline, Saunders, Seward, York</td>
<td>June 17, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR-4375</td>
<td>April 13-18, 2018</td>
<td>Severe Winter Storm and Straight-line Winds Antelope, Blaine, Boone, Boyd, Cheyenne, Clay, Custer, Deuel, Fillmore, Garfield, Gosper, Gheeley, Hall, Hamilton, Holt, Howard, Keith, Knox, Logan, Loup, Madison, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Pierce, Platte, Rock, Sherman, Valley, Webster, Wheeler</td>
<td>June 29, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR-4387</td>
<td>June 17-July 1, 2018</td>
<td>Severe Storms, Tornadoes, Straight-line Winds, and Flooding Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Harlan, Logan, Thomas, Thurston, and Wayne</td>
<td>Aug. 27, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.FEMA.gov
Recovery Summit

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency staff joined Iowa, Missouri and Kansas emergency management staff, as well as tribal representatives, at a Region VII Recovery Summit, Aug. 14-16 in Kansas City, Mo.

During the three-day summit participants discussed updated information on public assistance, individual assistance, volunteer and donations management, the new public assistance delivery model, a new grants portal and state managed disasters as well as a variety of other topics.

“It was well worth my time,” reports NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma. “I walked away with a lot of good information. FEMA is working on public assistance and I think there is an opportunity for states to shape how the new public assistance program works.”

Grants Portal
FEATURED AT SUMMIT

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recently introduced a web-based Grants Portal through which all project documentation and determinations on public assistance are entered.

“It’s a huge change for applicants and the states,” said Recovery Unit supervisor Molly Bargmann. “It helps us better monitor the status of projects and holds everyone accountable throughout the project creation process.”

All communication on projects can be tracked 24/7 and all documentation can be uploaded and accessible in the portal.

“In Nebraska, more than 200 entities have registered and are starting to upload policies and pre-disaster photos,” Bargmann said. “We are actively using the portal for recently declared disasters 4375 and 4387.

The portal helps facilitate a new process where projects are written in one of three Consolidated Resource Centers (CRC) — in Denton, Texas, Winchester, Va., or Sacramento, Calif. Instead of in a Joint Field Office in the state where the disaster occurred.

“Projects are written more consistently across the program with the new process,” Bargmann said.
Nebraska Hosts Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Road Show

By Deb Robinson
Planning and Training Specialist
Nebraska hosted the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Road Show at four locations across the state, Aug. 22-23, for local and state officials from law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) and emergency management agencies.

The road show made stops at the Waverly Weigh Station, the Nebraska State Patrol Training Center in Grand Island, the North Platte Weigh Station and the Department of Transportation District Maintenance Yard in Kimball.

The road show featured the specialized transport vehicle and casks that hold radioactive waste materials from labs in the country that supported research and development of nuclear weapons and America’s nuclear Navy. The materials generally contain items like personal protective equipment (PPE), hand tools, machinery and other sundry items that were used in labs and maintenance areas.

These materials are referred to as Transuranic Waste or TRU Waste and are shipped to the WIPP site in Carlsbad, N.M., where they are placed some 2,150 feet below ground in salt beds which will entomb the casks as they go through their natural decay process.

These shipments will resume through Nebraska in late 2018 or 2019. Local officials including law enforcement, fire departments, EMS, emergency management agencies and local hospitals are offered specialized training related to the transportation of radiological materials and how to respond to incidents or accidents involving radioactive materials.

The WIPP transportation program has an excellent safety record. With tens of thousands of shipments there has never been a major transportation incident. The program is highly regulated. Drivers for these shipments undergo more than 400 hours of training and must pass extensive background and driving records checks. Vehicles must undergo extensive inspections and...
attain certification with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA).

The casks in which these materials are transported undergo a series of certifications to test the absolute worst case scenarios and include drop tests, puncture tests, immersion tests and tests where they are set in fire to some 1,400 degrees for an extended period of time. Train collisions into brick walls at high speeds have also been conducted to test the resiliency of these casks.

The transport vehicles include enhanced safety systems such as forward and side collision avoidance systems, satellite tracking and communications and more.

“These are the mostly highly specialized trash trucks you can imagine,” one of the drivers from a tandem driving team explained. “Safety is not our first concern, it is our only concern and with the help of local and state officials across the country, these transports can go from their place of origin to the storage site without incident.”

Those who attended were able to get up close and look at the casks and the transport vehicles and ask questions of the drivers and program representatives. These opportunities are as important to those who oversee these programs as they are to those of us at the state and local levels. It is another example of how federal departments and agencies, state and local departments and agencies and the private sector work together to ensure programmatic success and safety.

From left, NEMA Assist Director Bryan Tuma, State Sen. Suzanne Geist, Lt. Gov. Mike Foley, Institutional Affairs Manager James Mason of the Office of the National TRU Program, Operations Division, U.S. Dept. of Energy and NEMA Preparedness Manager Nikki Weber were on hand for the Waverly stop of the WIPP Road Show on Aug. 22.
The Beacon – August 2018

Nebraska Hazmat Conference 2018

For LEPCs, Industry and First Responders

September 27–28, 2018
12 to 4 p.m. Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday

Sandhills Convention Center
2102 S. Jeffers St.
North Platte

Hurry! Sign up is available on the NEMA website until Sept. 5

Conference will cover hazmat preparedness for transportation and storage of chemicals with speakers covering Local Emergency Planning Committee operations, response to hazmat calls, public/private partnership and members from the Civil Support Team, State Emergency Response Commission, EPA Region 7 and state agencies.

Conference Highlights include:

■ Tour of the world’s largest railroad classification yard, the Union Pacific Bailey Yard
■ Local instructors from Nebraska’s premier hazmat teams
■ National speakers on hazmat response and recovery
■ Frank Patterson, Emergency Manager during the West Texas Fertilizer Plant explosion
■ Weather balloon launch with the National Weather Service – North Platte
■ And much more!

There is no cost to attend. Lodging is available for LEPC members and other governmental entities if you reside more than 60 miles from North Platte. Signify your lodging requirements during your sign up. You must sign up prior to September 5 to receive lodging.

We look forward to seeing each of you in North Platte! If you have any questions, please contact SERC Coordinator James Rashilla at james.rashilla@nebraska.gov or Trent Kleinow, North Platte Fire Department, at kleinowtd@ci.north-platte.ne.us

If you have trouble with the enrollment link, copy and paste this URL into your web browser: https://nema.nebraska.gov/event/nebraska-hazmat-conference-2018
University of Nebraska-Lincoln students in Dr. Zhenghong Tang’s Hazard Mitigation Planning course toured Nebraska Emergency Management Agency on Monday Aug. 27, and heard from recovery and planning unit staff. Clockwise from bottom left, Planning Unit Supervisor Sean Runge and Planning Specialist Patrick Rooney discuss local emergency operations plans; the students pose for a picture outside the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln; Planning Specialist Nick Walsh discusses hazard mitigation; Recovery Unit Supervisor Molly Bargmann discusses the recovery process; and Walsh and Runge talk about field deployments.

Local volunteers and emergency management personnel participate in an evaluated exercise in Richardson County on Aug. 7. The exercise tested participants ability to detect radiation and decontaminate people and equipment. Nebraska Emergency Management Agency staff served as controllers for the exercise.
The 2018 Nebraska Citizen Corps Volunteer Preparedness Conference Held in Bellevue

By Ryan Lowry
Citizen Corp Coordinator

People from across the state gathered in Bellevue, Aug. 17-19 for three days of training, presentations and exercises that were all designed to improve their skills as disaster response volunteers.

The 2018 Nebraska Citizen Corps Volunteer Preparedness Conference took place on Bellevue University’s campus and offered attendees an opportunity to network with others over the course of the weekend.

On Friday, attendees broke into two training groups. One group learned about managing spontaneous volunteers during a disaster and what it takes to set up a volunteer reception center (VRC). The other group took a CPR and Save-a-Life course, which allowed participants the chance to practice life-saving skills.

Conference attendees heard from a number of disaster response experts and practitioners on Saturday.

**Dr. Samantha Montano**, assistant professor with North Dakota State University’s Emergency Management department, spoke about the various roles of disaster volunteers and how they’ve changed over time.

**Ashley Mueller** (University of Nebraska Extension) and **Mark Kitchens** (FEMA Region VII) talked about youth preparedness programs that are offered in the region.

**John Packett** with Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo spoke about how the zoo prepares for a major disaster. And **Julie Nash** with the Corporation for National and Community Service spoke about what it was like to serve during a federal disaster deployment after she assisted with the 2016 hurricane response in Florida.

Participants then got the opportunity to test their skills during an exercise on Sunday morning. They were charged with setting up and managing a VRC that could process spontaneous volunteers during a disaster. As with any good exercise, there was a twist added in to test the skills of those who took the Save-a-Life training, and some participants got to test their skills in applying an improvised tourniquet.

Overall, this was a fun and educational event for disaster response volunteers. Not only did they get a chance to acquire new skills or improve existing ones, they also heard from a number of great speakers who recognize the value and importance of volunteers during a disaster.

The Nebraska Citizen Corps would like to thank Bellevue University, Tri-County Citizen Corps, and the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center as partners in putting this year’s conference together. We look forward to another great gathering of volunteers next year!
Melinda Davis joined the staff of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency on July 30 and will be working in the recovery unit as a temporary staff assistant to support work on recent disasters.

Davis previously worked at Blackhills Energy and held the position of exception specialist, with dispatching responsibilities. She was employed with Blackhills Energy for more than 14 year until the position was relocated to Rapid City, S.D. Davis was raised in Rose and after graduating high school moved to Lincoln and attended Southeast Community College.

“I met the love of my life, Jim, in Lincoln, and we have been married for 28 years,” Davis said. “He broadened my horizon by moving me to Houston, Texas, Springfield, Mo. and then finally back to Lincoln.”

Davis enjoys fishing, cooking and spending time with family.

Yvette Montes Jung joined the staff of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency on Aug. 6. She will be working in the recovery unit as a temporary staff assistant to support work on recent disasters.

Montes Jung previously worked for the Veterans Benefits Administration as a veteran services representative and at the Nebraska Department of Labor as an administrative assistant.

Montes Jung is originally from Los Angeles, Calif. As a former military spouse, she has lived in Maryland, Washington and Kansas as well.

In her spare time, Montes Jung enjoys spending time with her family, traveling and Lincoln Salt Dog baseball games.

She is married to Timothy Jung. She has three sons, Christopher, 30, Roman, 17, and Mathew, 14.

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 includes emergency management news and activities from across the state. Please forward story ideas or photos for inclusion to: Jodie Fawl, Public Information Officer, 2433 N.W. 24th St., Lincoln NE 68524; 402-471-7428, jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov.

www.nema.nebraska.gov