



December 2011

# The Beacon

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



# PREPARING FOR ICE

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# Holidays Greetings from all of us at NEMA

On behalf of the staff of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, I would like to wish all of you a happy and safe holiday season.

This issue of *The Beacon* concludes another event-filled year for NEMA staff and management courtesy of the Platte and Missouri rivers. This year saw record flooding, and we still have a Federal Emergency Management Agency Joint Field Office open in Lincoln. NEMA's response and recovery staff continue to work on all of the open disasters from the past several years as well as DR-4013 and DR-4014 declarations for this year.

2011 was a busy year on all fronts. Needless to say, the public assistance program continues to be exceedingly busy from all of the ongoing disaster work. The hazard mitigation program continues to receive funds through the open declarations even though local jurisdictions are challenged with being able to meet the funding matches required to receive the support. Tight budgets at both the state and local level will test participation in the program. Within the planning program, communications and homeland security, the agency continues to move forward with local planning, updating plans at the state level, working on the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) grant and continuing the staff work in support of Paraclete and communications interoperability.

NEMA has been limited in its ability to provide and support ongoing training because of staff turnover within the agency. I am excited to note we will have all positions filled within the training and exercising program and look forward to having a more active role at both the state and local level in support of training and exercising. I would note that within the radiological program of the agency, staff continues to support the local risk counties within their off-site planning and with the rollout of the new radiological emergency preparedness manual (REP) manual will be providing more support to incorporate new planning, training and exercising standards into the training and exercising program within the radiological program.

For local directors participating in the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) program, each of you is well aware of the ever-changing standards and performance standards to meet the grant guidelines. I am extremely proud of the work I am seeing going on at the local level in support of this program. In light of the fiscal climate at the federal level, I think each of the participating agencies can take pride in the work that has been done not only in Nebraska, but nationwide. We are fortunate emergency managers have stepped up to the plate and produced the work and results that have demonstrated to Congress the need to continue this program for the health, safety and welfare of our states and communities. I thank you for your diligence, hard work and strength of effort.

Nationally, I continue to keep fully engaged in support of the emergency management program. While still sitting on the board of directors for the Emergency Management Accreditation, I have taken on the responsibility of chairman of the preparedness committee within the National Emergency Management Association and serve as regional representative for Region VII for the board of directors of the National Emergency Management Association. On the preparedness front, we will be seeing many new programs being rolled out with the release of Presidential Decision Directive 8, changes within the training and exercising program within the Emergency Management Institute, the National Response Framework and a new National Emergency Management Academy. These coming months and next year will be exciting, challenging and changing for each of us and our jurisdictions.

As always, I thank you for your time, commitment and effort. NEMA staff will continue to strive to support each jurisdiction fully to the best of the agency's ability. We look forward to continuing our journey in support of Nebraska and our citizens.



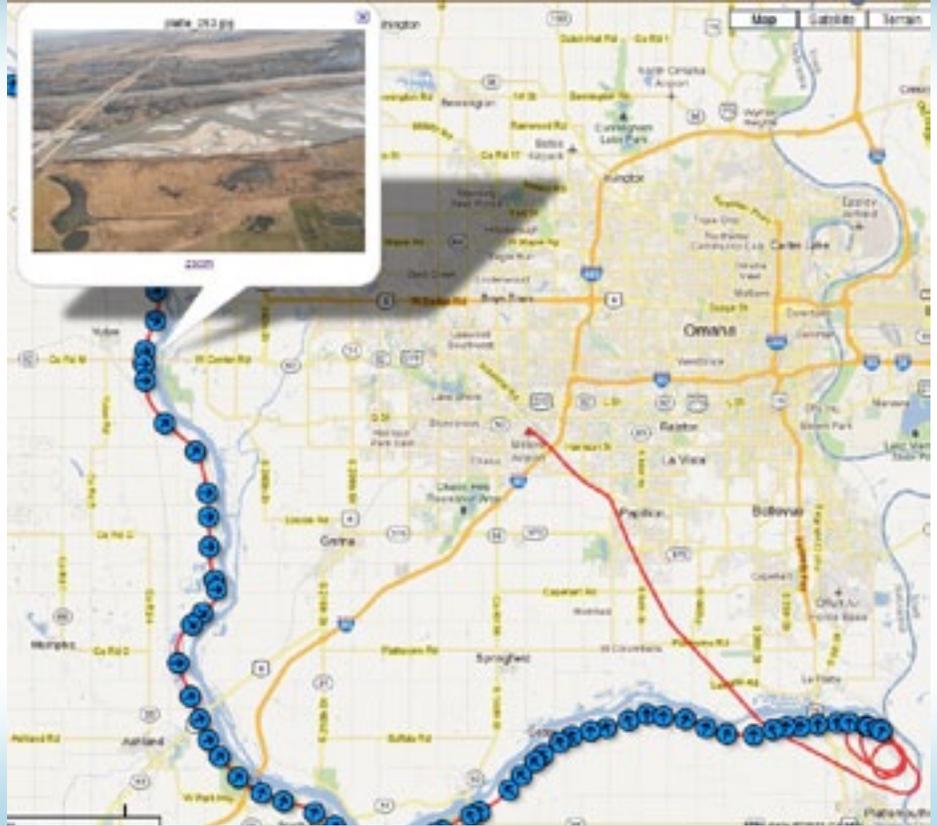
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Bennett". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

## COVER PHOTO

The Civil Air Patrol flew a photographic mission for NEMA along the Platte River Dec. 2 to document the channels that have formed in the river. During the flight from Fremont to the mouth of the Missouri, the Civil Air Patrol took still photos and videos complete with exact location information.

The photos show the frazil ice and frazil pan which is the first stage in river ice formation when the crystals start to form and grow. The pictures of the slushy channel provide the information needed to mitigate against ice jams.

“These photos will let us know where the channels are in case there is a need for ice dusting or the use of explosives to eliminate ice jams,” reports Sheila Hascall, state hazard mitigation officer at NEMA. “Using the photos, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can provide us with technical assistance in the event an ice jam forms.”



### Ice Meeting

Above: Sheila Hascall of NEMA kicks off the Lower Platte River Ice preparedness meeting, Dec. 12 at the Pappo Missouri River Natural Resources District. Right: David Pearson of the National Weather Service discusses the weather outlook. Center right: Bill Jones of the Natural Resources District discusses electronic reporting. Far right: Amanda Grint of the Pappo-Missouri River NRD talks about explosive procedures and contract updates.





## **Nebraska Council of Regions/Nebraska Wireless Interoperable Network Discuss Communications Priorities**

**Story by Bob Wilhelm, NEMA Planning Specialist**

Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy chaired a joint meeting of the Nebraska Council of Regions (NCOR) and the Nebraska Wireless Interoperable Network (NWIN) in Lincoln Dec. 9.

The meeting included briefings by state representatives and Nebraska Public Power District Representatives on the status of the three statewide first responder radio communications projects occurring in Nebraska.

Those projects are the State Radio

System (SRS), the Nebraska Region Interoperability Network (NRIN) and the Paraclete Interoperability Systems.

Representatives from the eight Planning, Exercise and Training (PET) Regions provided information and briefings on the plans and status of mutual aid communications projects in their regions and on efforts to pilot projects along the I-80 corridor to provide the ability of first responders to communicate with the Nebraska State Patrol

personnel.

The meeting then turned to identifying communications priorities and the next steps necessary to continue to move the build-out of all these projects forward while sharing the assets and infrastructure of each of the systems, where possible. Considerable discussion centered around the continued governance structure of this group and identifying sub-committees to move the work forward.



Above right, Mark Conrey of Douglas County 911 makes a point during the NCOR/NWIN meeting as Pete Peterson, left, emergency manager in Keith and Grant counties takes notes. Right, Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy chaired the joint meeting.



# APPLY NOW FOR HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT FUNDING

Sheila Hascall, state hazard mitigation officer, reports there is grant money available through the Federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

“If you have projects you have considered in the past but have not yet submitted, now is the time,” said Hascall. “Think about pulling that application out of the file, dusting it off and submitting it as a potential project for Hazard Mitigation Grant Funding. Nebraska Emergency Management Agency will help you get that project moving.”

Hazard mitigation grant funds can be used for a variety of projects designed to lessen the impact of natural disasters on communities, Hascall said.

Planning funds are available for drafting new hazard mitigation plans

Disaster	Lock in	HMGP Amount	Deadline	Planning Funds	Initiative Project Funds	Regular Project Funds
<b>1924</b>	01/11/2011	\$15,052,604	1/11/12	\$1,053,682	\$752,630	\$13,246,291
Allocated			1/11/12		\$750,942	\$7,094,780
<b>Available</b>			<b>1/11/12</b>	<b>\$1,053,682</b>	<b>\$1,688</b>	<b>\$6,151,511</b>
<b>1945</b>	10/21/2011	\$437,656	1/19/12	\$30,635	\$21,882	\$385,137
Allocated			1/19/12		\$17,225	\$65,000
<b>Available</b>			<b>1/19/12</b>	<b>\$30,635</b>	<b>\$4,657</b>	<b>\$320,137</b>
<b>4013</b>	Preliminary Estimate	\$20,000,000	08/12/12	\$1,400,000	\$1,000,000	\$17,600,000
Allocated			08/12/12		\$144,852	
<b>Available</b>			<b>8/12/12</b>	<b>\$1,400,000</b>	<b>\$855,148</b>	<b>\$17,600,000</b>
<b>4014</b>	Preliminary Estimate	\$600,000	8/12/12	\$42,000	\$30,000	\$528,000
Allocated			8/12/12			
<b>Available</b>			<b>8/12/12</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$528,000</b>

or updates to mitigation plans that may soon be expiring.

Initiative projects include, but are not limited to, generators for critical infrastructures, warning sirens and reverse 911 systems.

Regular projects include watershed improvement, flood reduction work, property acquisition (property buy out), and wind/tornado projects (residential and public). There are a many more potential hazard mitigation projects.

For more information contact:

**Sheila Hascall**

State Hazard

Mitigation Officer

sheila.hascall@nebraska.gov

402-471-7217



Participants in a NEMA-sponsored ICS - 300 Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents class Dec. 5-7 work through one of the classes many exercises. Todd Mann and Don Angell of American Equities taught the course which was held at the Nebraska Information Analysis Center of the Nebraska State Patrol. Pictured from left are: Rick Ewald of the National Weather Service, Roger Dudley a veterinarian at the Department of Agriculture, Jason McCartney of the Department of Insurance, Mary Baker, a NEMA planning specialist, and Bobby Hike from Douglas County Corrections.

## NEMA's Exercise and Training Section



From left, Chuck Chase, Roger Conrad and Rod Hutt are new exercise training officers joining Exercise and Training Unit Supervisor Dave Reisen

## Winter Readiness

Before the watches and warnings are issued, prepare a winter storm plan to enable you and your family to survive for 72 hours without outside assistance.

Have extra blankets on hand.

Ensure that each member of your household has a warm coat, gloves and mittens, hat and water-resistant boots.

Make sure all family members know what to do when a winter storm watch or warning is issued.

Assemble a disaster supplies kit for your home containing:

- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Portable, battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio and AM/FM radio; and extra batteries.
- First aid kit.
- One-week supply of food (include items that do not require refrigeration or cooking in case of power loss).
- Nonelectric can opener.
- Bottled water.
- One-week supply of essential prescription medications.
- Extra blankets and sleeping bags.
- Fire extinguisher (A-B-C type).

Develop an emergency communications plan in case family members are separated from one another during a winter storm.

Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance.

Make sure all family members know how to respond after a severe winter storm. Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1, police or fire department and which radio station to tune to for emergency information.



## Resolve to be Ready 2012

WASHINGTON - As 2011 - one of the most active years for disasters in recent history - comes to a close and Americans get ready to ring in a new year, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is encouraging all Americans to Resolve to be Ready by making a new year's resolution to be prepared for emergencies.

As a recent report by the National Climatic Data Center highlights, 2011 has seen more billion-dollar natural disasters than any year on record. This year, the U.S. experienced its first hurricane landfall since 2008, the most deadly series of tornadoes since the 1950s, significant earthquakes and severe flooding - hazards that impacted every region of the country. All of these events have served as important reminders that disasters can strike anytime, anywhere and being prepared is one of the most effective things we can do to protect our homes, businesses and loved ones.

FEMA annual campaign, Resolve to be Ready in 2012, urges Americans to make preparedness a priority during the holiday season by making a new year's resolution to be ready for disasters or by thinking about preparedness tools for last minute gift ideas.

"One of the most important lessons we can take away from this year is that

disasters can impact all of us, no matter what part of the country we live in," said FEMA administrator Craig Fugate. "While we can't control where or when they might hit, we can take steps in advance to prepare for them - efforts that can go a long way toward protecting our families, homes and business. Resolving to be Ready in 2012 could be the most important pledge you make this year."

By making a resolution to take a few simple steps in advance, Americans can minimize the impact of an emergency on their families, homes or businesses. To take the pledge, visit [www.ready.gov/resolve](http://www.ready.gov/resolve) which includes free information, checklists, and guidelines about how to put together a kit, make a plan, and stay informed.

Resolve to be Ready in 2012 is a nationwide effort to increase awareness and encourage individuals, families, businesses, and communities to take action and prepare for emergencies in the New Year. This effort is led by FEMA's Ready Campaign in partnership with Citizen Corps and The Advertising Council. For more information, visit [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov) and [CitizenCorps.gov](http://CitizenCorps.gov) or follow the campaign on Twitter using the hashtags #ready2012 and #resolve.

# 2012 Severe Storm Spotter Training

Below is a list of upcoming spotter classes scheduled in Nebraska by the **National Weather Service Omaha county warning area**.

The nearly two-hour classes provide a basic understanding of thunderstorm structure, spotting techniques, reporting criteria and procedures. There is no need to register. E-mail **Brian Smith**, warning and coordination meteorologist at [brian.e.smith@noaa.gov](mailto:brian.e.smith@noaa.gov) for more information.

## February

Day	City	Time	Location
28	Syracuse	7 p.m.	Fire Station, 578 Mohawk St.

## March

5	Seward	6:30 p.m.	Civic Center Auditorium 616 Bradford St.
6	Norfolk	7 p.m.	Lifelong Learning Center Northeast Community College 601 East Benjamin Ave.
7	Pawnee City	7 p.m.	Courthouse
8	Neligh	7 p.m.	Fire Station 711 W. 11th St.
11	Saline County	1 p.m.	Saline Center Hall 3 miles West and 7 miles South of Dorchester on Highway 15
13	Fairbury	7 p.m.	4-H Building Jefferson County Fairgrounds 56885 PWF Road

14	Wahoo	7 p.m.	Fire Station 158 W, Sixth St.
19	Gage County	7 p.m.	TBD
20	Cass County	7 p.m.	Emergency Operations Center 144th Street and Highway Community Room
21	Columbus	7 p.m.	Courthouse Basement 26th Ave and 14th St
21	Omaha	7 p.m.	Boys Town Music Hall 13715 Flanagan Blvd.
24	Lincoln	1 p.m.	Hardin Hall UNL East Campus 33rd St. and Holdrege
26	David City	7 p.m.	Fire Station 552 D Street
27	Bancroft	7 p.m.	Fire Station 401 Main St.
29	Bellevue	7 p.m.	Fire Training Academy 3100 Cornhusker Road

## April

3	Auburn	7 p.m.	Nemaha County Fairgrounds 4-H Building 9th and J Streets
10	Blair	7 p.m.	City Hall 218 S. 16th Street
16	Cedar County	7 p.m.	TBD
17	Fremont	7 p.m.	Christensen Field Expo Hall West Linden and Ridge Road
24	Craig	7 p.m.	Fire Station 333 S. Main St.

**When classes from the North Platte National Weather Service area are posted, they will be added in the training section of the NEMA website and posted in *The Beacon*.**



## NIPC Executive Committee

The Nebraska Infrastructure Protective Conference Executive Committee met Nov. 22 at the Nebraska National Guard Military Compound. Far left: Major General Judd Lyons speaks during the meeting. Above: Tonya Ngotel of NEMA gives an overview of the agency and left: Earl Imler of NEMA gives a flooding update. NIPC fosters participation in Nebraska's Homeland Security initiatives and programs by partnering industry representatives with government personnel to share knowledge and expertise.

# The Beacon

## Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

[www.nema.nebraska.gov](http://www.nema.nebraska.gov)

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**Governor Dave Heineman**

**State Homeland Security Director  
Lieutenant Governor Rick Sheehy**

**Director:  
Brigadier General Judd Lyons**

**Assistant Director:  
Al Berndt**

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 to share news about the agency and emergency management activities throughout the state. Forward story ideas or photos for inclusion in *The Beacon* to:

Jodie Fawl  
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1300 Military Road  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
(402) 471-7428 or  
[jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov](mailto:jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov)



## Training Calendar

Course	Date	Location	Contact	More Info
Risk Communications	Jan. 10 Course Community College North Platte	Mid-Plains 402-471-7420 <a href="mailto:jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov">jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov</a>	Jon Schwarz	<a href="#">Flyer</a>
Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training (MERRTT)	Feb. 8 Public Safety Training Facility 11616 Rainwood Road	Omaha 402-471-7420	Jon Schwarz <a href="#">Brochure</a> <a href="mailto:jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov">jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov</a>	<a href="#">Flyer</a>
Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training (MERRTT)	Feb. 9 Public Safety Training Facility 11616 Rainwood Road	Omaha 402-471-7420	Jon Schwarz <a href="#">Brochure</a> <a href="mailto:jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov">jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov</a>	<a href="#">Flyer</a>
Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training (MERRTT)	Feb. 10 Public Safety Training Facility 11616 Rainwood Road	Omaha 402-471-7420	Jon Schwarz <a href="#">Brochure</a> <a href="mailto:jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov">jon.schwarz@nebraska.gov</a>	<a href="#">Flyer</a>

## Other Courses Offered

Course	Date	Location	Contact	More Info
ICS - 300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	Jan. 16-18	S. Sioux City	Deanna Beckman (402) 494-7554 <a href="mailto:dbeckman@southsiouxcity.org">dbeckman@southsiouxcity.org</a>	<a href="#">Flyer</a>
ICS - 400 Advanced ICS for Command and General Staff-Complex Incidents	Jan. 16-18	S. Sioux City (402) 494-7554 <a href="mailto:dbeckman@southsiouxcity.org">dbeckman@southsiouxcity.org</a>	Deanna Beckman	<a href="#">Flyer</a>
2012 Severe Storm Spotter Training	Multiple Feb.-April	Various Locations	Brian Smith <a href="mailto:brian.e.smith@noaa.gov">brian.e.smith@noaa.gov</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
ICS - 300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	Feb. 18-19	LaVista 402-331-4748 <a href="mailto:melanie.smith@alegent.org">melanie.smith@alegent.org</a>	Melanie Smith	<a href="#">Flyer</a>
ICS - 400 Advanced ICS for Command and General Staff-Complex Incidents	April 21-22	LaVista 402-331-4748 <a href="mailto:melanie.smith@alegent.org">melanie.smith@alegent.org</a>	Melanie Smith	<a href="#">Flyer</a>
MGT 315 Enhanced Threat and Risk Assessment	June 12-13	Lincoln 402-441-7441 <a href="mailto:dahlberg@lancaster.ne.gov">dahlberg@lancaster.ne.gov</a>	Doug Ahlberg	<a href="#">Flyer</a>