

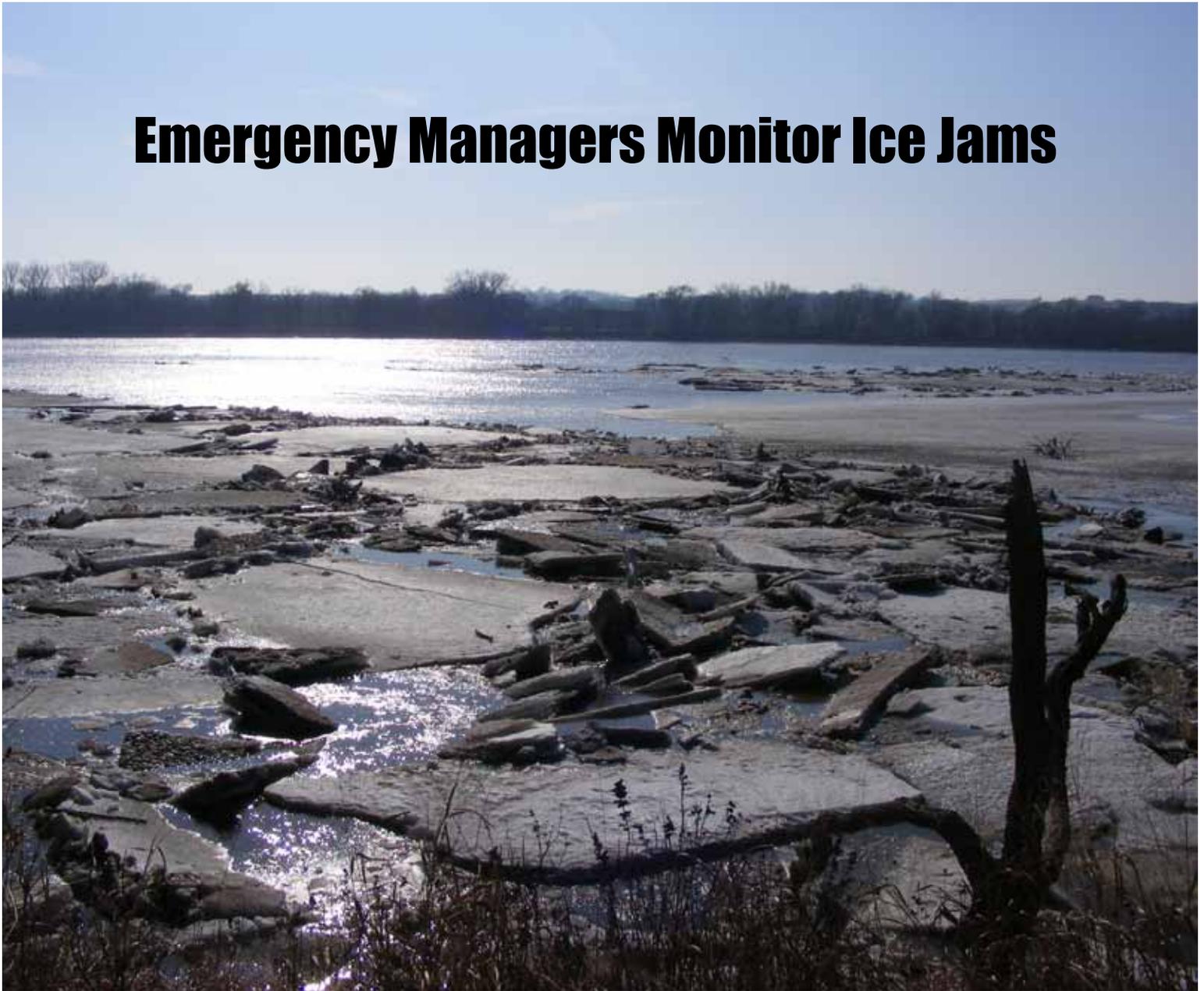


# The Beacon

February 2011

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

## Emergency Managers Monitor Ice Jams



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Platte River ice collects near Highway 31 at Schram Park on Feb. 16

Photo courtesy of Lynn Marshall, Sarpy County

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An ice jam on the Elkhorn River east of Pilger on Feb. 17.

Photo courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Another ice jam formed at Legges lake west of Fremont.

Photo courtesy Bill Pook, Region 5/6

## Emergency Managers Monitor Nebraska Rivers

Higher than normal temperatures made ash dusting the Platte River unnecessary the week of Feb. 14. However, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, local emergency man-

agers, the U.S. Corps of Army Engineers and Natural Resources Districts continue to monitor for ice jam-related flooding along the lower Platte River and its tributaries.

Residents along the Loup, Elkhorn and Platte rivers who historically have been affected by spring flooding, are encouraged to remain aware of the nearby river conditions.



A channel forms through the ice on the Platte River. Photo courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## NEMA Conducts Paraclete Training

NEMA exercise and training officers **Alisia LaMay** and **Dave Reisen** have begun working with the local Paraclete switch sites to conduct Paraclete training.

The training will be conducted in phases starting with the Basic Operator (Dispatcher) Training for those individuals who will work within the system every day, typically dispatchers.

The second phase will be aimed towards communication directors/emergency managers, or those staff at the switch, creating the communication plans within Paraclete specific for that switch.

The last phase of the training is a technician level training, targeting specific individuals within the state who will be proficient enough within the program to go into the software and hardware to make changes or adjustments as needed.

The first NEMA delivered Basic Operator Training within Paraclete was conducted at the Taylor Switch.

“The training was well received and those in attendance reported that the training helped give them a better understanding of how Paraclete works at their level,” Reisen said. “They said they discovered how beneficial the program will be for their jurisdiction.”

LaMay and Reisen will contact representatives at the switches in the near future to set up training and work through any issues they may be having with Paraclete.

**For more information on Paraclete please contact Alisia LaMay at [Alisia.lamay@nebraska.gov](mailto:Alisia.lamay@nebraska.gov) or Dave Reisen at [dave.reisen@nebraska.gov](mailto:dave.reisen@nebraska.gov)**



Ron Edmond of Oak Ridge Associated Universities offers communication advice to Nebraska spokespersons.

## Spokesperson Training Offered

Training offered through NEMA helped Nebraska spokespersons understand the importance of establishing trust and credibility when communicating to the media and the public in times of crisis.

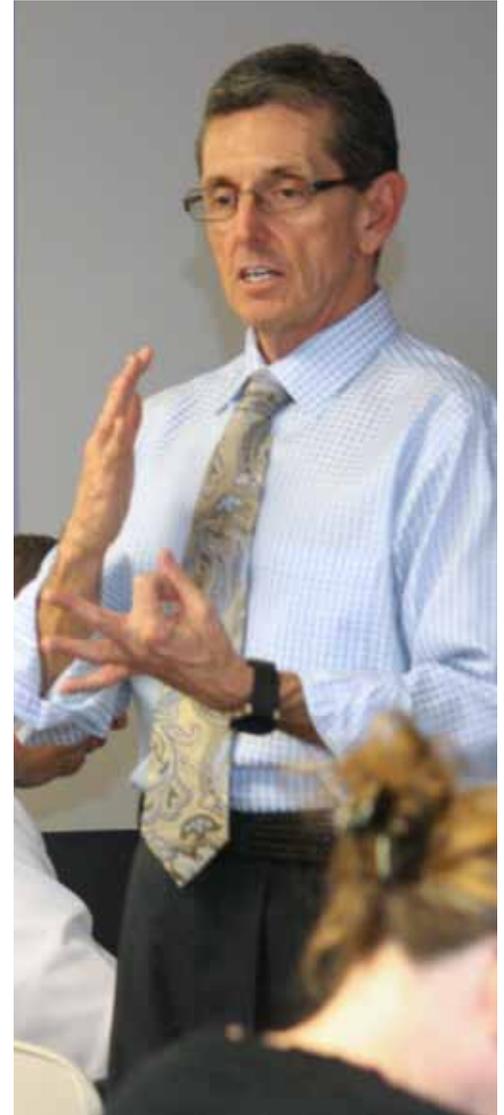
**Ron Edmond** of Oak Ridge Associated Universities shared his insight on risk communications with 50 participants in a workshop, Feb. 16 in Lincoln. The course helped participants learn how to effectively deliver critical information, build trust and manage the communication aspects of emergency response.

NEMA's Technical Hazards Section Supervisor Jon Schwarz scheduled the

conference after hearing Edmond at a conference in Chicago.

The workshop was authorized and funded by the U.S. Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) — Carlsbad Field Office through the Western Governor's Association. NEMA manages Nebraska's work agreement with WIPP.

“Our work agreement requires that we offer risk communications training opportunities for people in a position to talk to the public and media about radiological accidents,” Schwarz said. “Presenting the right message in a timely manner during emergency-related events is critical.”



“Communication is a skill, it can be learned,” said Ron Edmond.

# Mitigation Grants Available

Any jurisdiction can apply for a planning grant, but projects are only available to jurisdictions with approved hazard mitigation plans.

Applications for these grants can be found on the NEMA Website under the NEMA Divisions and State Administrative Plan for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

Areas with approved plans seeking assistance with hazard mitigation projects or planning are encouraged to apply at any time. Please contact the State Hazard Mitigation Officer for more information.

Those with hazard mitigation plans are encouraged to continue submitting projects for review. Mitigation can take many forms; it can involve actions such as:

- Promoting sound land use planning based on known hazards
- Buying flood insurance to protect your home and belongings
- Relocating or elevating structures out of the floodplains
- Elevating utilities and laundry out of basements
- Securing shelves and water heaters to nearby walls
- Protection of critical facilities

## Mitigation Can Reduce Loss

The application of good mitigation practices will result in fewer Nebraskans becoming victims of natural disasters. For example, mitigation measures can be applied to strengthen homes, so that families and their belongings are better protected from floods, fires, earthquakes, wind damage and other natural hazards.

Business and industry can avoid damages to their facilities and remain operational in the face of catastrophe by mitigation measures they apply in advance.

Mitigation can be used to strengthen hospitals, fire stations and other critical service facilities so that they can remain operational or reopen more quickly after an event.

In addition, mitigation measures can help reduce disaster losses and suffering so there is less demand for money and resources in the aftermath.

The end result of mitigation is a reduction in the cost of natural disaster response and recovery to each individual Nebraska taxpayer; both in a decrease in costs to state and federal governments and also in the losses suffered by each homeowner in the event of a natural disaster.

- Building better flood drainage systems
- Building wind/tornado safe rooms
- Installing warning sirens
- Developing, adopting, and enforcing effective building codes and standards
- Engineering roads and bridges to carry a higher-year event without damage and
- Developing and implementing a

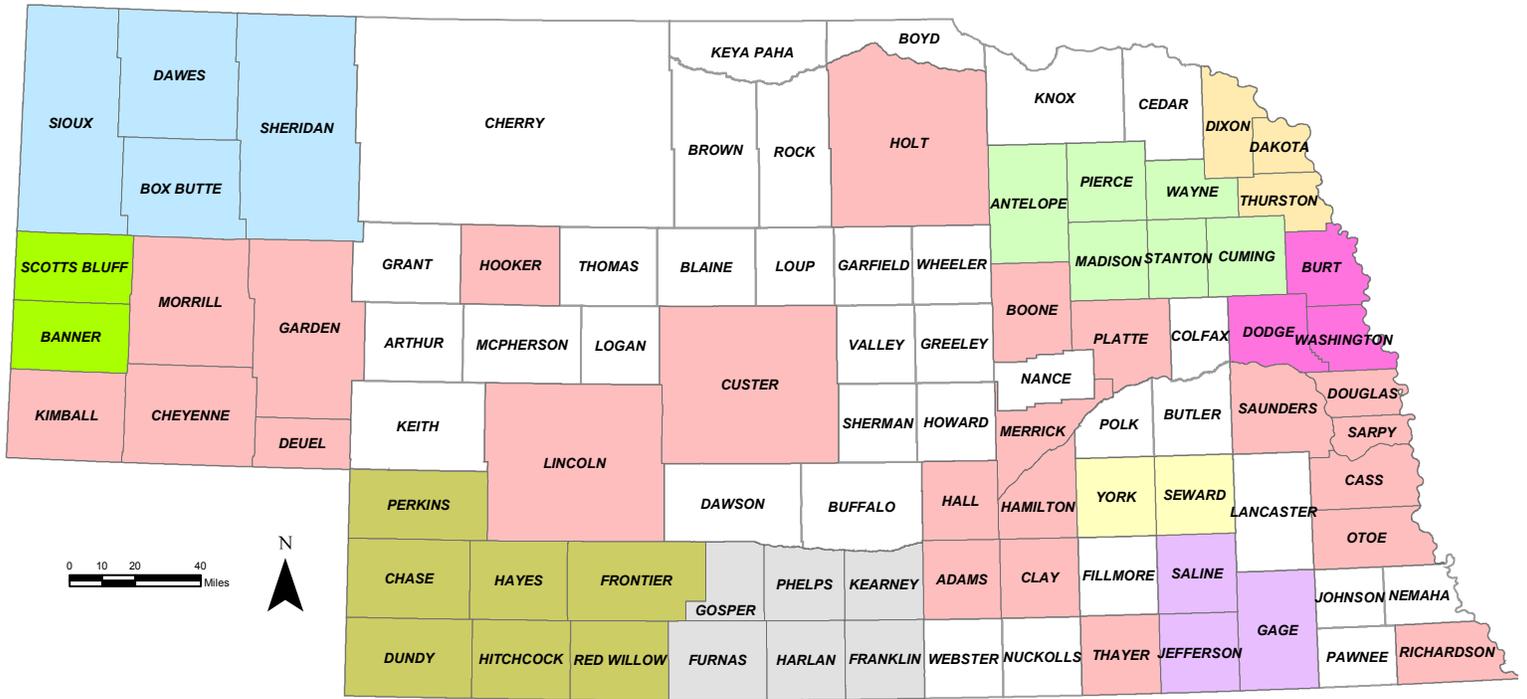
plan in businesses or communities to reduce susceptibility to identified hazards (Implement state and local hazard mitigation plans)

This enables the implementation of mitigation measures during the immediate recovery from a disaster, providing funding for previously identified mitigation measures that would benefit a disaster area.

**Below are the locked in ceiling amounts for open disasters. Disasters 1902, 1924 and 1945 are not final.**

Disaster Number	Declaration Date	Locked In Ceiling Date	Locked In Ceiling Amount	Disaster Due Date For New Apps
1864	12/16/2009	12/16/2010	\$742,150.00	03/16/2011
1878	02/25/2010	09/13/2010	\$1,100,037.00	02/25/2011
1902	04/21/2010	10/26/2010	\$542,573.00	04/21/2011
1924	07/15/2010	01/11/2011	\$15,052,604.00	07/15/2011
1945	10/21/2010		Unknown	10/21/2011

# NEBRASKA LEPC'S



The map above is a snap shot of active LEPC's taken within the 2009-2010 years  
For information about LEPCs contact the SERC at [www.nebraska.gov](http://www.nebraska.gov) or  
The SERC Coordinator at (402) 471-7176

**Above is a current map of active Local Emergency Planning Committees across the state. Data for this map was taken from annual reports, correspondence with members, applications and outreach conducted by NEMA. The singled colored counties signify the single county LEPCs, the same colored counties signify regional LEPCs.**



Major General Judd Lyons, the Adjutant General of the Nebraska National Guard, presents Jim Anderson of NEMA with a Meritorious Service Medal at Anderson's retirement celebration Jan. 27.



NEMA celebrated Jim Anderson's 22 years as a planner at the agency with a luncheon and open house Jan. 27. Anderson was honored with a plaque from NEMA Assistant Director Al Berndt and a Nebraska Admiralship. He also received a flag that had flown both over the Nebraska State Capitol and the Joint Force Headquarters office during his last week of work.

# Bellevue Tests Evacuation Plans

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**

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is charged by Nebraska statute to reduce the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of Nebraska in terms of injury, loss of life and property damage resulting from natural, technological or man-made disasters and emergencies.

NEMA is responsible for coordinating the state response in any major emergency or disaster including the support of local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other federal partners.

*The Beacon* is published monthly by NEMA to share news about the agency and emergency management activities throughout the state.

Please forward story ideas or photos for possible inclusion in *The Beacon* to:

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A model city table top exercise on evacuations from a chemical spill gave 22 members of the Bellevue Police Department command staff an opportunity to test their plans and guidebooks for emergency response.

**Dale Tedder** of the City of Bellevue's Emergency Preparedness Office, said the training included reviews of new Incident Command System forms and emergency response guides, as well as command trailer training.

"We were using a location that included an evacuation of a number of housing additions," Tedder said.

The exercise was designed to test evacuation plans and routes and to give command staff more training on evacuation.



Tedder

"I try to have a drill once a year to touch on some emergency management function so we're all on the same page."

NEMA's **Dan Hiller, Aaron Alward** and **Dave Reisen** facilitated the model city

exercise. "It was a great opportunity for us to go to the local jurisdiction and allow them to demonstrate their knowledge of their policies and procedures," Alward said. "The group of law enforcement took command of the hazardous materials incident and began prioritizing needs to most effectively protect the affected population."



The City of Bellevue conducted a model city exercise to test evacuation plans.

## Calendar

**Feb. 28** — Deadline 2011 Nebraska Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest

**March 9** — Proclamation Signing for Severe Weather Awareness Week.

**March 14-18** — Severe Weather Awareness Week 2011

**March 16** — **Tornado Drill Day**

Once test warning is issued, it is valid for 20 minutes. Central Daylight Time (CDT)/Mountain Daylight Time (MDT)

- 10 a.m. CDT/ 9 a.m. MDT — drill begins
- 10:10 a.m. CDT/ 9:10 a.m. MDT — Omaha/ Sioux Falls issues test
- 10:20 a.m. CDT/ 9:20 a.m. MDT — Hastings issues test
- 10:30 a.m. CDT/ 9:30 a.m. MDT — Cheyenne issues test
- 10:35 a.m. CDT/ 9:35 a.m. MDT — North Platte issues test
- 10:40 a.m. CDT/ 9:40 a.m. MDT — Goodland issues test.

