The Beacon –– October 2011

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

October 2011

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Logan County Wildfire
Wildfires in Logan and Lincoln counties resulted in Gov. Dave Heineman declaring a state of emergency Oct. 5.

The action was necessary as high winds and dry conditions presented a threat to local government’s ability to respond, Heineman said.

The three fires burned approximately 23,000 acres in central Nebraska, as unusually dry, warm weather and gusty conditions threatened to hamper efforts to halt the spread of the blaze.

“This proclamation allows us to take steps necessary to protect the people and resources of the state of Nebraska,” he said.

The response to the fires included numerous local and mutual aid fire departments, the State Fire Marshal’s Office, the Nebraska Forest Service, the Nebraska State Patrol, the Logan County Sheriff, Custer County Emergency Management, Red Cross, Salvation Army, local emergency management, Nebraska Emergency Management and the Department of Roads, along with assistance of area farmer and ranchers.

“Damage estimates are at $4 million,” said Al Berndt, assistant director of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. “We have reports of damage to 12 pivot irrigation systems; cropland and one home. The emergency declaration will help support local response operations.”

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency monitored the situation and sent a representative to the area to work with local responders.

One home was lost and one person was life-flighted to Lincoln as a result of the fires. The injured person is recovering at home.

The first fire started Oct. 4 in Northern Lincoln County. It was caused by a combine in a soybean field. The second fire was also caused by a combine. The third fire was caused by sparks from electrical lines because of high winds.
October 17 FEMA recovery statistics for the 12 Nebraska counties designated for Individual Assistance from the May 24-to-Aug. 1 flooding of the Missouri River.

- Total Registrations – 1,048 applications
- Total Individual and Household Program (housing assistance grants) -- $2,699,222
- Total Other Needs Assistance (State-FEMA property grants) -- $92,089
- Total SBA home and business loans -- $2,108,100
- Total Disaster Unemployment Benefits -- $14,544
- Total visitors to the nine Disaster Recovery Centers, fixed and mobile -- 817

New Faces at NEMA

Mary Baker
Public Assistance
Planning Specialist

Melanie Hooks
Hazard Mitigation
Planning Specialist

Leo Larkin
Preparedness
Planning Specialist

Miranda Rogers
Hazard Mitigation
Temporary

Winter Weather Awareness Day
Nov. 3, 2011

Winter weather season is approaching and the Nebraska Emergency management Agency would like to remind Nebraskans to prepare for the season.

By being prepared and taking proper precautions, the people of Nebraska can reduce the effects of blizzards, snow and ice-covered roads, extremely low temperatures and other hazards of life-threatening weather developments.

Check out FEMA's information on winter preparedness at http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/winter.shtml.

Another good source for information is the Nebraska Department of Roads 24-Hour Weather and Travel Information available online at www.511nebraska.org You can also call 511. Those outside Nebraska should call 1-800-906-9069.
Nationwide Emergency Alert System Test Scheduled Nov. 9

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will conduct the first nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

The nationwide test will occur on Nov. 9 at 1 p.m. Central Time and may last up to three and a half minutes. The public will hear a message indicating that “This is a test.” The audio message will be the same for both radio, television, and cable.

The National-level EAS is a public alert and warning system that enables the President of the United States to address the American public during extreme emergencies.

Similar to local EAS tests, the Nationwide Test will involve broadcast radio and television stations, cable television, satellite radio and television services and wireline providers.

Over the past two years, and as part of ongoing national preparedness planning efforts, FEMA, the FCC and other federal partners, state, local, tribal and territorial governments, EAS participants and others in the EAS community have been working toward making this test a reality.

As the federal, state, tribal, territorial and local governments prepare for and test their capabilities, this event serves as a reminder that everyone should establish an emergency preparedness kit an emergency plan for themselves, their families, communities and businesses.

Anyone can visit www.Ready.gov for more information about how to prepare for and stay informed about what to do in the event of an actual emergency. For more information visit: http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas_info.shtm

Visit the NEMA Website at: http://www.nema.nebraska.gov/preparedness/training-calendar.html for other training opportunities