In This Issue

Interest Watch Continues Throughout Nebraska  
Cooper Nuclear Station Holds Evaluated Exercise  
NEMA Offers Basic Academy  
Second Annual CERT Conference Held in Grand Island  
NEMA Moves to New Offices  
Hazard Mitigation Deadline Approaches  
Emergency Communication Workshop Held

Cover Photo

Back burn at Region 24 Complex fire eliminates fuel.

For more 2012 Nebraska Fire pictures visit NEMA’s fire album at: Facebook Fire Album
An active fire season — according to a wildfire report from the Nebraska Forest Service there were 131 wildfires reported in the state during June alone — the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) activated a fire watch to monitor fire conditions and activity across the state. The State Emergency Operation Center is open daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. with NEMA duty officers on call overnight to monitor calls from local emergency managers.

When the fires broke out in Brown County in the Niobrara River corridor, NEMA was actively monitoring the situation in terms of acreage actively burning; number of volunteer fire departments being requested for mutual aid, and the commitment of state resources, reports Al Berndt, assistant director of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

“Drought conditions mean we’re in a fire watch until fall,” Berndt said. “Gov. Heineman requested the upgraded alert level following his state of emergency declarations because of the drought.”

Four teams conducted Preliminary Damage Assessments for Boyd, Brown, Cherry and Keya Paha counties from Aug. 14-17 for the fires that burned more than 75,000 acres in north-central Nebraska from July 20-29.

More than $4 million was spent for emergency protective measures in the area. An Incident Management Team was hired because the fire situation surpassed state capabilities.

In addition to NEMA the following state agencies responded: National Guard, Department of Roads, State Fire Marshal, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Agriculture, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Nebraska Forest Service and Nebraska State Patrol.

More than 100 volunteer fire departments provided mutual aid to the Region 24 fire, including three departments from South Dakota.

For more fire pictures visit NEMA’s fire album at:

Facebook Fire Album
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Joint Information Center (JIC) staff participate in an evaluated exercise at the Nebraska Public Power District JIC on July 31 as NEMA Assistant Director Al Berndt, right, reviews a news release in his role as the Governor’s Authorized Representative.

NEMA’s Bryan Cook, radiological emergency preparedness planning and training specialist, left, and Nemaha County Sheriff Brent Lotmann participate in the second day of the exercise on Aug. 1.

From left, Emergency managers Renee Critser of Nemaha County and Jim Gerweck of Richardson County speak with George Hanssen of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture at the Cooper Nuclear Station evaluated plume phase exercise in Auburn Aug. 1.

Above: Nebraska PIO Jodie Fawl, left, answers FEMA evaluator Cara Christianson Riley’s question during the second day of the exercise. 
Left: Technical Hazards Section Manager Jon Schwarz, left, asks Department of Health and Human Services staff (from left, Brian Miller, Dr. Robert Fairchild, Howard Shuman, and Jim Defrain) a question during day two of the exercise.
Basic Academy, a week-long focus on emergency management, gave 23 participants from across the state a close up look at emergency management in Nebraska.

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency Basic Certification Course was held Aug. 13-17 in Lincoln and included sessions on the history of emergency management, local and state emergency operation plans and National Incident Management System. Coursework also included weather spotting, individual and public assistance hazard mitigation grant management, an emergency managers panel discussion and public information.

“Emergency management training is just one part of the Basic Certification Program,” said Dave Reisen, supervisor of the Exercise Training Section. “The academy also helps build professional relationships between emergency managers from across the state.”
Nebraska CERT Conference

by Ryan Lowry, State Citizen Corps Coordinator

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers from across the state came together to participate in a series of trainings and exercises at the Second Annual CERT Conference in Grand Island, Aug. 17-18.


The purpose of the conference was to highlight the value of training for CERTs around the state. Unfortunately, there are not always resources, such as funding or man-power, available to participate in a full-scale exercise that simulates an actual disaster or emergency. It is also very labor-intensive to set up a full-scale exercise. However, there are many other options available for volunteers to train with their CERT. The goal for this year’s conference was to show volunteers and volunteer leaders different options for training which come at little or no cost and are easy to put together.

In a table top exercise, participants were given a scenario (a tornado touches down in a small town) and were asked how they would proceed to assist first responders. Because participants were talking their way through the scenario, they were able to raise questions, discuss ideas and get feedback from others. The purpose of this exercise, beyond understanding how their CERT would respond in a disaster, was to show them that training does not always have to take place in the field or require hours of preparation. It can be as simple as gathering around a table and walking through a scenario.

Attendees split into five teams on the second day of the conference to conduct a series of ‘skills tests’. These included: basic first aid, triage, basic search, communication/incident command and cribbing. Each team was given 30 minutes to complete their skills test before moving on to the next station. After, teams gathered to discuss what they did well and where they see room for improvement. Here again, the goal was to show volunteers ways to stay active with training without having to go through scarce resources to put it together.

The Nebraska Citizen Corps Council and Nebraska Emergency Management Agency recognize all of the hard work these volunteers put in to ensure they are prepared to respond to any disaster or emergency. Our hope is that volunteers were able to return with a host of ideas to share with other CERT members in their community. Training with your team can be as simple as gathering around a table or as complex as setting up a full-scale exercise.

See more pictures on the NEMA Facebook page.

Points of Contact

Tri-County/Dodge
Vacant
United Way of the Midlands Director
1805 Harney St.,
Omaha, NE 68102
402-522-7930

Southeast Region
Wayne Svoboda – Director
Volunteer Partners
215 Centennial Mall S, Ste. 340
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-441-7441
director@volunteerpartners.org

East Central Region
Tim Hofbauer – Director
City of Columbus/Platte County
Emergency Management
2610 14th St., Columbus, NE 68601
402-564-1206
pcem@megavision.com

North Central Region
Lynn Beland – Director
343 G St.,
Burwell, NE 68827
308-214-0790
beland@nctc.net

South Central Region
Jon Rosenlund - Director
City of Grand Island/Hall County
Emergency Management
100 E. First St.,
Grand Island, NE 68803
308-385-5362
jronr@grand-island.com

Panhandle Region
Jessica Davies
Wellness/Volunteer Coordinator
Panhandle Public Health District
808 Box Butte Ave.,
Hemingford, NE 69348
308-487-3600
jdamus@pphd.org
NEMA Moves to New Offices at the Joint Forces Headquarters

Clockwise from top left: moving day in the Bunker; the truck is loaded; staff offices in new facility; NEMA mail room, Nikki Weber’s office, an outside view, the operations room, and NEMA staff on moving day.

*NEMA phone numbers are the same and the NEMA address will remain the same until the Nebraska Military Department mail room moves.*
Nov. 10 Deadline for Hazard Mitigation Applications Approaches

Federal disasters DR-4013-NE and DR-4014-NE have been granted an extension for mitigation applications to be submitted.

**Nov. 10 is the new deadline for hazard mitigation applications.**

“Don’t let this opportunity pass you by,” said Sheila Hascall, state hazard mitigation officer. “If you haven’t had time yet to work on mitigation projects please take this opportunity to potentially get a project funded.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning funds</th>
<th>Initiative Project funds</th>
<th>Regular Project funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,245,589</td>
<td>$889,707</td>
<td>$15,658,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigation Plan Development</td>
<td>Emergency Generator (Critical Facility)</td>
<td>Wind/Tornado Safe Room (Community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigation Plan Update</td>
<td>Reverse 911</td>
<td>Wind/Tornado Safe Room (Residential)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tornado Siren</td>
<td>Property Acquisition (Buyout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Siren Remote</td>
<td>Property Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Property Elevation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flood Diversion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First priority for funding are the jurisdictions affected by the flooding in 2011.

For more information on the priority of projects please see the Administrative plan on the NEMA website.

Contact NEMA hazard mitigation staff for applications or assistance with the development of an application: sheila.hascall@nebraska.gov, miranda.rogers@nebraska.gov

---

Barb Sturner of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Region VII offices gives a presentation for Public Information Officers on Aug. 22 at the Governor's Mansion in Lincoln. The training event was sponsored by the Governor's Communication Office, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency and focused on emergency communication.