



The Beacon

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

March 2013



Cover Photos

Winners of the Severe Weather Poster Contest are from left: Brynn Wortmann, first; Jerome Silva, second; Cleopatra Thomas, third and Izak Spann; fourth.

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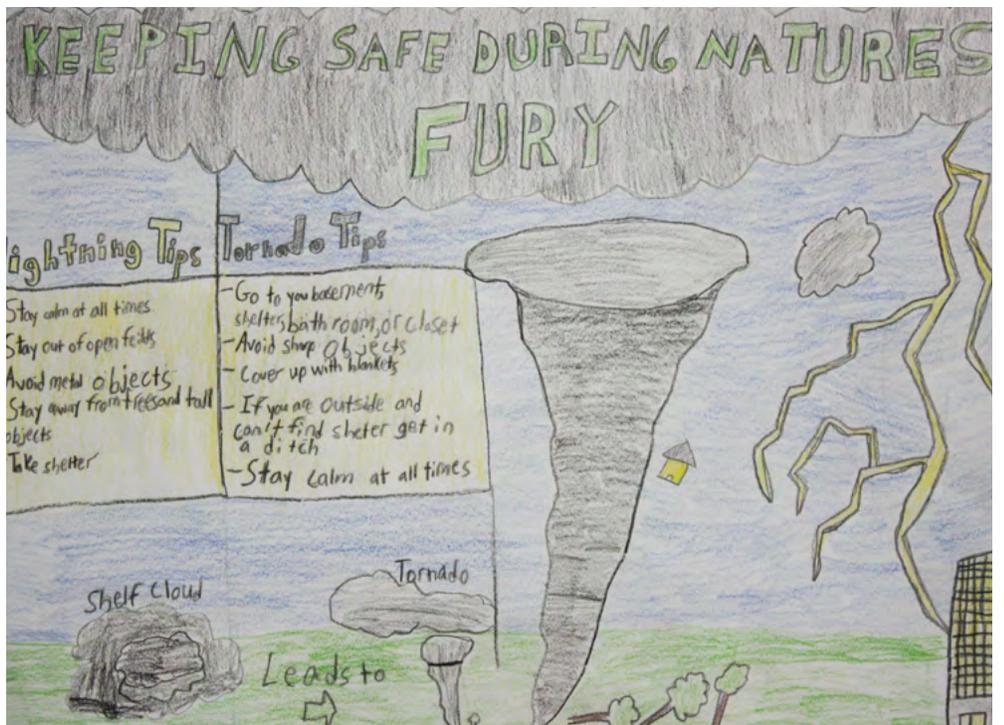
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“Keeping Safe During Nature’s Fury” outlined tornado and safety tips.

Posters were judged on originality, effort and accuracy. The top prize is a \$125 gift card, second is \$100 and third \$75 all sponsored by NAEM. NWS provides a \$50 gift card for fourth place.

Each of the winners will receive a Weather Alert Radio courtesy of **B.J. Fictum**, Saline County Emergency Management director. NEMA had the four winning posters matted and framed for the students.

In addition, honorable mention certificates will be awarded to: **Josephine Anderson**, Crete Elementary School, Saline County; **Tristan Eifert**, Ponca Public School, Dixon County; **Isabella Fonfara-Drewel**, Holy Ghost Catholic School, Douglas County; **James Gallegos**, Willowdale Elementary, Douglas County; **Claire Gideon**, Burwell, Garfield County; **Tayla Goettsche**, St. Paul Public Schools, Howard County; **Elizabeth Gompert**, Gompert Home School, Knox County; **Andrew Heinrichs**, Thayer Central Intermediate School, Thayer County; **Jaiden Johnson**, Bloomfield Elementary School, Knox County; **Kaylee Klover**, Southern Elementary School, Gage County; **Abigail Lewis**, Loup County Public Schools, Loup County; **Camryn Morgan**, St. Paul Elementary School, Howard County; **Grace Olson**, Bassett Elementary School, Rock County; **Madelyn Portwine**, Cross County Elementary School, Polk County; **Samuel Runde**, Catlin Elementary, Douglas County; **Alyssa Salts**, Southern Elementary School, Gage County; **Ian Schildhauer**, Mary Lynch Elementary School, Kimball County.



For more information on severe weather awareness, visit:
[NWS-Omaha/Valley Severe Weather Awareness Week](http://www.nws-omaha.gov/valley-severe-weather-awareness-week)
[NWS-Hastings Severe weather Awareness Week](http://www.nws-hastings.gov/severe-weather-awareness-week)
[Severe Weather Awareness Week Packet](#)

For more information on being prepared, visit:
www.bereadynebraska.com/

Public Assistance Staff Closes Out 8 Disasters

The public assistance staff at Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) recently closed out eight of Nebraska’s federally-declared disasters representing more than \$243 million in public assistance grants from the federal government.

Donny Christensen, unit supervisor, and staff: **Mary Baker, Merle Henkenius and Julie Bergfield**, were recently commended by assistant director **Al Berndt** for their work.

“Our public assistance staff did a wonderful job completing all the administrative actions needed to finalize these public assistance programs,”

said Berndt. “Closing out the disasters means the Federal Emergency Management Agency has determined that Nebraska has completed all the required grant work and that FEMA has completed all applicable administrative actions related to the public assistance program.”

NEMA works with local governments following federally-declared disasters in administration of grants from the federal government to aid in quick recovery from disasters. Depending on the size of a disaster, close out can take anywhere from three to six years. It involves monitoring work

completion, reconciling final costs and closing out subgrants and ultimately closing out the disaster grant. Close out occurs once FEMA has determined that Nebraska and its subgrantees have completed all required work.

In addition to the eight disasters, identified in the box below, NEMA staff is nearly ready to close out disaster 1853 for severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that occurred June 5-June 26, 2009, in Arthur, Box Butte, Chase, Cherry Custer, Deuel, Dixon, Garden, Hamilton, Keya Paha, Lincoln, Morrill, Pawnee, Perkins, Richardson, Rock and Scotts Bluff counties.

Closed Disasters

Declaration	Date Approved	Description, Date of Incident, Counties Affected.
1779	July 18, 2008	Severe storms, straight-line winds and flooding, June 27, 2008 Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders
1770	June 20, 2008	Severe storms, tornadoes and flooding, May 22-June 24, 2008 Adams, Blaine, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Buffalo, Burt, Butler, Cass, Chase, Cherry, Colfax, Cuming, Custer, Dawson, Douglas, Dundy, Fillmore, Frontier, Furnas, Gage, Garfield, Gosper, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Hayes, Holt, Howard, Jefferson, Johnson, Keya Paha, Lancaster, Lincoln, Logan, Loup, McPherson, Merrick, Morrill, Nance, Nemaha, Otoe, Phelps, Platte, Polk, Red Willow, Richardson, Rock, Saline, Sarpy, Saunders, Seward, Sherman, Stanton, Thayer, Thomas, Thurston, Valley, Webster, Wheeler, York
1765	May 30, 2008	Severe storms, tornadoes and flooding April 23-26 2008 Gage, Johnson, Morrill, Nemaha, Pawnee
1739	Jan. 11, 2008	Severe winter storm, Dec. 10, 2007 Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson Thayer
1721	Aug 29, 2007	Severe storms and flooding, June 11-16, 2007 Arthur, Chase, Dundy, Keith, McPherson, Perkins
1714	July 24, 2007	Severe storms and flooding, June 2, 2007 Buffalo, Custer, Dawson, Frontier, Greeley, Hayes, Hitchcock, Howard, Kearney, Lincoln, Logan, Loup, Madison, Valley, Wheeler
1706	June 6, 2007	Severe storms, flooding and tornadoes, May 28-June 7, 2007 Buffalo, Custer, Dawson, Frontier, Greeley, Hayes, Hitchcock, Howard County, Kearney, Lincoln, Logan, Loup, Madison, Valley, Wheeler.
1674	Jan. 7, 2007	Severe winter storms, Dec. 19, 2006 to Jan 7, 2007 Adams, Antelope, Blaine, Boone, Brown, Buffalo, Butler, Cedar, Chase, Cheyenne, Clay, Custer, Dawson, Deuel, Dixon, Dundy, Fillmore, Franklin, Frontier, Furnas, Garden, Garfield, Gosper, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock, Holt, Howard, Kearney, Keith, Keya Paha, Kimball, Knox, Lincoln, Logan, Loup, Madison, Merrick, Morrill, Nance, Nuckolls, Perkins, Phelps, Pierce, Platte, Polk, Red Willow, Rock, Seward, Sherman, Stanton, Valley, Wayne, Webster, Wheeler, York



Todd Manns (right) of the Blue Cell Group lead the Advanced Planning Concepts Course at NEMA on April 12. Participants included, from left, Terry Miller of Saunders County, Mark Meints of Gage County, Kevin Stary of Nebraska State Patrol and Ron Eriksen of the Lincoln-Lancaster Health Department. The two-day course was also offered in Chadron.

Course Prepares Participants for Incidents

Developing a common framework for people to work together effectively is what the Incident Command System (ICS) is all about. Understanding the forms and procedures for operations in ICS is what a recent course held in Lincoln and Chadron was designed to accomplish.

Advanced Planning Concepts: Developing Incident Action Plans is a two-day course designed to immerse participants in the usage and understanding of ICS forms.

The course also instructed participants in the advanced planning process and several other critical advanced planning products and techniques.

“The course covered the planning process and developing the IAP, which is the Incident Action Plan, in more depth,” said Dave Reisen, training and exercise section supervisor at NEMA. “It offers a look at how the planning section operates and develops products needed to successfully create the IAP. Understanding the system is good



Whitney Shipley of Douglas County Emergency Management serves as documentation unit leader during the course exercise Feb. 12 at NEMA.

Advanced Planning Concepts: Developing Incident Action Plans
Continued from page 2



Chuck Chase of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), right, gives job assignments during the exercise portion of the Incident Actions Plans course. Pictured from left are: Leo Larkin of NEMA, Mikki Nienhueser of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Todd Manns, instructor, and Terry Miller of Saunders County.

at the local level because it helps deal with larger events, and it helps us at the state level because it gives us better expertise to help locals.”

NEMA initially sponsored this course for approval by the Department of Homeland Security.



Tom Guilford of the Nebraska Air National Guard and Gary Petersen of Seward and York Counties Emergency Management work in the situation unit during the course exercise.



A strategy session included, from left: Incident Commander Bruce Okamoto of the Nebraska State Patrol, Msgr. Christian Bradley of the Nebraska Air National Guard, Mark Hoskins of Lancaster County Emergency Management, Todd Duncan of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Police Department and Bob Willhelm of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

IPAWS Webinar

A statewide webinar on the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) featured information on the Nebraska specific-guidance for the application process. Basic information on the IPAWS program was presented by Mark Lucerno chief IPAWS engineer from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

A presentation given by the Joint Interoperability Test Commend (JITC) gave an inside look on the testing process for the Paraclete/IPAWS program.

“The information session provided vital information for emergency managers across the state” said **Alisia LaMay**, NEMA program specialist. “It was important for NEMA to put out our guidance in conjunction with our FEMA partners to give the locals the full program view.”



For more information, contact Alisia LaMay, (402) 471-7425 alisia.lamay@nebraska.gov

Severe Weather Awareness Week March 25-29

Gov. Dave Heineman declared March 25-29 Severe Weather Awareness Week, an annual event to remind Nebraskans that severe weather is part of living in Nebraska.

“Understanding risks and how to respond to them can save lives,” said **Earl Imler**, response and recovery section manager at NEMA. “Preparing for an emergency or disaster in advance will help you better weather the storm.”

The Statewide Tornado Drill is on Wednesday, March 27. During Severe Weather Awareness Week the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency urges you to take action now to be prepared for future emergencies.

If you haven’t already assembled a disaster supplies kit, take time before severe weather strikes to gather together the following items:

- One gallon of water, per person per day, for drinking and sanitation;
- Non-perishable food -- enough for three days;
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- NOAA weather radio;
- A flashlight
- Extra batteries;
- First-aid kit;
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Medications

Is Your Twitter Account Prepared for a Disaster?

So you’ve stocked up on all the items you need should a disaster occur in your community, but have you considered preparing for the information you will need immediately during that crisis?

Another way to be prepared is knowing who to follow on social media. Following official sources of information can lead to better situational awareness during emergencies.

For instance, on Twitter you can create an emergency preparedness list that includes people to follow in the event of severe weather in your area.

A #prelist filled with Twitter handles to reference during a crisis might save you some important time if your community is affected by a crisis.

To learn how to create a list and how to add/remove people from a list [visit the Twitter help center](#).

To get started, check out the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VII’s [Nebraska list](#). Follow their list or create your own.

The FEMA list for Nebraska includes media outlets, school districts, the Red Cross, the National Weather Service, local health departments, Nebraska State Agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency and others.

“Making a list prior to an emergency will make it easier to get information right when you need it,” said **Jodie Fawl**, NEMA, public information officer. “Preparing now can save effort later when time is of the essence.”



ICS 300/400

Twenty six participants recently completed Intermediate ICS for Expanding Events and Advanced ICS for Command and General Staff, Complex Incidents and Multi-agency Coordination Systems (ICS 300 and ICS 400) at NEMA. The three-day and two-day curriculum includes instruction in general principles associated with incident command, along with various tabletop exercises. The course provides training on the advanced resource management. The classes were held March 4-8.



Communications

Federal Emergency Management Agency representatives from the Disaster Emergency Communications Division met with Nebraska communicators at NEMA to discuss the State Annex Planning Process March 4. The annex will serve as a reference for FEMA.



NEMA/Nebraska Forest Service Conducts Wildland Fire Training

Leo Larkin of NEMA and Casey McCoy of the Nebraska Forest Service conduct initial and refresher basic firefighter classroom and field training to Nebraska Army National Guard aviation personnel, March 4-6 in Lincoln. The S130/190 Red Card training is a nationally recognized training for wildland fire suppression. Aviation crews that will be responding to state or federal fires are required to have this basic training. Upper left, classroom training; right, fire shelter demonstration by McCoy; and, left, an equipment demonstration by Larkin.



Lavon Heidemann Named Nebraska Lieutenant Governor

Gov. Dave Heineman appointed **Lavon Heidemann** of Elk Creek as the 39th lieutenant governor of Nebraska.

“I am excited for this opportunity to serve the people of Nebraska,” said Lt. Gov. Heidemann. “Public service is something in which I believe deeply. I am looking forward to my time traveling our state, meeting with our citizens, visiting our businesses.”

NEMA supports the lieutenant governor as state homeland security director and acts as state administrative agency for the state’s homeland security program and point of contact for integration of emergency management and homeland security programs with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Lt. Gov. Heidemann is a farmer and livestock producer, and is a volunteer

firefighter.

He was elected to the University of Nebraska Board of Regents in 2012. Prior to his time as a regent, Heidemann served as a state senator for Legislative District 1 from 2005 to 2013. As a member of the Legislature, he served as chairman of the appropriations committee for six years.

Lt. Gov. Heidemann was elected to the Elk Creek School Board in 1996 where he served until he was elected to the Legislature.

Lt. Gov. Heidemann graduated from Elk Creek High School. He has attended the Midwest Council of State Governments’ Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership.

Lt. Gov. Heidemann was born in Pawnee City. He and his wife Robin have three children.



Gov. Dave Heineman appoints Lavon Heidemann lieutenant governor.



Rogers Named NEMA Planning Specialist

A familiar face has filled the planning specialist position in hazard mitigation at NEMA.

Miranda Rogers, who has worked as a temporary employee for NEMA for the past 18 months, was named to the position March 1.

Rogers is married and has twin three-year-old boys — Atticus and

Hunter. She has a bachelor of arts in human relations from Doane.

“I look forward to continuing to work with emergency managers and representatives of local jurisdictions on hazard mitigation projects,” Rogers said. “I’ve seen how these projects can really make a difference saving lives and property in a community.”

Nebraska Severe Weather Awareness Week -- March 25-29

Are you ready ?

BE INFORMED MAKE A PLAN BUILD A KIT GET INVOLVED

Visit ready.gov for more information.

BASIC PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER G-290

Scheduled for May 21-22, 2013

at Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, 2433 N.W. 24th St., Lincoln

Course Contact, Chuck Chase 402-471-7178, chuck.chase@nebraska.gov

REGISTER NOW: Space is limited to 20 students. Register online by May 6 at : [Training and Conferences Link](#)

Course Description

A Public Information Officer (PIO) is responsible for ensuring that affected populations receive accurate and timely information during an emergency. This two-day course is designed to prepare participants to function as a full-or part-time PIO. It offers an opportunity to participate in a panel discussion with news media representatives. In addition, it will provide instruction on:

- Oral and written communication skills
- Understanding of and the ability to work with news media
- Basic tools and techniques needed to perform effectively

This training is a prerequisite and foundation for more advanced FEMA training.

Target Audience:

This course is intended for individuals who have public information responsibilities as their main job or as an auxiliary function or individuals who need a general understanding of the emergency public information function

Highly recommended prerequisites:

IS-100.b: Basic ICS course
IS-29: PIO Awareness

Other recommended courses:

IS-42: Social Media
IS-200.b: ICS for Single Resources
IS-700.a: NIMS Introduction
IS-800.b: NRF Introduction

These free independent study courses may be taken online through the [Emergency Management Institute](#)

No meals or mileage provided. Lodging is available, upon request, for those living more than 60 miles from Lincoln.

Course participants will learn to:

- Communicate emergency public information effectively in writing to the public through the news media.
- Describe actions the PIO can take to prepare for and conduct an effective interview with the news media.
- Demonstrate the ability to answer questions effectively during an on-camera interview.
- Describe how to effectively perform the responsibilities of the PIO at the scene of an incident.
- Describe the JIS/JIC concepts as they apply to the public information function in an expanding incident.

Training Opportunities

Check out NEMA's

[Training Calendar](#)

For Upcoming Classes



If you would like to include a course on the calendar, please send the information to: dave.reisen@nebraska.gov



www.nema.nebraska.gov

(402) 471-7421

Toll Free (877) 297-2368

Fax: (402) 471- 7433

Governor Dave Heineman

State Homeland Security Director

Lt. Governor Lavon Heidemann

NEMA Director

Major 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

The Beacon is published monthly and includes emergency management news and activities from across the state. Please forward story ideas or photos for inclusion to:

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[@NEMAtweets](https://twitter.com/NEMAtweets)

Legislative Update: LB434

A bill before the Nebraska Legislature — LB434 — would allow for information about individuals with functional needs to remain exempt from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The bill will assist emergency management and public agencies in the development of functional needs registries.

“This would allow emergency managers to collect information on people with disabilities or other needs including non-English speaking residents for purposes of planning for assistance

before, during and after a disaster or other emergency” said Cindy News-ham, NEMA administrative assistant. “The Information obtained would not be considered a public record and would prevent personal information on vulnerable populations from being made public.”

The registries would help local emergency managers know where people are and what their needs are during an emergency, News-ham said.

The bill is being consider but was not identified as a priority bill by any senator.



Nebraska Emergency Management Agency is now located at the Joint Force Headquarters in Lincoln. NEMA offices are located in the lower right portion of the picture.



Points of Contact

Tri-County/Dodge

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