



December 2014

The Beacon

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



Future Governor Visits NEMA

On Dec. 15, Governor-elect Pete Ricketts visited the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. Pictured from left are: Lt. Governor-elect Mike Foley, future chief of staff Matt Miltenberger, Ricketts, Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, the adjutant general for the Nebraska National Guard, Assistant Director Bryan Tuma and Brig. Gen. Rick Dahlman, deputy adjutant general. Below: NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma, right, updates Governor-Elect Pete Ricketts and staff.

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The Year in Review 2014



A Message from
Bryan Tuma
NEMA Assistant Director

As 2014 concludes, Nebraska Emergency Management staff can look back on a busy year that includes successful responses to three federally-declared disasters and an additional state-declared disaster. NEMA and its partners—local emergency managers, other state agencies, federal agencies and non-governmental organizations—worked together effectively to respond when disaster struck.

As work was completed on older disasters the NEMA public assistance staff closed out three older disasters and expects to close out an additional three disasters in January 2015. The NEMA public assistance staff works closely with local sub-grantees to make sure work is completed, deadlines are met and payments are made as disaster closeouts approach, but that is just one of the areas where NEMA had great results in 2014, as outlined below.

- NEMA received positive preliminary feedback on re-assessment by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program in November. The agency first received accreditation in 2009, and every five years must reapply. To achieve re-accreditation, NEMA documented compliance with a set of 64 industry-recognized standards and underwent a peer review assessment by EMAP-trained assessors. The Nebraska program received a “yes” for compliance in all categories, and the results were forwarded to the EMAP Program Review Committee, which will make a recommendation to the EMAP Commission for final action.
- Through NEMA, the state of Nebraska joined the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact, which includes: Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming. The compact shares personnel and resources, when needed in the event of a wildfire.
- NEMA planners worked with local emergency management directors to update local emergency operation plans (LEOPs) for 19 of the state’s 93 counties.
- NEMA had positive results from its first hostile action-based (HAB) exercise with the Cooper Nuclear Power Station in 2014. No deficiencies were noted, nor did NEMA have any areas requiring corrective action (AR-CAs).

In 2015, NEMA will continue to strive to be a results-oriented, purpose-driven and focused agency that supports all facets of emergency management in the state of Nebraska. Our goals continue to include: building emergency management capabilities throughout the state, coordinating emergency management information and activities efficiently and effectively, and supporting local and state officials in their efforts to protect, prevent, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies or disasters. I am confident in Nebraska’s emergency management team as we move ahead into 2015.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Tuma', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Workshop Focuses on Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan

A participatory workshop, Dec. 10-11, at Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) allowed state and local representatives an opportunity to effectively implement the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan initiatives.

The Department of Homeland Security sent four representatives to work with Nebraska attendees during the 12-hour workshop, which focused on the specific needs and priorities of the Nebraska plan. The workshop was coordinated by NEMA and the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO).

According to NEMA Information Technology and Communications Unit Supervisor **Sue Krogman**, SCIP is an overall, high-level attempt to challenge interoperable communications across the state.

Working with **Mike Jeffries**, state network manager with the OCIO, the workshop was scheduled using DHS-suggested attendees that included members from the Nebraska State Patrol, National Guard, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Roads, Department of Motor Vehicles, Nebraska Methodist Hospital, local law enforcement, local fire departments, a FirstNet point of contact and one member from each of the state's planning, exercise and training (PET) regions.

Chief Information Officer **Brenda Decker** and **NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma** gave the opening remarks



Department of Homeland Security staff lead the SCIP workshop.

and welcomed everyone to the workshop. Both Decker and Tuma gave full support of this plan from their agencies.

"We had a great turnout and the attendees were prepared to fully participate in the workshop," Krogman said. "Everyone had received a copy of the SCIP and had been asked to read through it and come prepared for discussion. I was really pleased with the amount of interaction."

DHS staff gave a presentation on how other states have drafted and set up their SCIPs, and gave suggestions for information to include in the Nebraska plan.

"This workshop was a great opportunity for key players to review Nebraska's goals and objectives contained in the state plan," Tuma said. "Our SCIP provides the umbrella, the overarching plan, over the state tactical interactive

communication plan (TICP) and the local TICPs. This workshop provided validation that the Nebraska plan is going in the right direction."

Participants reviewed the goals and objectives of the state plan which include:

- Create a full-time, salaried, statewide interoperability coordinator position.
- Create a statewide sustainable funding plan to enhance and implement interoperable emergency communications.
- Develop an outreach and information sharing program to engage and inform interoperability stakeholders and community leaders and to build support for the SCIP and its goals and initiatives.

"The SCIP was revised in April 2013, so we didn't have to create new goals," Krogman said. "We just made sure they were all still pertinent to communications in Nebraska. One outcome of the workshop was that we discovered we really need to update the State TICP and all of the regional TICPs. These updates will enable members of the Regional and State Field Teams to have input into these plans with the most current capabilities of their systems." A TICP workshop will be held sometime this spring before Nebraska's "known" tornado season.

DHS representatives took all the SCIP changes back with them to incorporate, and will be forwarding the updated plan to Krogman and Jeffries.

"After everyone from the workshop has had a chance to review the changes, we will adopt the plan and move forward," Krogman said.



SCIP workshop participants review goals and objectives of the Nebraska plan.

New Madrid CERTEX Exercise Conducted

Col. Marshall Dougherty, who was recently appointed defense coordinating officer (DCO) for Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VII, hosted a functional certification exercise for the region in Kansas City, Kans., Nov. 17-21.

Participants included representatives from FEMA, the states (including **Roger Conrad** from the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency) and the Department of Defense (including **Lt. Col. Eric Hunsberger** from the Nebraska National Guard).

The exercise, facilitated by U.S. Army North, was designed to stress the role and functions of the DCO in a complex catastrophic disaster.

The scenario for this CERTEX was a New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ) earthquake with aftershocks within Missouri and other states. More than 80 people participated.

“The primary purpose of the CERTEX is to ensure that the DCO is trained and ready for disaster response operations,” said Dougherty. “Additionally, the exercise is an excellent opportunity for all of our partners to experience and understand how the Defense



Col. Marshall Dougherty, Army North Defense Coordinating Officer in Kansas City, Mo., addresses members of a joint military and civilian disaster response team during a certification exercise (CERTEX) held in Kansas City, Nov. 17-21, that tested their capabilities to coordinate response efforts for a series of catastrophic earthquakes and aftershocks.

Coordinating Element (DCE) integrates and coordinates with our partners and what our functions are for conducting operations in a catastrophic disaster.”

The exercise was an excellent opportunity for all stakeholders to experience and understand how the DCE integrates and coordinates with its partners.

Each FEMA region has a DCO, an

active duty colonel assigned to Army North, with several other military personnel making up the rest of the Defense Coordinating Element. Whenever a new DCO takes the reins, he must go through a CERTEX within 90 days of assuming his position.

The exercises are designed to stress the role and functions of the DCO/E in a complex disaster.

“What was important about this training was learning how the DCO works in support of FEMA as FEMA supports the state,” said Conrad. “The DCOs are better trained when the interagency team players show up, and that’s what we did. It allowed us to identify all the seams in training and those things that are done well and share the best practices among the key leaders and other regions.”

“Exercises like this are valuable,” Conrad said. “The more you practice, the more proficient you become.”

“If the state was faced with an incident of this size and scope, we are now better prepared by having this regional experience. We learned about available assets and what would be involved in such a response.”



Participants work in the simulation (SIM) cell during the exercise.

Rapidtag and Mobile Express Refresher Course Offered



Workshop participants work on Mobile Express with NEMA's Roger Conrad.

A Rapidtag and Mobile Express user refresher training was conducted at Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, Dec. 9-16, for representatives of the Nebraska emergency management community.

Rapidtag and Mobile Express are electronic systems, developed by Salamander Systems, for creating identity tags for persons and equipment responding to, or being evacuated from, communities effected by disasters or incidents within the state. The systems track people, equipment and activities within their incident assignment.

This training consisted of a review of the Salamander Systems user guides and a practical application of those systems. There were also discussions regarding lessons learned from uses of these systems in disasters from the past year and upcoming developments and events.



NEMA's Training and Exercise Unit Supervisor Dave Reisen discusses upcoming events and developments in the credentialing system.

Home Makeover: Winter Edition

Just as you would add winter care items to your emergency kit to prepare for the upcoming season, your home can also use a winter makeover. Properly preparing your home for cold temperatures can keep you safe and warm, and lower your energy costs. Here are a few tips to follow as the mercury plunges:

- Run ceiling fans in reverse to help circulate warm air that gathers near the ceiling;
- Replace your furnace filter every two months;

- Make sure gutters and downspouts are clean and that water drains at least six feet from your home's foundation;
- Keep fire extinguishers on hand, and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them. House fires pose an additional risk, as more people turn to alternate sources to heat their home; and
- Hire a contractor to check the structural ability of your roof to sustain unusually heavy weight from the accumulation of snow or ice.

Get in the energy saving spirit by conducting a home energy assessment. See how much energy your home consumes and evaluate what measures you can take to make your home more energy efficient. Then, check out "12 Days of Energy Savings" from the U.S. Department of Energy to learn how to stay warm while saving money this winter.

After you prepare your home for winter weather, visit America's PrepareAthon! for ways to prepare your family.



Regional FEMA Meeting Held in Lincoln

Four times a year, Region VII of the Federal Emergency Management Agency holds a Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meeting. On Dec. 9 and 10 it was held in Lincoln, and included tours of NEMA and the Nebraska Task Force One Urban Search and Rescue Team's facility. The meeting included a review of the federal Ebola response, analysis of the upcoming winter weather season and a review of the national preparedness report.



Donny Christensen, public assistance unit supervisor, was one of three NEMA staff members to speak at the annual Nebraska Association of County Officials conference in Omaha, Dec. 10-12. He spoke with county clerks on the disaster process and documentation needs. Bryan Tuma, NEMA assistant director, presented Emergency Management 101 for county commissioners or supervisors. Nikki Weber gave an update to local emergency managers on the preparedness section of NEMA.



Unity Day

Top: Alisia LaMay of NEMA introduces Lunch and Learn speaker Lillie Chambers, founder of Mom's Food Pantry, in Benet, at the Military Departments Unity Day at the Joint Force headquarters on Dec. 3. Chambers, a soldier in the Nebraska National Guard, started the pantry as a way to give to the community and show her children the importance of treating others as they would want to be treated themselves.

Center right: Diversity awareness booths, designed by numerous areas of the Nebraska Military Department, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency and the Nebraska State Patrol, were featured.

Left: Julie Bergfield, Mary Baker and Phyllis McCown of NEMA check out one of the booths.



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State Homeland Security Director

Lt. Governor John Nelson

NEMA Director

Major General Daryl Bohac

Assistant Director

Bryan Tuma

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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Calendar of Events

- Jan. 8-9** Modular Emergency Response Radiological Transportation Training (MERRTT) , Train The Trainer, Lincoln
 - Jan. 10** Compressed MERRTT, Nebraska City
 - Jan. 20-22** Emergency Management 101, Lincoln.
 - April 1-3** NAEM Conference, Grand Island
 - Aug.-Sept.** TERREX seminars, tabletops. Winnebago, Fremont, Tecumseh, Lincoln.
- To register for classes visit [the NEMA Training Calendar page.](#)

NEMA Staff

UPDATE



Top Left: Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, left, presents NEMA's Kathleen Silva with a ceremonial coin for her work preparing for the Emergency Management Assessment re-certification.

Top Right: Cindy Newsham also received the adjutant general's coin for her work on the EMAP assessment.



Bottom Left: Chuck Chase, left, was recognized by Brig. Gen. Richard Dahlman for his contributions to the 2014 Nebraska state employee annual charitable giving campaign.