

NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Strength.

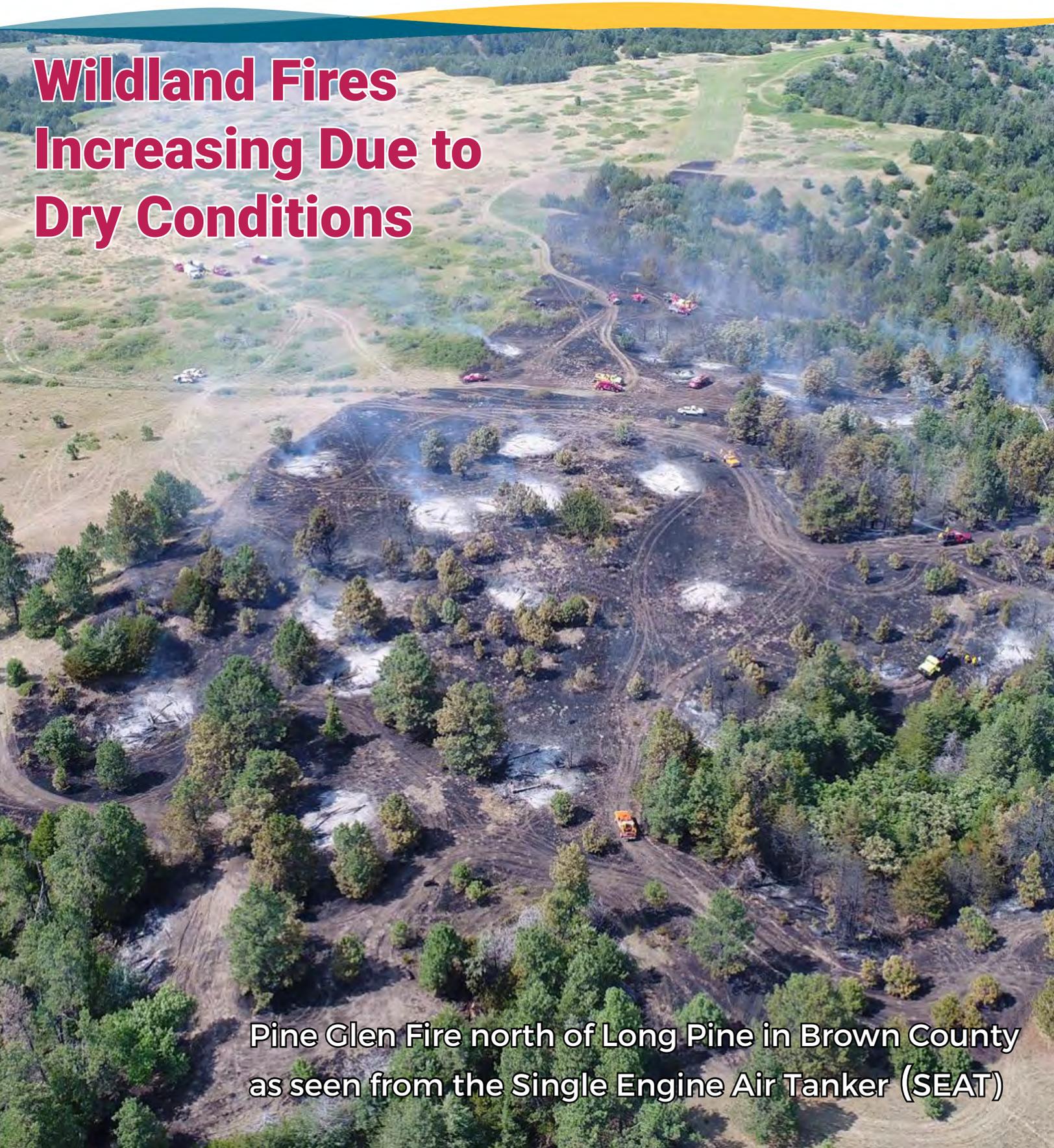
July 2017



The Beacon

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

Wildland Fires Increasing Due to Dry Conditions



Pine Glen Fire north of Long Pine in Brown County
as seen from the Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT)



A Message from NEMA Assistant Director Bryan Tuma

We envision safer, less vulnerable communities in Nebraska made possible through effective collaborative partnerships committed to saving lives and reducing the impact of disasters.

Our mission is to coordinate, support and serve Nebraska through an effective and relevant emergency management agency.

NEMA staff is busy this summer with a newly declared federal disaster, another requested federal disaster, a state-declared disaster for a storm in Genoa, planning for the Aug. 21 Eclipse, and an increase in wildfires, Single Engine Air Tanker flights and Civil Air Patrol observation flights. A variety of scheduled training and exercises continue as declarations, weather and fire events occur.

President Donald Trump declared a major disaster for severe winter storm and straight-line winds during the period of April 29 to May 3, 2017 in Nebraska and ordered federal assistance to supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected. Federal funding is available to state, tribal, and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe winter storm and straight-line winds in the counties of **Blaine, Custer, Furnas, Garfield, Gosper, Holt, Loup, Red Willow, Rock, and Valley**. Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

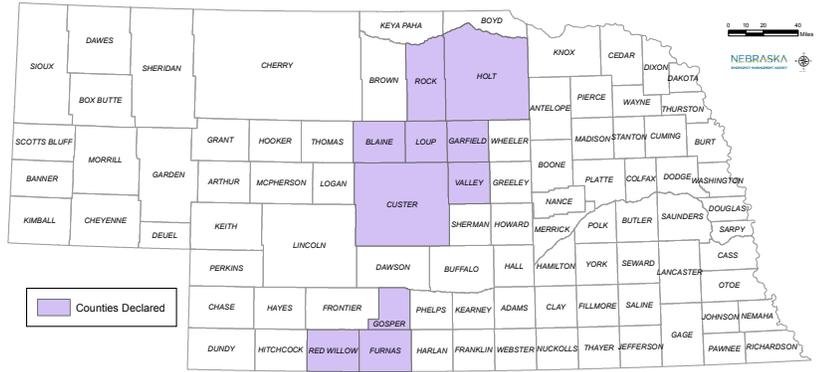
Gov. Pete Ricketts has also requested a disaster for severe storms that occurred June 12-17. NEMA should hear soon whether that request has been approved.

- Teams of local, state and federal disaster specialists conducted public assistance preliminary damage assessments in 17 Nebraska counties impacted by severe storms, flooding, high winds and tornadoes from June 12-17.
- The damage assessments determined the scope and extent of damage to public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, public buildings and critical facilities, such as power lines and water treatment facilities.
- The counties being assessed were: **Banner, Box Butte, Butler, Cass, Cuming, Dodge, Douglas, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Kimball, Morrill, Platte, Polk, Sarpy, Saunders, Sheridan, Sioux, Thurston, Washington and Wayne**. Storm-impacted public power districts were included in the assessments.
- The assessments gave Gov. Ricketts the information he needed to determine that a federal disaster request was warranted.
- FEMA Region VII received Nebraska's request and forwarded it to the White House for a decision by the president.
- The Public Assistance Program provides grants to state and local governments and certain non-profit entities to assist them with the response to, and recovery from, disasters.

The Small Business Administration approved a disaster request that makes disaster loans available to Nebraska businesses and residents affected by the storms, tornadoes and extremely high winds that occurred June 12-16. (See story on page 4.) Cass County qualified for the declaration and that means counties contiguous to Cass County are eligible to receive low-interest loans for residents and small businesses. To date, 28 loan applications have been received by the SBA; \$602,800 in loans have been approved.

NEMA staff has also been busy preparing for the Aug. 21 total eclipse that will cross the state and is expected to bring large numbers of tourists to the areas. Planning meetings with staff from other state agencies have identified the hazards that could occur prior to and on the day of the event.

DR 4321 - DECLARED COUNTIES





Jill Burmester



Patrick Conway



Connor Conzone



Brian Folts



Walter Kirkland



James Rashilla

Staff Fill Positions This Summer at NEMA

Jill Burmester joined NEMA in July as a program specialist for the Nebraska State Watch Center. She will work in to help improve situational awareness for the emergency management community in Nebraska.

Previously, Burmester served 33 years in the Nebraska Air Guard. She retired as a federal technician. She was a noncommissioned officer in charge of command post operations and previously served as a crew chief and inspector in the guard. She is certified as an aircraft and automotive mechanic.

Burmester earned her bachelor's degree from Peru State, in business. She grew up on a dairy farm near Pender and attended Wisner Pilger schools. Burmester is married to Twila Shaw and has five children. She enjoys camping, travelling and is involved with Camp Creek Threshers. She lives on an acreage near Eagle.

Patrick Conway left sunny and humid Florida for sunny and humid Nebraska when he joined NEMA in July as a planning specialist in the Recovery Section. He will work with local applicants for public assistance following disasters in the state.

Conway previously worked as a service coordinator for a security company in Sarasota, Fla.

He has bachelor's degrees in homeland security and public safety administration from the State College of Florida.

He has been married to his wife, Karen, for six years and has four step children ages 31 to 13. Carson, 13, and Bradley, 23, are still had home.

Carson will attend Scott Middle School and Bradley will attend the University of Nebraska and major in engineering. In Florida, Patrick was a Scout Master and plans to continue his involvement in scouting in Nebraska.

Connor Conzone joined NEMA in July as a planning specialist for the Recovery Section. His job is to make sure applicants complete paperwork and projects properly in order to receive the most money possible for their projects.

Conzone came to NEMA from Long Island, N.Y., where he worked at the New York Housing authority, FEMA Corps and Underwriters Laboratory (UL).

He attended SUNY Empire State where he earned a bachelor's degree in emergency management and an associates degree in environmental science. In Long Island, Conzone taught Jiu Jitsu to children and teens. He enjoys video games, bike riding and hiking.

Brian Folts joined NEMA as the unit supervisor for the technical hazards unit. His job will focus on radiological emergency planning, supervising the SERC and helping manage the state calibration lab.

Most recently Folts was a junior ROTC instructor at Omaha Public Schools and prior to that held various positions in the Nebraska Army National Guard.

He has a bachelor's degree in logistics management from Bellevue University. He has been married to his wife, Kathy, for 19 years. Their daughter, Emily, is a senior at Mar-

ian High School in Omaha. Folts is a big husker football fan and he enjoys gardening.

Walter Kirkland is transferring from the Recovery Section to the Preparedness Section as of Aug. 7. He will continue as a planning specialist in the planning unit instead of public assistance. He will be addressing initiatives related to long-term recovery strategies associated with emergencies and disasters. He has been with NEMA since April 2016.

Kirkland earned a bachelor's degree in emergency management with a minor in fire department administration from Western Illinois University in Macomb, Ill. He was a firefighter with the volunteer fire department in Brimfield Ill. for nine years.

His work experience includes an internship with the City of Peoria, Ill. office of emergency management, work as an EMT for BYE ambulance and work as a technician in the emergency room at the Methodist Hospital in Peoria.

James Rashilla, has been named coordinator of the State Emergency Response Commission. Previously, Rashilla served as a planning specialist in the Preparedness Section.

Rashilla first joined NEMA as an intern in the summer of 2015, outfitting the mobile operations center and completing public assistance work. He graduated from the University of Nebraska at Omaha with a bachelor's degree in emergency management.

Rashilla is married to Dana from Atkinson Nebraska. He is also a sergeant in the 754th Chemical Company in the Nebraska Army National Guard.

SBA Offers Disaster Assistance to Nebraska Businesses, Residents Affected by June 12-16 Severe Weather



SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Low-interest federal disaster loans are available to Nebraska businesses and residents affected by the storms, tornadoes and extremely high winds that occurred June 12-16, 2017. U.S. Small Business Administration's Administrator **Linda McMahon** announced.

SBA acted under its own authority to declare a disaster in response to a request SBA received from **Gov. Pete Ricketts** on June 29.

The disaster declaration makes SBA assistance available in **Cass, Lancaster, Otoe, Sarpy and Saunders** counties in Nebraska; and **Fremont and Mills counties in Iowa**.

"SBA is strongly committed to providing Nebraska with the most effective and customer-focused response possible, and we will be there to provide access to federal disaster loans to help finance recovery for businesses and residents affected by the disaster," said McMahon. "Getting our businesses and communities up and running after a disaster is our highest priority at SBA."

"Low-interest federal disaster loans are available to businesses of all sizes, most private nonprofit

organizations, homeowners and renters whose property was damaged or destroyed by this disaster," said SBA's Nebraska District Director **Leon Milobar**.

Businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets.

SBA can also lend additional funds to businesses and homeowners to help with the cost of improvements to protect, prevent or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future.

For small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations of any size, SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. Economic injury assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any property damage.

Disaster loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and rent-

ers are eligible for up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property.

Interest rates can be as low as 3.215 percent for businesses, 2.5 percent for private nonprofit organizations and 1.938 percent for homeowners and renters with terms up to 30 years. Loan amounts and terms are set by SBA and are based on each applicant's financial condition.

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

They may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for information on SBA disaster assistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The filing deadline to return applications for property damage is Sept. 1, 2017.

The deadline to return economic injury applications is April 3, 2018.



"Just Keep Learning: Schools and Education During Disasters" was the topic of a panel discussion that included NEMA's **Mary Baker**, above right, at the 42nd Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop in Broomfield, Colo., from July 9-12. Also serving on the panel were, from left, Rebekah Paci-Green, moderator, of Western Washington University, Magdalena Denham of Sam Houston State University, Veronica Cedillos of the Applied Technology Council, Alex Sun of the FEMA Youth Preparedness Council and Jennifer Smith of Save the Children. The Natural Hazards Center hosts the Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop.



Mary Baker, right, Nebraska state hazard mitigation officer, speaks on school safe rooms built in Nebraska at the Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop in Broomfield, Colo. This panel focused on school safety and security from the engineering and practitioner point of view, as well as addressing the student's perspective. More than 400 federal, state and local emergency officials, representatives of nonprofit and humanitarian organizations, hazards researchers, disaster consultants, and others dedicated to alleviating the impacts of disasters attended the workshop.

State Prepares for Aug. 21 Eclipse

State Agencies Coordinate Response to Expected Influx of Tourists

Lincoln, NEB. —A total solar eclipse, visible across Nebraska on Aug. 21, is predicted to bring as many as half a million visitors to the state to see the rare occurrence.

Gov. Pete Ricketts has asked Nebraska Emergency Management Agency to coordinate with other state agencies on plans to support local communities prior to and during the event in order to make sure Nebraskans and tourists alike have a safe and enjoyable experience.

“We are excited to welcome visitors from around the globe to beautiful Nebraska to witness a rare phenomenon as it crosses our great state,” Gov. Ricketts said.

NEMA has met with staff from other state agencies in preparation and to develop a coordinated plan.

“In emergency management we prepare for the worst and hope for the best,” said NEMA Operations Manager Earl Imler. “By considering issues that could arise with the influx of the upwards to 450,000 visitors to the state, we have developed plans for helping local jurisdictions in the path of totality should any of those incidents occur.”

The state is using the same system used to prepare for weather disasters or wildfires — the Incident Command System — to respond to the event. The State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) at NEMA will be staffed by representatives from many state agencies, Aug. 21, to provide any necessary support to local communities.

“Local emergency managers will get support or assistance from the SEOC if a situation arises in their area of the state,” Imler said. “In addition, the state’s Joint Information Center will also be open in the week prior to the event and on the day of the eclipse to send out important information updates to the public.”

For information and links to other state agency and federal websites with eclipse information visit: <https://nema.nebraska.gov/operations/2017-solar-eclipse>.

Eclipse Viewing Safety Tips:

- Don’t stop along the interstate or park on the shoulder during the event.
- Exit the highway to a safe location to view and/or photograph the eclipse.

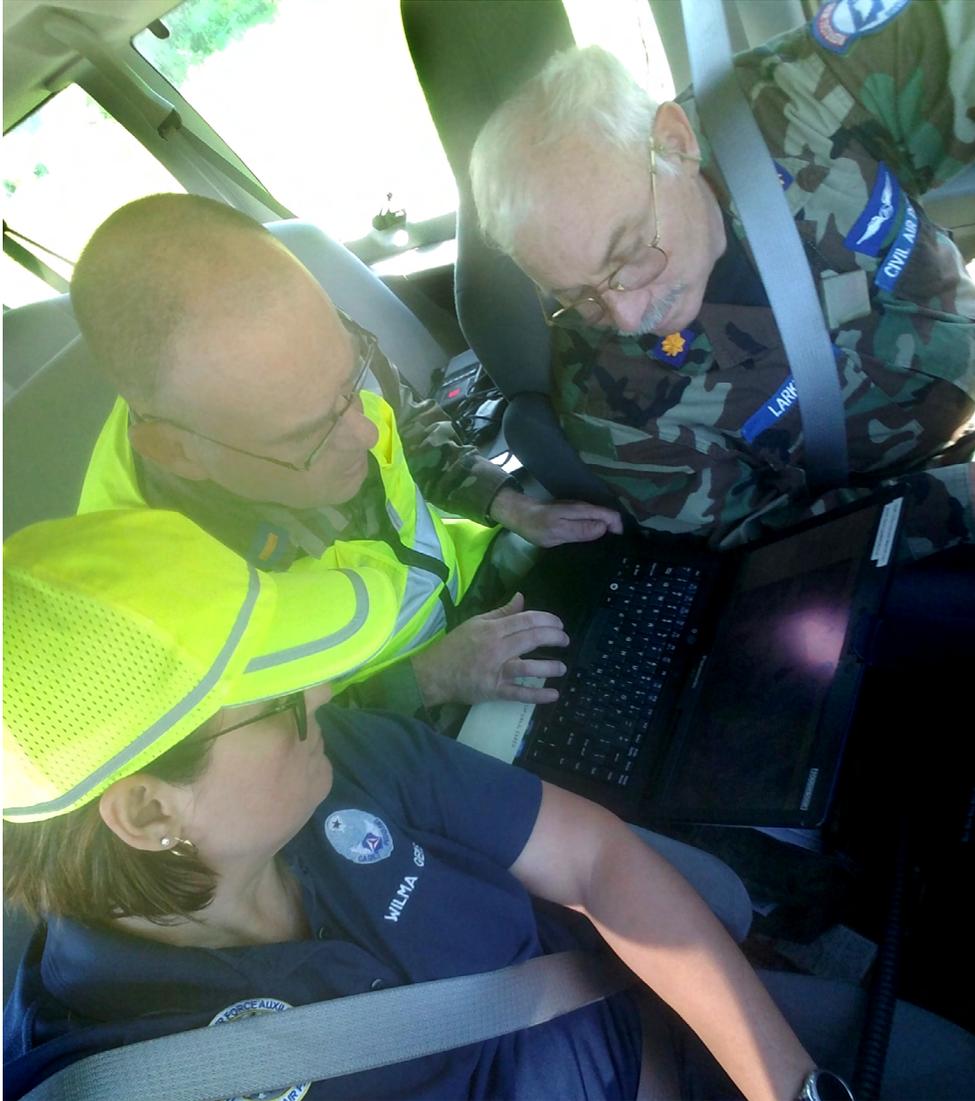
- Don’t take photographs while driving.
- Don’t try to wear opaque eclipse glasses while operating a vehicle.
- Turn your headlights on — do not rely on your automatic headlights when the eclipse blocks out the sun.
- Watch out for pedestrians along smaller roads. People may be randomly parking and walking alongside the roadside in the hours around the eclipse to get the best view.
- Prepare for extra congestion, especially on the interstates in the eclipse’s path, on the day before, day of, and day after the eclipse.
- Check traffic conditions on www.511.nebraska.gov or through the Nebraska 511 app available for download for Android and Apple devices.
- For more information on travel in Nebraska and optimal viewing locations, please visit <http://neclipse17.com/> or <http://outdoornebraska.gov/eclipse/>.
- You can find travel safety tips at <http://dot.nebraska.gov/news-media/eclipse/>.
- For information on the solar eclipse, its path and how to view it with proper safety glasses or other techniques, visit the NASA website at <http://eclipse2017.nasa.gov>.

It’s Wildfire Season So Remember to take the Following Precautions:

- Choose campsites carefully and pay special attention to campfires at all times;
- Ensure that all smoking materials are safely extinguished and disposed of properly; and
- Never park or drive your vehicles into areas of tall grass.



CAP Training Supports Nebraska Firewatch Missions



From left, CAP volunteers Wilma Gerena, Tom Guilford and Leo Larkin plan a training mission for CAP pilots.

Ever wonder what it takes to train a mission pilot for a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) firewatch mission?

It takes members like **Wilma Gerena**, administrative assistant with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, COOP Fish and Wildlife Unit, **Tom Guilford**, Air National Guard emergency manager, 155th ARW/CES, and **Leo Larkin**, program specialist with NEMA, to set up visual targets and emergency locator transmitter (ELT) training transmitters to train volunteer CAP pilots for what is known as a Form 91 flight.

All pilots in CAP are required to complete annual training in order to fly and maintain currency for a CAP mission.

CAP supports the public with flights including: aerial imagery, search, wild-fire detection and blood transportation.

"The Form 91 flight is an annual event paid for either by the U.S. Air Force, when funds are available, or out of a member's own pocket," Larkin said. "The training consists of both visual targeting with many different materials such as parachute gores or VS17 panel markers and practice ELT training transmitters that simulate a downed aircraft ELT."

This training allows both air and ground crews to conduct practice search missions. This basic training also includes advanced technology such as satellites and cell phone forensics.



Pilots must identify visual targets during annual training.



An ELT training transmitter simulates a downed aircraft beacon.



Volunteers Leo Larkin and Tom Guilford look for a target area prior to annual training.

ICYMI

SOCIAL MEDIA

In case you missed it

Not sure who to follow on Twitter? [Check out the lists NEMA curates or follows.](#)

#Preparefortheheat

Nebraska DHHS @NEDHHS
5 days ago

It's another hot one today. Use these tips to stay safe in the heat. <http://ht.ly/PHIX30dOq56>



GIHallEMA Retweeted

Citizen Corps @Citizen_Corps · Jul 24

Everyone needs an emergency plan, including those with access & functional needs. Tailor your plan today: go.usa.gov/xNHQj

#ready



#LightningSafety



Region 51 EMA @lincoemgt · Jul 25

Whether playing or watching sports, When Thunder Roars Go Indoors! See a Flash, Dash Inside! <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/>



Lightning means Game Over

If you're at a sporting event, the same rule applies:

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

weather.gov/lightning

#NEclipse17

NebraskaTourism @NebraskaTourism · Jul 19

Enjoy the eclipse, but make sure to stay safe! Check out these eclipse safety tips:

bit.ly/2tnHLfi #VisitNebraska <https://t.co/b1B9zbnDdU>



NSP Troop A @NSP_TroopA
1 day ago

#buckleup

These kids, all agree Seatbelts save lives! #buckleup





Molly Bargmann, unit supervisor, and John Cook, planning specialist, of the NEMA Recovery Section, conduct an applicant briefing in Cambridge, July 11. They provided information on the newly declared disaster Federal Disaster 4321.

Nebraskans Honored at LEPC Conference in Kansas City July 22



John Grimes, Nebraska SERC Chairman, (left) presents the Nebraska Small Population Local Emergency Planning Committee Award to Region 44 at the Region 7 Conference the weekend of July 22-23. Thomas Smith, Region 44 Emergency Management Coordinator accepted the award.

John Grimes, left, Nebraska State Emergency Response Commission chairman, presents the Nebraska Industry Local Emergency Planning Committee Award to Amber Hoban of Fortigen in Geneva. Also pictured is Jim Dunker, Fillmore County Emergency Management director.



Gen. Dayrl Bohac recognized NEMA Preparedness Manager **Nikki Weber** for her work on the budget. He presented her with an adjutant general's coin and thanked her for her work on the technical hazards unit budget.

NEMA Staff/Local Emergency Managers Support National Guard Full-Scale Exercise, Operation Drake, in August



From left, Lt. Col. Spencer Hansen and Col. Annmarie Anthony discuss Operation Drake, a full-scale exercise with Nebraska Emergency Management Agency exercise and training officers Sean Runge, Roger Conrad, and Larry Fichtner. The exercise is scheduled for Aug. 21-27. NEMA operations staff have supported the planning effort. The ETOs and local emergency management staff will use the Salamander tracking system during the week-long training to keep track of participants and resources.



Sean Runge, NEMA ETO, uses the Salamander system to register soldiers during a rehearsal of concepts (ROC) drill on July 23. The drill was held in preparation for Operation Drake, a full-scale exercise to test the Nebraska CERFP and the Missouri HRF schedule for Aug 21-27.



NEMA ETO Roger Conrad addresses National Guard soldiers at a training session as exercise coordinator Maj. Martin Neal looks on.

Prepare Your Home for Wildfire

Wildfires can occur anywhere, any time of the year.

According to the [National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities Program](#), more than \$1.9 billion was spent on wildfire suppression in 2016.

However, [you can prepare yourself, your business, and where you live in the event you may experience a wildfire emergency](#). Get started by:

- Watching the Federal Emergency Management Agency's wildfire animation, [When the Fire Starts](#).
- Reviewing your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy to ensure you have the adequate coverage for your property and

personal belongings.

- Removing flammable items, such as firewood piles and portable propane tanks, within 30 feet of all structures and discard dry or dead vegetation from up to 100 feet around your home.
- Learning and practicing evacuation routes from your home or business to an area that is not affected by the wildfire. The best action to protect yourself and your family is to evacuate early and avoid being trapped.

Wildfires can occur any time of the year, but are especially prevalent during the dry season. Make sure you prepare ahead of time by checking out [Prepareathon's How to Prepare for a Wildfire Guide](#).

Preparedness for People with Disabilities

People with disabilities and others with access and functional needs are encouraged to evaluate their necessities in the event of an emergency and create an emergency plan unique to them.

- Collect information – [Create a paper copy of contact information](#).

- Share emergency plans with people in your support networks.
- Practice Your Plan with your support network, just as you would with a fire drill.

For more information on how to make an emergency plan, visit Ready's [individuals with disabilities page](#).

Parent Preparedness

The National Preparedness and Ready Campaign have highlighted ways for parents to be prepared to prepare their family for disasters:

- [Create a family emergency communication plan](#) because your family may not be together when disaster strikes. It is important to plan how you will connect with each other.
- Prepare [infants and young children](#) for emergencies. Learn the [emergency plans for their daycare or school](#).
- Get college-age kids [campus ready](#). Gather information on the emergency procedures for their school or dorm.
- [Practice your emergency response plan](#) by conducting drills that will help your family's response time when seconds count.

Disasters can be stressful for kids. Make emergency planning fun for children. Visit www.ready.gov/kids for games, quizzes and other resources to help young children and teens understand the importance of emergency preparedness.



(402) 471-7421

Toll Free: (877) 297-2368

Fax: (402) 471-7433

Governor Pete Ricketts

State Homeland Security Director

Lt. Governor Mike Foley

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 includes emergency management news and activities from across the state. Please forward story ideas or photos for inclusion to: Jodie Fawl, Public Information Officer, 2433 N.W. 24th St., Lincoln NE 68524; 402-471-7428, jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov.

www.nema.nebraska.gov

