



SECURE & PREPARED

March 25, 2011

Volume 7, Issue 6

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Upcoming Training

Storm Spotter Training
April 5, 2011

G775 EOC Management and Operations
April 12, 2011

CAPTAP/ACAMS
May 9, 2011

CERT Train the Trainer
May 18, 2011

To register for these courses and more, visit <http://homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/training/>.

Local Officials Guide Available Online

Local officials have an important role to play in disasters. Learn more on page 2.

Iowa Prepares for Potential Flooding

Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division Administrator J. Derek Hill joined Governor Terry E. Branstad and Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds March 21 to provide a briefing on preparations for potential flooding in Iowa.

“As Iowans know, with spring comes the risk of flooding,” said Branstad. “Our administration is bringing together local, state and federal partners to ask questions and discuss planning and response actions that could be put into place to prepare for potential flooding.”

The most recent update from the National Weather Service indicates the most significant threat of flooding is on the Big Sioux and Mississippi river basins.

Based on current predictions, HSEMD has been compiling an inventory of flood-fighting resources, discussing local flood concerns with



HSEMD Administrator Derek Hill and Governor Terry Branstad discuss flood preparations during the Governor's press briefing on March 21.

the Army Corps of Engineers, developing staffing patterns for a possible response operation and reviewing policies for resource deployment.

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Severe Weather Awareness Week is April 4-8

The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD), together with the National Weather Service (NWS), is again recognizing the first week in April as Severe Weather Awareness Week. The goal is to provide Iowans a better understanding about the state's spring weather hazards. Brochures and fact sheets about Iowa's various hazards are available for download on both HSEMD's BeReadyIowa website and

the Des Moines NWS website, www.weather.gov/desmoines.

The public and news media can also find daily PSAs, and podcasts featuring tips from HSEMD and NWS officials, available for download at www.BeReadyIowa.org, beginning March 28.

“Flooding has been emphasized here in Iowa quite a bit during the last month,” said HSEMD Administrator

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Severe Weather Awareness Week

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J. Derek Hill. “However, Iowans need to remember there are other hazards they need to prepare for this time of year.”

The highlight of Severe Weather Awareness Week is the annual tornado drill scheduled for Wednesday, April 6 at approximately 10 a.m. Schools, businesses, state and local governments, the military, and individuals are strongly encouraged to participate in the drill. Additional information about the tornado drill can be found on local NWS websites.

For each day during Severe Weather Awareness Week, a different subject will be highlighted:

- **Monday**-Flash Floods
- **Tuesday**-Weather Warnings
- **Wednesday**-Tornadoes
- **Thursday**-Severe Thunderstorms
- **Friday**- Family Preparedness

Additional information about severe weather and family safety can be found at www.BeReadyIowa.org.

Visit HSEMD’s Facebook page and Twitter feed for daily updates during Severe Weather Awareness Week. Ω

FCC Waiver Permits Use of “Live” Codes for Tornado Drill

The National Weather Service has received a waiver from the Federal Communications Commission to use “live” Emergency Alert System (EAS) codes during the statewide tornado drill on April 6, as part of Severe Weather Awareness Week.

Jeff Johnson, warning coordination meteorologist with the Des Moines National Weather Service, said use of the live EAS codes will enable them to test the warning

system via NOAA weather radios from start to finish during the tornado drill. Broadcasters using the EAS will be able to test their equipment to make sure tornado warnings go out over the airwaves like they should. Johnson said without the ability to use the EAS codes, they would have to use codes to simulate the warning. By using the live codes, he explained, NOAA weather radios will go off during the drill, making it easier for people to participate. Ω

Local Officials Play Vital Role in Disaster Response

As we all know, Iowa is susceptible to many types of disasters that can have devastating effects on communities and citizens. The State of Iowa has a system in place to assist officials in ensuring their communities are prepared to respond.

The publication, “Introduction to Homeland Security and Emergency

Management for Local Officials,” was developed to provide officials with information on their role. The publication is available at www.iowahomelandsecurity.org in the Resource Room/Publications.

Contact your county’s emergency management coordinator for more information. Ω

Flood Response Preparations

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“Homeland Security and Emergency Management is in close communication with response partners, gathering and sharing information and planning for potential flooding threats,” said Hill. “Our job is to ensure Iowa and Iowans are prepared, ready to respond, and have the ability to recover from flooding and all hazards.”

HSEMD has been working closely with counties along the Big Sioux and Mississippi rivers over the past few weeks and will continue to do so as needed.

During a February briefing at the State Emergency Operations Center in Johnston, HSEMD gathered agencies that are instrumental in flood response to receive a flood outlook briefing from the National Weather Service. The Governor’s Office, local county emergency management, the Iowa Departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Public Health, Human Services, Inspections and Appeals and Public Safety, the Iowa National Guard and the Army Corps of Engineers participated in the briefing.

HSEMD will continue to work closely with partners at all levels to remain aware of and monitor ongoing forecast information.

During the March 21 briefing, Hill stressed the importance of Iowans making sure their families are prepared. To learn more about individual and family preparedness, visit www.BeReadyIowa.org. Ω

HSEMD and Warren County Emergency Manager Assist Local Boy Scouts with Earning Merit Badges

On March 7, 2011, the New Virginia, Iowa, Lions Hall was full of enthusiastic and inquisitive Boy Scouts working to earn their communication and preparedness merit badges.

To assist the Boy Scouts, HSEMD's Vicki Morris, and Mahala Cox, Warren County Emergency Manager, shared information on how to communicate in terrorism and emergency situations.

Morris and Cox shared information with the Scouts and answered questions on a variety of topics. In regards to terrorism, the Scouts were briefed on: the meaning of prevent, protect, deter and detect; methods HSEMD uses to communicate with the private sector; the "If you See Something, Say

Something" campaign that emphasizes the importance of reporting suspicious activity to local law enforcement and authorities; and HSEMD's preparedness website, www.bereadyiowa.org.

Communications in emergency situations focused on 9-1-1. Information shared with the Scouts included to never hang up, know when to call, why prank calls are a bad idea and that 9-1-1 does not accept text messages.

Morris and Cox advised the Boy Scouts to remember four things



Warren County Emergency Manager Mahala Cox talks with Boy Scouts in New Virginia.

during an emergency situation-- stay strong, stay calm, stay clear and be careful. Ω

Governor Branstad Designates April 9-1-1 Education Month

Governor Terry E. Branstad has designated April as 9-1-1 Education Month in Iowa.

The Iowa E-911 Communications Council and the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division are hoping the month-long campaign will help Iowans of all ages recognize the importance of 9-1-1 and the role they play in ensuring effective and efficient emergency response in times of crisis. Both the U.S. Congress and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) have also recognized April as National 9-1-1 Education Month, and are encouraging the media, the 9-1-1 community, the wireless industry,

and public information providers to engage in 9-1-1 awareness and education activities this month.

"911 is an ever-expanding program. The technology is changing all the time," said E-9-1-1 Communications Council Chair Steven Ray of the Iowa Department of Public Safety.

As consumers utilize new communications technologies and devices, 9-1-1 education takes on an increased importance for everyone, but especially for children, teens and parents.

NENA has made a number of public safety educational resources

available for the media, 9-1-1 professionals, educators, and citizens via their website at www.nena.org/education/911-education-month, including an electronic brochure entitled Making 9-1-1 Work for YOU! The brochure is designed to provide essential information about the 9-1-1 system and emergency response.

Iowa HSEMD will have information available on both its websites, www.iowahomelandsecurity.org and www.BeReadyIowa.org, throughout the month of April, including a series of weekly blogs and podcasts. You can also link to HSEMD's Facebook page and Twitter feed for regular updates during April. Ω

Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division

A division of the Iowa Department of Public Defense

Administrator
J. Derek Hill

7105 N.W. 70th Avenue
Camp Dodge, Bldg. W-4
Johnston, IA 50131

Phone: 515.725.3231

Fax: 515.725.3260

Web site:

www.iowahomelandsecurity.org

Secure & Prepared is published by the Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division for those involved in the homeland security system in the state of Iowa.

For more information contact Stefanie Bond, 515.725.3271 or stefanie.bond@iowa.gov.

News Team

Stefanie Bond
Laura Carlson
Tara Dowd
Beth Lewis
Amy Meston
Lucinda Robertson
Lynda Wessel

HSEMD Mission

Lead, coordinate, and support homeland security and emergency management functions in order to establish sustainable communities and ensure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

We're on the Web!

www.iowahomelandsecurity.org

Region 5 Holds PIO Workshop

The sixth and final in a series of regional public information officer (PIO) workshops took place March 15-16 in Region 5.

The workshop was held at the ISU Extension Office in Oskaloosa and was hosted by Mahaska County Emergency Manager Jamey Robinson.

"It was one of the best trainings I have ever attended," said Robinson. "It really made me think about what I need to have for the EOC to support the PIO position."

Local and state participants came together for the training and exercise activities funded by the 2008 Homeland Security Grant Program. The goal of the workshops was to develop and coordinate emergency manage-

ment and partner PIOs at all levels of government. Topics included the Joint Information System, joint information centers, information management and utilizing social media. The sessions helped to highlight the need for PIOs at every level to communicate with colleagues.

"I think the individuals coming into the workshop thought the PIO's role was just to let the media know what was going on, but by the end of it realized with the proper utilization of the PIO position you're not just releasing information, you're saving lives," Robinson said.

Chris Kramer and Frank Cowan, experts in emergency public information and the Joint Information System, conducted the training. Ω

March 20-26 is National Poison Prevention Week

Tomorrow is the last day of National Poison Prevention Week.

The Poison Prevention Week Council has several links on their website, www.poisonprevention.org, where you can obtain resources and learn about National Poison Prevention Week. Additionally, the American Association of Poison Control Centers' website, www.aapcc.org, has poison prevention information and tips; poison statistics; frequently asked questions; links to YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook; and a lookup tool where you can find your local poison control center. You can also find poison prevention materials and learn how to "poison proof" your home.

Some items in and around your home that could hurt you if used in the wrong way, in the wrong amount, or by the wrong person are:

- Oven cleaner, drain cleaner or toilet bowl cleaner
- Alcoholic beverages
- Furniture polish
- Medicines
- Hair relaxer or hair color

The Iowa Statewide Poison Control Center is located at 401 Douglas Street, Suite 402 in Sioux City. You can reach them at 1-800-222-1222, or www.iowapoisson.org. You can call your poison control center for an emergency or just to ask questions. **When in doubt, check it out.** Ω