



READY RACINE



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Building regional resilience

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Over the past several years, there has been a lot of talk about regional cooperation and in Southeastern Wisconsin we have done more than talked, we have actually sat down and worked on joint projects including a regional evacuation plan which earned us a Public Policy Forum's "Salute to Local Government - Regional Cooperation" award in 2007.

At the 2008 Governor's Conference on Emergency Management, Eric Holdeman, former King County (Washington) Emergency Management Director, challenged emergency managers to think regionally as they go about their daily business. Specifically, Holdeman states that emergency management must be: "joint, unified, national & international, coordinated, collaborative, inter-operable, synchronized, with standards, the media is a partner. The underlying framework for all of this is the need for it to be done on a regional basis and it cannot be accomplished internal to your agency, jurisdiction or organization."

How one defines a region is left up to interpretation and is actually very fluid. A "region" could be multi-state, multi-county or just county-wide. Holdeman suggested that the "region" should be made up of people who interact on a daily basis with some form of commonality.

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Be prepared for spring floods

Flooding has been a major concern this spring. Snow, rain and saturated soil are contributing to both slowly developing floods and flash flooding. Simply stated, there is no place for the water to drain, resulting in flooded fields, roads and in some cases homes.

Last summer, sustained rains in August resulted in flooding throughout Racine County and many affected families did not have flood insurance. Fortunately, we received a presidential disaster declaration and individual assistance was made available to those affected.

However, there is no guarantee that this type of assistance will be made available the next time and presidential disaster declarations are actually few and far between. For example, in the past eighteen years, Racine County has only received four declarations.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, steps homeowners should take prior to a flood event include:

- Elevating the furnace, water heater, and electric panel in your home
- Consider installing "check valves" to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.
- Make sure your sump pump is in working order and consider having a back-up battery system and an extra motor.
- If feasible, construct barriers to stop floodwater from entering the building and seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds.
- Talk to your insurance provider about your policy and consider if you need additional coverage. Typically property insurance does not cover flood damage.

After a flood, it is important that those affected report that damage to local authorities. In addition, you should:

- Avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may

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Hazards, he stated, are a great uniter of people.

Holdeman also said that resilience could be like a rigid steel rod or it could be flexible like a spring-which "springs" back to its original shape. The mistake we make is thinking that resilience equates to rigidity when in fact, we need to be strong enough to withstand a disaster but flexible enough to bounce back.

As I listened, I thought of these massive skyscrapers which tower above cities. Although these grand buildings are built with integrity they still have a slight sway to them. The bottom line is that no community can be completely disaster resistant, but we can be flexible enough to withstand that blow and then bounce back.

While Eric offered a very "unique" formula for regional resilience (www.ericholdeman.com/docs/Formulas.pdf); the basic concepts were rather simple. Regional cooperation begins with relationships built on trust.

This results in information sharing and collaboration which ultimately leads to joint planning and meetings (sometimes lots of meetings). In order to become resilient, one needs to add mitigation strategies and personal and employee preparedness. Hindrances to the process include allowing "me" to interfere with "we".

Finally, Holdeman challenged everyone to expand their worldview and to include community networks such as non-profits, churches and even the media in this formula for regional resilience. ❖



Citizen Corps Update

Linda Botts



Area volunteers trained in CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) were on standby to assist on Monday, January 7th after the tornadoes rolled through Kenosha County. Although CERT was not activated that evening, many CERT volunteers were able to assist neighbors in their community.

Joel, trained in 2005, and his brother Adam, trained in 2007, handed out small flashlights to neighborhood kids who were frightened by the power outage following the storm in their neighborhood. Joel reported that many people that he saw were shocked and dazed by the tornado and its damage and, as a result, were not paying attention to the many new safety hazards presented by the debris around them.

Maureen, trained in 2007, worked with her neighbors to bring in all of their animals and prepare them for the storm. They also put ID tags on their horse's halters in case they became loose. Maureen reported that although her neighbors have not taken the CERT training, they have learned something about the class through the skills and knowledge that Maureen and her husband have passed on.

Many other CERTs donated money, clean up items or volunteer time in the days following the disaster.

Southeast Wisconsin Citizen Corps would like to thank all CERTs who took the time to get trained and be prepared, and especially those who were able to help out in their neighborhoods in the days following the tornadoes.

For more information on the Southeast WI Citizen Corps program, contact me at SEWICC@goRacine.org.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Apr 15	Tornado Awareness & Spotter Seminar
Apr 21-25	Tornado & Severe Weather Awareness Week
Apr 24	Tornado Drill Day
Apr 29-May 1	Incident Management/Unified Command for Terrorism and CBRNE Incidents (MGT-313)
May 7	WIFSS/DHS AWR153 Principles of Detection & Diagnosis
May 8	WIFSS/DHS AWR154 NIMS, Team Building & Risk Communication
May 14	NOAA Weather Radio All-Hazards Day
Jun 1-7	Rip Current Awareness Week
Jun 11	Basic PIO Course (Full)
Jun 12	Advanced PIO Course (Full)
Jun 12	Heat Awareness Day
Jun 21-22	Amateur Radio Recognition Days
Jun 22-28	Lightning Safety Awareness Week
Nov 2	Standard Time begins
Nov 10-14	Winter Awareness Week
Dec 5-6	Skywarn Recognition Day



also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Stay away from downed power lines, and report them to the power company.
- Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters. Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.
- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals.❖



NEWS BRIEFS

The **Ready Racine Special Tornado Edition** was included in the Wisconsin School Public Relations Association Crisis Communication Tool Kit which was distributed at their conference this past February.

The **Sturtevant Police Department** received a FEMA Commercial Equipment Direct Assistance Program (CEDAP) Grant for the purchase of a TacSight SE35 Advanced Thermal Imager.

David Maack, Racine County Emergency Management Coordinator, served on the planning committee for WEM's annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management.

Dave Prott was appointed as the Racine County Public Works Director and Highway Superintendent.

Governor Jim Doyle has requested that **Kenosha, Lafayette, Racine** and **Waukesha** be added to the Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA-3285-EM-WI due to extraordinary costs incurred in response to the Feb. 5-6 snow storm.

Did you know....

- Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles.
- Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUV's) and pick-ups.

Resources

Climate, Water and Weather Links

Aviation Weather: www.aviationweather.gov
Brochures/Booklets/Posters: www.weather.gov/os/brochures.shtml
Education/Outreach: www.weather.gov/os/edures.shtml
Flooding/Water: www.floodsafety.noaa.gov/
Hurricane Awareness: www.weather.gov/om/hurricane/index.shtml
Lightning Safety: www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/
Marine Weather: www.weather.gov/os/marine/home.htm
MIC/WCM/SOO/DOH List: www.weather.gov/os/wcm-soo.pdf
National Digital Forecast Database: www.weather.gov/ndfd/
Natural Hazards Statistics: www.weather.gov/os/hazstats.shtml
NOAA Weather Radio Information: www.weather.gov/nwr/
Past Weather/Climate: wlf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/ncdc.html
Rip Current Awareness: www.ripcurrents.noaa.gov/
StormReady Home Page: www.stormready.noaa.gov/
Severe Weather Safety: weather.gov/os/severeweather/index.shtml
Tsunami Information: www.tsunami.gov

Public Health Emergency Law and Forensic Epidemiology CD-ROMs

PHLP has released version three of the Public Health Emergency Law and Forensic Epidemiology training materials on CD-ROM. To learn more about the courses or to order a free CD-ROM, visit <http://www2a.cdc.gov/phlp/phel.asp>

Public Health Emergency Response: A Guide for Leaders and Responders

<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/press/newsroom/mediaguide/guideleader.html>

What's your RQ?

RQ stands for Readiness Quotient. Click on the link below and take the test. It's simple and quick - it should take you less than 2 minutes to do and give you a good assessment of how "ready" you and your family are. <http://www.whatsyourrq.org/test.shtml>

Pandemic Preparedness Toolkit

The CDC and HHS worked with community leaders to create a pandemic preparedness toolkit called "Take the Lead". It contains a wealth of useful templates, checklists, and other resources to assist an entire community in preparing for a pandemic. <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/takethelead/index.html>

Small Business Disaster Preparedness Guide Launched

The Small Business Administration and Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company have teamed up to launch a disaster planning guide for small business owners. <http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/disasterpreparedness/index.html>

Personal and Family Preparedness

The University of Minnesota has a great website on personal and family preparedness. <http://cpheo1.sph.umn.edu/meret/FamilyEmergency.asp>

Business not as usual video

Seattle & King County has launched Business Not As Usual: Preparing for Pandemic Flu, a 20-minute training video to help advance local preparedness efforts. The video is available on-line now at www.metrokc.gov/health/pandemicflu/video.

Disaster Zone Blogosphere, moderated by Eric Holdeman

<http://www.disaster-zone.com>

Partner Spotlight

Public Health Emergencies & Response

Understanding Public Health

Your local public health department is the backbone of the nation's public health system. Through assessment, policy development and assurance, health departments strive to protect and promote the health of the people by:

- Preventing and controlling epidemics and the spread of communicable diseases
- Protecting against environmental hazards
- Educating the public and community stakeholders
- Preventing injuries and disabilities
- Promoting and encouraging healthy behaviors
- Responding to public health emergencies

Understanding How Public Health Responds in Emergencies

For many years, your local public health department has been working with hospitals and other emergency response partners to prepare for the usual . . . or unusual . . . public health emergencies that may occur. These emergencies include incidents of severe weather, contaminated food or drinking water, and chemical spills. In recent years we have become increasingly aware of the possibility of terrorism and pandemic influenza.

If a public health emergency is recognized or detected, the Public Health Emergency Plan (PHEP) may be activated. The PHEP is an all-hazards public health plan that outlines how health departments may respond.

There are typically three response stages:

1. **Detection.** It is critical to detect an act of bioterrorism or infectious disease outbreak as soon as possible to control its spread.
2. **Response.** Once recognized, public health officials will respond to public health emergencies accordingly. Responses include making notifications to community partners, disease investigations, confirming disease/agent, and providing treatment/prophylaxis to emergency response partners and the community.
3. **Containment.** Once a public health emergency has been confirmed, public health officials may use a variety of measures to control its effects. These measures include distributing antibiotics and implementing isolation and quarantine recommendations.

Your local health department is able to respond effectively and efficiently to all of these types of events due to its work and planning efforts. ❖

For any further questions contact your local public health department.

Caledonia/Mt Pleasant Health Department
(262) 835-6443

City of Racine Health Department
(262) 636-9201

Western Racine County Health Department
(262) 763-4930



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.