



THE KEMA PERSPECTIVE

FEBRUARY 2013—ISSUE 2

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SPRING FORWARD

BY PRESIDENT STONE

Winter is still in full swing. The days are shorter, the nights are longer and both are cold. With that in mind, most people anticipate spring and one of the hot topics is the time change. On March 10, 2013, we in Kansas will “Spring Forward”. A lot of people complain about losing an hour of sleep, but we do get that extra hour of daylight and with spring also comes something exciting—new beginnings. The grass begins to turn green, the flowers and trees start to bloom and everyone seems to be in a better mindset.

Professionals in Emergency Management and the National Weather Service know that with spring comes severe weather. Severe weather brings with it beauty and a natural

awe, but it also brings destruction and many long, sleepless nights for those Emergency Managers and NWS Staff.

As we discuss new beginnings, we should all take a moment to think about how we as Emergency Managers can improve our systems, relationships, procedures or protocols. This is a great opportunity to think about creating a volunteer program, enhancing the ones we have, or use already existing infrastructure to our benefit, which ultimately helps those that we serve.

This is the chance for us to step outside of our normal comfort zone and “Spring Forward” into something

new. We all work within our specific regions, but disasters do not know any boundaries. Not only am I in a county that has a regional boundary, but I also have a state boundary. Please take this time to get to know your neighbors before the disaster hits. During this next severe weather season, chances are that if you are not calling someone for help, they may be calling you.



SC REGION UNCOVERED**BY: CHARLENE MILLER**

KEMA met with the TAG for the annual KEMA visit. From that meeting came a request from the TAG to gather information. As South Central Vice President, I was tasked with gathering the information. While I understood there were many different facets of emergency management and hats worn, I must admit, I didn't realize it to the depths that I have discovered.

You see, Emergency Manager's are not your regular run of the mill emergency planner, thinker, do'er, or responder. I'm sure you already know that most don't just wear one hat like that of a Sheriff, Cop, EMT, or Paramedic. There is no "one size fits all."

The "size" all depends on where you are, what role(s), you fulfill, the "make-up" of your county, and the unique challenges of each place. When I sent out the request for information, I truly didn't expect to receive the diversity across the ENTIRE South Central region that I did. The information requested, which I will highlight here shortly, led to an enlightening and enjoyable phone conversation with one of our rural EM's. I had a pretty good idea, or at least I thought I did, what it was probably like for him. However, when I hung up the phone after the conversation, I realized I really didn't have a clue to the depths of the challenges small rural counties are facing. Yet, we ask them to meet the same goals, criteria, objectives, etc as the larger

cities, metropolitan areas, and multi-staffed single duty counties. This doesn't seem quite right to me. I would wager to bet that while many may think they understand the diversity of Kansas, that until you leaves the confines of your office, travel, speak and interact with others in your field, you truly don't know just how diverse Kansas is. If you haven't already, I encourage you to reach outside the boundaries of your county to your neighbors and find out what assets they have to assist you and what you can do to assist them.

Speaking of the information gathered and the diversity of the South Central region, I have a come to the conclusion, that if there is a subject matter expert you need, then check with one or our EM's, you will likely find what you are looking for! Our region combines approximately **194** years of experience (only counting the director's years) in just their current EM position. Those years of experience are an incredible asset to the Emergency Management field locally, state-wide and nationally. Unfortunately that number also highlights the depth of experience that we have

in this region yet knowing some will be retiring, leaving their legacy and knowledge on those they have befriended, mentored, encouraged and led along the way.

It's also just impressive that those 194 years aren't all in Emergency Management. When I talk about a "unique and rare breed" this is what I mean. Sure we have our multi-hat EM's who are also responsible for Fire and EMS Departments, but that ended up being more of a minority than I anticipated. Our EM's also fulfill the roles of – Are you Ready for This?! – Public Health Administrator, Sanitarian, Health Officer, Risk Manager, County Safety Manager, Records Management, 9-1-1 Addressing, County PIO, County Compliance Officer, GIS Assistant, 9-1-1 Coordinator, Undersheriff, County Planning & Zoning, Floodplain Management, Freedom of Information Officer, and Fire Service Administrator. But wait, I don't want to leave off that one of our EM's has served full time and is now "as needed" the County Death Investigator.

So many hats that we wear, must mean that we have the staff to be able to give everything our 100% correct? Think again! The poll revealed that nine counties have (continued on page 3)



Charlene Miller, SC Region Vice President

"Emergency Mangers are unique. Bound by local, state and federal mandates yet molded to meet the uniqueness and diversity of their county."

~Charlene Miller

...SOUTHCENTRAL CONTINUED

additional staff that helps support their roles and responsibilities. Which I'm sure is one reason why so many of us rely on volunteers in one fashion or another to assist our departments. While some counties had no volunteers, ten counties reported just under 500 volunteers that are available to provide support. i.e. CERT, CART, MRC, RACES, and S p o t t e r s . Emergency Management is a diverse field and adapted to the

meet needs of the their respective counties, while still working to meet State and Federal mandates. It seems no matter where you go these days with budget crunches, we are asked to do more with less. Without the help of neighbors and friends, it will be a challenge to keep doing more with less.

One thing is for sure here

in the South Central region. We are very diversified. I also know that we are more than willing to give and receive support to one another. Whether it's a big city, small rural county or anything in between, there is undoubtedly a wealth of knowledge and expertise in our region; each one of us molded to our own unique counties and situations.

"It's all about people. It's about networking and being nice to people and not burning any bridges." ~Mike Davidson

A NORTHWEST OBSERVATION

BY: KEITH HABERER

Yes, it happened again in the Northwest Region. What you ask? Was it a tornado? No. How about a flood? No, (we do need the moisture though). What about a snow or ice storm? Well we have had those recently, but they were pretty minor as winter storms go, so no, I'm not talking about any winter storms.

What I am talking about happened in Russell County in 2010, Thomas County several years ago and just happened again in Logan County. A sudden, spontaneous collapse of a cement grain storage facility, otherwise known as a grain elevator, is a local disaster that we rarely plan for or exercise.

This is an incident that can happen in all 105 counties in Kansas. Most of you remember the elevator explosions such as DeBruce Grain in 1998 and Barlett Grain in 2011 that

killed seven and six respectively. Some of you remember the elevator collapse in Russell that killed two, but how many heard of the recent collapse in Oakley, or even the collapse in Mingo that, fortunately, killed no one?

The reason I chose to write (and I use that term loosely) an article about the recent collapse of these structures is twofold. First, to raise awareness of an issue that I feel, without proper mitigation will become a more frequent occurrence in our counties. And second, to possibly help start a dialogue with your local elevator operators in regards to their planning for and mitigation of an elevator disas-

ter. Maybe even get them involved your LEPC or include them in a special planning workshop.

Ever since I was a volunteer Firefighter/EMT with Colby Fire Department, I have been training or touring elevators in Thomas County and now in Russell County. Although in Russell County some of my tours were more for delivering wheat, milo and soybeans from my fields or picking up feed grain for my livestock. On the fire department we toured the local elevators in Colby, Mingo and the surrounding areas that were in our Area of Responsibility or Fire District. We preplanned and trained for (continued on pg 4) fires, small and large,



Keith Haberer, NW Region Vice President

...NW KEMA CONTINUED

explosions, high angle rescue and trench/collapse rescue. We observed the cleanliness, or lack thereof, the facilities, identified hazards and hazardous materials, and even detailed where we could anchor our pulleys and ropes for repelling. But we only did that maybe once a year at the best and never took our part-time emergency manager along.

I have also attended some Ag and Farm safety classes and (several times) the Grain Elevator Fires class provided by the Kansas State Firefighters Association at their Regional Fire Schools. Usually during that class on fires and ex-



plosions, there is a tour of an elevator and discussion of the construction of elevators also. A comment that I remember and try to share is that when these elevators were built in the 1930s, 40s and 50s, they used concrete and rebar and were figuring on a 50 year life-span of the structure. It doesn't take a mathematician to figure out that we could have several more collapses in the future. In 2006, Russell County conducted a full scale exercise simulating an explosion at the very same elevator that collapsed in 2010. That exercise helped our responders familiarize themselves with the elevator and its construction.

I have focused mainly on the concrete, tubular shaped, multiple bin

elevators as the point for this discussion, but look around your county at the old wooden, tin covered elevators, the large steel bins and the flat storage units, each with their own inherent hazards. Take time to discuss these issues during your LEPC meetings, with your fire departments and with other first responders. We have some old, non-functioning, disused structures in Russell and Ellsworth counties that need to be removed, but that is another issue in

your county. itself. Just make sure you are aware of the potential disaster, focus on getting your responders training if there is a need and pray it never happens in your county.

Now let's go on to my second point with some background information of the fatal collapse. On June 24th, 2010, during the middle of harvest, some of the bins at AGCO Inc. Elevator A in Russell collapsed killing a 19 year old and a 21 year old, both employees of AGCO. Narrowly escaping was the truck driver of the semi that they were unloading. In the aftermath of the disaster many questions were asked, engineers consulted, inspections performed, OSHA investigated and insurance companies...well, they did was insurance companies normally do. Although AGCO had their elevators inspected and had an outside safety director, it is my understanding that there are no

requirements for elevators to be inspected by structural engineers. Since the disaster and removal of the damaged bins, AGCO has had all of their bins inspected and lined at all of their locations, spending millions of dollars to complete. From an article I read after the Russell collapse, it was that, "Solutions include putting in bin liners, which puts the silos in the same condition or better condition that when they originated."

Please don't misunderstand me, I'm not advocating for an emergency manager or anyone else on the LEPC telling the Cooperatives and Private Elevator operators that they have to spend large sums of money to inspect and line all of their multi-bin concrete structures. But if you haven't sat down together and discussed the disasters that have already occurred, the age of and potential for loss at their facilities and the response/recovery resources that your county may have to provide, it's time you did. While you are in those discussions, you might be able to direct the conversation towards mitigation or maybe use the word prevention, in gleaning what steps they are taking to forestall a disaster. Good, honest, open discussion usually leads to a plan or the steps necessary to remedy a potential disaster.

When the elevator collapsed at Oakley, my heart kind of sank, until I found out that there were no injuries or fatalities. George "Pappy" Lies, the Logan-Gove County Emergency Management Director called me that night and asked if there was anything that he might need to do, after he shared what their command and general staff along with the general manager of the elevator and railroad officials had accomplished. From our conversation it appeared they had "covered all the bases" so to speak and really had a good handle on the situation. He called back a few more times and I shared with (continued on page 5)

...NW KEMA CONTINUED

him the name and cell phone number of the general manager for AGCO. Also the engineering firm's name and contact information that AGCO uses so the general manager in Oakley could get the information that he needed.

At the end of the day, it comes back to what we do every day. Make sure you are exchanging business cards before the disaster. You are keep-

ing yourself, your LEPC and your responders informed, trained and prepared. And, most important, make sure everyone goes home after the call! If you need additional information, don't hesitate to call or email me anytime.

I also want to thank Pappy, Kathleen from Trego County and Justin

Couse who is not only a volunteer firefighter from Lucas Fire Dept., he is an elevator employee for United Ag, the Northwest Trustee for the Kansas State Firefighters Association, and my assistant EM for their proofreading, editing and technical assistance on this article.



NORTHCENTRAL REGION

BY: RODNEY JOB

The north central region has been doing intensive training with our Mobile Express systems. Regional training has occurred on the system, along with practicing on different scenarios. This helps our emergency managers to better understand the system. A special THANK YOU to Pam Kemp who has spearheaded this project. She has done an excellent job in setting up the classes with Midwest Card and ID.

Ottawa County graduated their first CERT team last

fall. The CERT class attendees were very energetic. Marie has done an excellent job promoting CERT in Ottawa County.

Also last fall, Lincoln County was awarded their "Storm Ready Certification" by the National Weather Service.

Through the NC Regional Homeland Security Council, we have sponsored another active shooter class. This resulted in an additional 30

officers trained on how to respond to an event involving an active shooter. This class has been a success over the last several years and we are planning on sponsoring more in the coming years. We have also recently sponsored three HazMat IQ classes; the feedback has been good on the classes with responders stating that this is one of the best classes they have taken!



Rodney Job, NC Region Vice President

**"Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity."
~Aristotle**

SOUTHWEST KEMA REGION

BY: VAUGHN LORENSEN

The Southwest Region has been working on communications thru out the area. With the help of the other regions of the state, we saw the completion of the State 800 system. This allowed our region to have the capabilities of talking with other responders from our region and into the State of Colorado, along with their responders. Our Regional Planning Council has taken the communications initiative and purchased radio communications for response vehicles and some infrastructure, including Law Enforcement, Fire, Emergency Management, EMS, Hospitals, Emergency Operations Centers, and PSAPS. We provided a radio to the National Weather Service for easy communications with them. Along with this, counties in

the Southwest completed the narrow banding process. Additionally several counties moved to the State 800 system either partially or completely.

We have had numerous trainings in our area including Before the Storm, CRMCS, Bold Super System, HSEEP, planning workshop & ICS training to name a few.

In June, our 18 county region held a hospital based Exercise involving responding agencies from the area. We learned weaknesses and strengths of all players and hospitals and what we can do to help each other. We looked at capabilities of those there, what we have and don't have and what

could be shared. Numerous other exercises were done thru our regions in individual counties.

Our region continues to support both our Incident Management Team, and Search and Rescue Teams. Some of our IMTs from the region had been deployed to serve others over the last year. The teams or team members participated in the recent tech conference at Crisis City.

We as a region continue to work with the Regional Planning Council on strategic planning and sustainment of our council.

Besides facing the (continued on page 7)



Vaughn Lorenson, SW Region Vice President

...SOUTHWEST CONTINUED

drought in the area, we had only one major incident in our region this year. A fire at Palmer Manufacturing in Garden City which brought several responders from the area to work together to con-

trol this situation.

The Southwest Region welcomed several new Emergency Managers to the area including Luther Kieth in Greely county,

Michael Paz-Torres in Finney County and Stacy Michelle in Morton County.



GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

BY: DOUG SCHMITT

The Kansas Legislative Session of 2013-2014 has begun and this should be an interesting year for everyone involved in Kansas politics. Here is a quick breakdown the legislature.

SENATE

The State Senate is comprised of 40 members. 32 of those members are Republican and the remaining 8 are Democrats. 16 members (40%) are serving their first term in the Senate. 12 of the 16 have previously served in the House.

HOUSE

The State House of Representatives is comprised of 125 members. 92 of those members are Republican and the remaining 33 are Democrats. 55 members (44%) are newly elected and 6 of those members have previously served as Representatives.

The biggest change we will see is that in the past the Senate was controlled by moderate Republicans and the House was controlled by conservative Republicans. This election cycle put more conservatives in the Senate and the balance of power has

shifted to the conservatives. This should make for a more streamlined process to get bills enacted with less fighting between the 2 chambers.

There are a couple of issues I am concerned about this year in this political climate. The first issue pertains to limiting local government taxing authority and the second issue is with commercial valuations. Both of these issues will impact local Emergency Management programs by creating budgetary issues locally. The driver behind these issues was the campaign talk of lowering personal property taxes. I fully expect to see legislation introduced on both of these items and all local government groups will need to speak in unison against them.

On another note, I met with Representative Gonzalez and got to see the newly remodeled Capital. I would suggest that everyone try to make it a point to visit. All members of State Legislature

now have their offices in the Capital again, so keep that in mind if you plan on visiting your legislator this session.

In addition to monitoring the goings on in Topeka, I am currently finalizing the plans for the KEMA delegation to encourage our federal legislators to keep our federal funding intact. This annual journey will take place the last week of February this year.

I have also generated a KEMA bill tracker that I will try to send out weekly to keep everyone informed on bills of impact to the Emergency Management community. If you have any questions on specific bills or legislative activity in general feel free to contact me at

doug@jf-ks.com.

Doug Schmitt is the Government Affairs Chairman for KEMA and the Legislative Committee Chairman for the Kansas State Fire Fighters Association.

If Plan A fails,
remember
that you have
25 letters left.

KANSAS CENTER FOR SAFE AND PREPARED SCHOOLS

BY: DR. BOB HULL

The New Year has begun with a flurry of activity concerning school safety and preparedness. This is of course as a reaction to the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newton, Connecticut. We (like you) are hearing many proposals of what schools need to do for the safety of all. We believe the best approach is to continue the efforts of many schools and staff. School safety and preparedness is more than just an educational responsibility. It is also a process, not a single event as defined by a single tragedy. A culture of school preparedness is continuous effort and a community responsibility.

To assist with the goal of increased school safety and preparedness, we offer the following to you for consideration:

Engage or re-engage your school district's crisis management team.

Review and update your school's crisis/emergency management plans and have them focus on the all-hazard approach.

Connect with and establish a relations with your local community's first responders, emergency management, physical and mental health professionals, local officials and your faith community.

Undertake safety and security

drills and exercises with a new sense of realism and purpose.

Become aware of and participate in training, workshops and conferences that focus on school safety and preparedness.

Communicate with your school community about your safety/preparedness plans.

The safety of our students is job one when they are under our care.

There are many helpful online resources that provide useful information as we deal with school tragedies, violence, mental illness and school preparedness. Some to consider are:

National Association of School Psychologists www.nasponline.org

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry www.aacap.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration www.samhsa.gov

National Institute of Mental Health www.nimh.nih.gov

National Association for School Resource Officers www.nasro.org

National Association for School Nurses www.nasn.org

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools—Technical Assistance Center www.rems.ed.gov

FEMA—www.ready.gov/school-emergency-plans

NEA www.nea.org

We wish that 2013 will be a safe year for all of our students and we as a society will rededicate our efforts to obtain meaningful changes and sustainability in school safety and preparedness.



The Kansas Center for Safe and Prepared Schools can be found online at <http://kspreparedschools.org>.

Phone: (785) 861-3022

Dr. Bob Hull, Director

Mr. Jerry Tenbrink, Associate Director

EMAP

BY: STEVE LARSON & JACKIE MILLER

In December, the State of Kansas Emergency Management Program, led by KDEM, completed the initial assessment toward accreditation through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) with very high marks!

EMAP is a voluntary review process for state and local emergency management programs that is a means of demonstrating, through self-assessment, documentation and peer review, that a program meets national

standards for emergency management.

“Our preliminary exit assessment is that our state emergency management program is compliant with 101 out of 104 (continued on page 10)

EMSAK

BY: DARCY K. GOLLIHER

We have an exciting conference scheduled for April 10th through 13th at the Best Western Airport Inn and Conference Center in Wichita. Todd Manns from The Blue Cell will be starting us off Wednesday afternoon with a presentation on Damage Assessment,

Thursday we look forward to the presentations on Disaster Preparedness on a Limited Budget, COAD Development within your community, a down and dirty Spanish lesson that will come in handy

in any emergency situation; and our favorite, Dealing with Difficult People in Disasters.

Friday morning we will be focusing on Weather Forecasters and Legal Issues involving Emergency Management. And of course, the best part of any conference is the networking opportunity.

Watch for the registration to come out early February. We look forward to seeing you all there!



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

BY: CHANCE HAYES, WCM

The National Weather Service (NWS) and Kansas Emergency Management Association request your participation in “Severe Weather Week” activities from March 4th - 8th, 2013. This week is devoted to providing citizens of Kansas vital safety information to help them make the appropriate decisions when hazardous weather is imminent. Over the past couple of years we have seen tragic loss of life during tornado outbreaks. Findings from these outbreaks point towards warning complacency as a major contributor to the unfortunate loss of life. I would like to emphatically state that any tornado that occurs has

the potential to cause damage and take lives. It is imperative that you heed the warnings issued by the National Weather Service. Understanding that we live in a very technical society we understand the need to gather more information prior to sheltering. However, I urge you to act quickly once your sense of well-being threshold has been compromised. Isn't a few minutes in shelter worth you and your loved ones safety, versus taking a risk that is not needed?

The annual statewide tornado drill will take

place on Tuesday March 5th at 1:30 pm with a backup date of Thursday, March 7th.

Please take the time during Severe Weather Awareness Week to ensure that you, your family, and co-workers are familiar with all safety procedures during inclement weather. Those few minutes it takes to re-familiarize you and others may ultimately pay dividends during hazardous weather.

Stay Safe Kansas!!!

“The sky is your screen to a movie that never ends.”

~Chance Hayes,
WCM National
Weather Service
Wichita Office

Tuesday, March 5th at 1:30 pm—Test Tornado Drill

...EMAP CONTINUED

standards,” said Angee Morgan, deputy KDEM director. “We are optimistic that we may receive full accreditation.” The state was non-compliant in three standards relating to communications, concerning deficient documentation.

KDEM began working toward accreditation early in 2012. KDEM provided documents on every facet of the emergency management program detailing day-to-day business and during disasters. Hundreds of documents were reviewed by EMAP assessors for compliance with EMAP standards. These standards cover:

- Program Management
- Administration and Finance
- Laws and Authorities
- Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Consequence Analysis
- Hazard Mitigation

- Prevention
- Operational Planning
- Incident Management
- Resource Management and Logistics
- Mutual Aid
- Communications and Warning
- Operations and Procedures
- Facilities
- Training
- Exercises, Evaluations and Corrective Actions
- Crisis Communications, Public Education and Information

A final on-site assessment team was in Topeka December 10-14 to review the documentation. Morgan said the assessment was very detailed. During the team’s exit report, inspectors said no state had ever received accreditation the first time and that Kansas had done extremely well. Twenty-nine states are currently fully accredited; one state is

conditionally accredited. KDEM had 30 days following the team’s official report to make corrections and receive evaluation on them and are awaiting final determination.

Morgan said everyone on the KDEM Staff, as well as state emergency management partners had worked hard for a very long time on the EMAP process.

“I am extremely proud not only of our KDEM team, but all who are part of our emergency management program,” said Morgan. “We have a great team in Kansas!”

On a final note, the EMAP Assessment Team highlighted some “Best Practices” in the exit report. These included the Kansas Fusion Center, Comprehensive Resource Management and Credentialing System and the Vulnerable Needs Registry.

**REPORT ON KANSAS PREPAREDNESS****BY SHARON WATSON****Report on Kansas Preparedness Paints Inaccurate Picture**

A recent report released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation presented a very inaccurate view of emergency preparedness in Kansas.

The annual report, called Trust for America’s Health, ranks states on 10 areas of public health emergency preparedness. This year’s report gave Kansas only three out of 10 points. The news headlines which resulted

indicated the state isn’t prepared for disasters. However, the 10 criteria used to rank the state have little to do with Kansas disaster preparedness, especially our preparedness for common Kansas emergencies like tornadoes, snow and ice storms, flooding or severe drought conditions. Instead, the report ranked the state on health-specific preparedness including items like whether we have a 90 percent or better whooping cough vaccination rate, whether Medicaid covers flu shots with no co-pay,

whether the state has a climate change adaptation plan and whether the state maintained or increased public health funding in recent years. These specific criteria don’t present an overall picture of the state of all emergency preparedness in Kansas.

“The report does not provide an accurate and thorough picture of the state’s readiness to respond to health emergencies, disasters or terrorism,” said Governor Sam Brownback in a Dec. 20, 2012 news release. “Kansas is no stranger to disasters and in recent years has responded to health emergencies including H1N1 pandemic

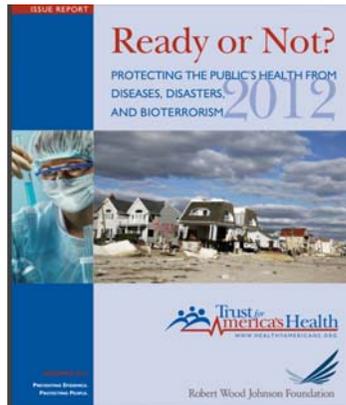
...REPORT ON KANSAS CONTINUED

and other disease outbreaks as well as tornados, floods, snow storms, and ice storms.”

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general and director of Kansas Division of Emergency Management added, “Kansas has proven its ability to respond to emergencies many, many times including the deadly Harveyville tornado earlier this year, Missouri River flooding in northeast Kansas last year and many deadly winter storms and tornados over the past several years.”

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation changes the criteria it uses annually and in recent years has fluctuated significantly, giving Kansas a score of 9 out of 10 points a few years ago. The conclusions drawn aren’t reflective of overall public health preparedness according to Robert Moser, M.D. secretary and state health

officer of Kansas Department of Health and Environment in the Dec. 20th news release: “No matter the score, the report presents a skewed view of public health readiness, draws inaccurate conclusions and in no way indicates the actual preparedness level in Kansas.”



When considering the overall preparedness level of Kansas, it’s important to look at a number of factors well beyond what this report critiqued.

“Kansas emergency preparedness involves numerous state agencies including Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Division of Emergency Manage-

ment, Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Department of Transportation and many others depending on the emergency,” noted Brownback. “Counties and cities, as well as individuals, play a significant role in our state’s overall preparedness and Kansans have frequently proven to be self-sufficient and resilient in times of disaster.”

State officials released a response to the report which may be found online at [www.kansastag.gov/press_release_detail.asp?](http://www.kansastag.gov/press_release_detail.asp?PRid=1091)

[PRid=1091](http://www.kansastag.gov/press_release_detail.asp?PRid=1091) .

The original report is available online at <http://www.healthyamericans.org/report/101/>.

IPAWS

During Hurricane Sandy, which ravaged the Northeast coast, New York City employed a new public alerting technology. Using FEMA’s Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS), New York City was able to send Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) directly to cell phone users warning them to evacuate an area, or shelter in place, or avoid driving on the roads depending on where they were located. Because WEAs are not subscription based, residents and tourists in New York City re-

ceived WEAs during Hurricane Sandy.

Only authorized IPAWS alerting authorities can send WEAs. Federal, state, territorial, tribal, or local public safety officials can become authorized IPAWS alerting authorities through a [simple four step authorization process](#). In addition to hundreds of states, counties, and cities across the nation that are currently authorized to use IPAWS, the National Weather Service (NWS) uses IPAWS to send WEAs to keep citizens aware of severe weather. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Chil-

dren (NCMEC) also uses WEAs to send AMBER alerts in the most serious child-abduction cases.

WEAs are free messages broadcast directly to WEA-capable cell phones and can ensure that life-saving information, whether it is about a missing child, evacuation, chemical spills, severe weather, or other hazardous situations, reaches the public in time to respond. WEAs attract attention with a unique sound and vibration, which is particularly helpful to people with hearing or vision-related disabilities, but will not interrupt calls in progress. WEA technology is available nationwide and is already on dozens of wireless cell phones or other wireless devices. (Continued page 12)

BY: CAITLYN STEPHENSON

We are on the web!

www.kema.org



In Memory

In December, KEMA lost a retired emergency manager, friend, and cohort. Who could forget Bryan's infectious laugh and smile. KEMA sends our thoughts and prayers to his family. May you rest in peace Bryan.



...IPAWS CONTINUED

WEAs are broadcast to mobile phones in a geographically targeted affected area down to the county level. Future technology developments will make it possible for alerting authorities to refine targeting capabilities.

Every WEA has an expiration date/time and will be resent within the affected area until it expires; however, each individual wireless device will display the alert only once. If a wireless customer travels into the affected area after the WEA was originally sent, and the alert has not expired, they will still receive the alert.

WEAs are limited to 90 characters and look like text messages, but unlike existing text messaging that uses Short Message Service Point-to-Point (SMS-PP), WEAs are broadcast to devices by the SMS-Cell Broadcast (SMS-CB) in a one-to-many service, which simultaneously delivers the message to multiple recipients. The WEA therefore avoids network congestion issues

experienced with traditional SMS and will be received by WEA-capable phones even if individuals can not send or receive calls or texts.

WEAs are products of the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS) which is a partnership between Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and wireless carriers. IPAWS alerting authorities can use FEMA's IPAWS Open Platform for Emergency Networks (IPAWS-OPEN) to send out geographically targeted alert and warning messages through a variety of disseminators, including the Emergency Alert System (EAS), which sends warnings to television and radio via broadcast, cable, satellite and wireline communication pathways, CMAS/WEAs, public feed service to enhance internet services, unique alerting systems such as road signs and large voice sirens, and emerging technologies.

Currently all major cell phone carriers, as well as numerous smaller carriers, are participating and selling mobile devices that have CMAS/WEA capability. Not

all phones currently in the market are capable of receiving WEAs, but it is anticipated that by 2014 all commercially available phones will be WEA-enabled. Carriers list the devices currently WEA-capable on www.ctia.org/WEA as well mark phone and wireless devices boxes with the Wireless Emergency Alert logo.

To learn more about IPAWS or about becoming an IPAWS alerting authority, go to www.fema.gov/ipaws. The FEMA IPAWS Program Management Office can be reached at ipaws@dhs.gov.

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