

## 35<sup>TH</sup> MSEMC BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

### **A New Tool for Community Support – Missouri University Extension’s “*Neighboring for Emergency Management and Disaster Response*” (w/ Conne Burnham)**

Strong neighborhoods are one of the most powerful — and often overlooked — assets in disaster readiness and response. Missouri University Extension’s **“Neighboring for Emergency Management and Disaster Response”** initiative offers a practical, relationship-centered approach that helps communities build resilience long before an incident occurs. In this session, **Conne Burnham** will introduce the Neighboring model and demonstrate how simple, intentional community-building practices can strengthen local support networks, improve information flow, preparedness, response, recovery and enhance Mass Care outcomes during emergencies.

### **A PIO’s Guide to Effective Messaging**

Matt Coppin, Metro West Fire Protection District

The events of the past several years have not changed your target audience, but they have changed the way that audience receives and processes information. For Public Information Officers, much of the work happens outside of active incidents, delivering safety, prevention, and preparedness messaging that helps build more resilient communities. However, shared experiences such as a global pandemic, contentious public discourse, and an increase in natural disasters have created a constant flow of urgent and often negative messaging. This has altered how audiences engage with information, often leading to fatigue, disengagement, or dismissal of important messages. As a result, traditional communication models are less effective than they once were. This presentation explores these shifts and provides practical strategies to help PIOs deliver clear, relevant, and impactful messaging that resonates with their communities before an emergency ever occurs.

### **Advancing a Unified Vision for Community Pet Protection: The Emergency Manager's Role**

Joy Ollinger and Kyle Held, ASPCA

Hurricane Katrina forever changed how we view the human-animal bond during crises, exposing the tragic consequences of leaving pets out of the plan. This session, led by the ASPCA's National Field and Disaster Response manager, demonstrates how pet-inclusive planning reduces human risk and streamlines local responses. Through case studies of recent operations, including the Southern California wildfires, attendees will learn actionable strategies to integrate animals into every phase of the emergency cycle, ensuring no family member is left behind.

### **Alpha-Gal – Is Not the Girl Next Door.**

Dr. Thomas Huffman

Likely attendees will be from areas with high incidence of tick bites and high risk of alpha-gal exposure. Information about this new disease spread by tick bites, how to recognize, what to do for a reaction, and how to prevent exposure and tick bites. Information will be focused for those not in the health care field.

## **Best Practice Support for Local Community Mass Care Needs from Our Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.**

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) play a critical role in meeting local Mass Care needs before, during, and after emergencies. From sheltering and feeding to emotional and spiritual care, distribution support, and long-term recovery, these partners bring unique capabilities that strengthen every community's readiness and resilience. This panel discussion brings together leaders from Missouri's VOAD network to share real-world best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches for supporting local Mass Care operations.

### **Building MO MORT-1 into your Community's Response Plan**

Kevin Tweedy, MO DMAT-1/MO MORT-1 Commander & Brendan Bagby, MO DMAT-1/MO MORT-1 Deputy Commander

High-impact recovery efforts extend far beyond the initial scene, requiring a complex network of specialized support for both victims and families. This session examines the Branson Duck boat tragedy and the recent Butler plane crash to detail the intensive mobilization of disaster mortuary resources and the wrap-around social services essential for navigating such a profound loss. Attendees will walk away with a tactical roadmap for integrating behavioral health and other recovery assets into their incident planning.

### **Every Minute Matters: EMS Response to the Yates Center Health and Rehab Evacuation Fire**

Troy Armstrong, Kansas Major Emergency Response Group

This course provides an in-depth, real-world examination of a rapid-onset, large-scale health care facility evacuation triggered by a fast-moving wildland fire in Woodson County, Kansas. Using the Yates Center Health and Rehab incident as a case study, participants will analyze how emergency medical services (EMS), fire services, law enforcement, emergency management, health care staff, and community partners coordinated under extreme time pressure to evacuate vulnerable long-term care residents and maintain countywide EMS coverage. The course walks participants through a detailed incident timeline, from initial fire reports and disaster declaration through evacuation operations, MERGe activation, sheltering, patient redistribution, and post-incident recovery. Emphasis is placed on operational decision-making, interagency coordination, triage and patient tracking, transportation logistics, responder rehabilitation, and the challenges of managing medically fragile populations during a rapidly evolving incident. Participants will examine how Incident Command System (ICS) principles were applied, where gaps emerged, and how adaptive leadership and community involvement – such as assistance from school staff, citizens, and student-athletes – contributed to a successful outcome with no fatalities. The course also explores compliance considerations under the CMS Emergency Preparedness Rule, highlighting expectations for long-term care facilities and the critical role EMS plays in supporting facility preparedness, evacuation planning, and drills. Through after-action analysis, strengths and opportunities for improvement are discussed, including communications interoperability, MCI management, resource staging, patient accountability, and responder mental health support. The course concludes with practical lessons learned and best practices that can be applied by EMS agencies, emergency managers, and health care partners to improve readiness for future health care facility fires, mass evacuations, and all-hazards incidents.

## **Follow the Leader: Living on Purpose Wherever You Stand**

Scott Todd

This breakout session equips first responders to recognize their influence, clarify their purpose, and lead with conviction in any role or assignment. Participants will learn why leadership begins long before a badge or title and how everyday actions shape the culture around them. The session introduces three core anchors of purposeful leadership — **\*\*Identity over Performance, Presence over Position, and Mission over Moments\*\*** — and provides practical tools, such as grounding habits, emotional check-ins, and transition rituals, to strengthen resilience in high-pressure environments. Attendees will explore the role of personal convictions as internal guardrails, examine the qualities of trusted leaders, and learn a simple, repeatable path for multiplying impact through empowerment, modeling, coaching, and releasing others. The session applies these principles directly to first responder realities, including mentoring rookies, modeling calm under pressure, building trust, and fostering emotional regulation. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped to lead themselves and others with clarity, integrity, and purpose — becoming leaders worth following wherever they stand.

## **How Can the SEMA EHS/VAL Office Best Help EMDs, and local Community & Faith-Based Leaders?**

Emergency Managers carry enormous responsibility, often with limited time, staff, and resources. The SEMA Emergency Human Services and Voluntary Agency Liaison Office is committed to strengthening that work — but the most meaningful improvements start by listening directly to the people doing the job every day. This breakout is designed as an open Listening Session, giving EMDs along with their local community partners and faith-based organizations a dedicated space to share what support is most needed, what challenges persist, and where statewide coordination can better align with local realities. Instead of a presentation, this session centers on local EMD's and partners experiences, to better understand “your priorities, and your ideas,” which will help shape how EHS & Mass Care support interacts with local EMDs, community partners.

## **How EPCRA Works Today – Lessons Learned from the Federal Hazmat Roundtable**

Tim Gablehouse, Colorado EPC and NASTPO

The HazMat Roundtable was formed to identify critical issues and suggest plans of action to strengthen HazMat preparedness throughout the United States. Comprised of technical specialists and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), the Roundtable meets annually to address pressing challenges and, consequently, help improve the nation's public safety. This course will review the findings of the Roundtables and the objectives of programs that can be established to address improvements in local preparedness planning.

## **I-70 Emergency Response**

Joseph Moore, Eric Kopinski & Michael White, Missouri Department of Transportation

Discussion on I-70 Corridor Incident Management, coalitions, partnerships, and response efforts during construction and post-construction.

### **Lessons from the Prior New Madrid Earthquake Series with the Recent Advances**

Greg Hempen, Ecoblast, LLC

The objective of this talk is to develop a paleo-seismic, historical and instrumental seismicity dataset for the Central US region. From that background, the presentation will offer a plausible scenario for the 1811-12 New Madrid Earthquake Series (NMES), with three Principal Events and aftershocks following each. The second objective would be to cite the considerable Design, Response and Recovery Advances that have been developed over the last 15 years, since the 200th NMES Anniversary. This talk presents some of the scientific and engineering advances in the young science of Seismology. It will note the strides made in earthquake-resistant design for our Central and Eastern US region, particularly for the New Madrid Seismic Zone. The last objective would be to identify remaining concerns for mitigating, responding to, and recovering from a large, regional earthquake, including its aftershocks and the potential for the next NMES. These issues where progress could be made include building code adoption, inspection and enforcement; structural engineering research for compounded damage from aftershocks; conducting exercises with aftershocks and including compounded damage from those aftershocks; and research into mass regional disruption for both response and recovery for a period of 2 to 6 months of the three Principal Earthquakes and their aftershocks.

### **Micro Habits for Busy Public Safety Leaders: Wellness Without More Time**

Tommy Wright, Iron & Intention, LLC

This course is a leadership and wellness course designed for supervisors, command staff, emergency management leaders, and other public safety professionals operating in high-stress, high-tempo environments. This course introduces micro-habits-small, evidence-informed behavioral practices that improve mental clarity, fatigue management, stress regulation, and decision-making without requiring additional time. The training emphasizes leader responsibility, operational readiness, and practical application during high-tempo public safety operations. The course focuses on personal and organizational wellness strategies that support mission effectiveness, safety, and sustainability. The course is non-diagnostic, non-therapeutic, and educational in nature. By the conclusion of the session, participants leave with a clear understanding that small, consistent leadership behaviors-when practiced daily-can significantly improve wellness, decision quality, and mission readiness without adding time to already demanding schedules. Ultimately, Micro Habits for Busy Public Safety Leaders reinforces that wellness is not separate from leadership-it is a critical component of effective command, sound judgment, and long-term organizational success.

### **NEW GIS Innovations for Enhancing Emergency Human Services and Mass Care Function Coordination (w/ Lucius Creamer)**

Over the past year, Missouri's SEMA Emergency Human Services team has partnered closely with the GIS specialist to transform how we visualize, coordinate, and deliver Mass Care support across the state. This breakout session highlights the new data sets, mapping tools, and spatial analysis capabilities developed to strengthen collaboration among local, regional, and statewide partners. Participants will see how these GIS innovations improve situational awareness, streamline resource coordination, and support more effective decision-making during sheltering, feeding, distribution, and other Mass Care functions.

### **No One Left Behind: Accessible Disaster Planning for Everyone**

Deb Hendricks, Office of Disaster Services, Department of Mental Health

Individuals with disabilities are up to 40% more likely to be negatively impacted by disasters. All students who attend this session will increase their knowledge about creating plans that ensure accessibility for all.

### **Preparing Together: Integrating Emergency Services Education, Certification, and Training**

Dr. Darius Watson, Lincoln University

This presentation explores Lincoln University of Missouri's emerging role in advancing disaster preparedness, resilience, and response through the newly established Security Sciences Institute and the Health & Security Sciences Building. Beginning with the lessons learned from the May 22, 2019, Jefferson City tornado and subsequent collaboration among local, state, academic, and community stakeholders, Lincoln University has developed a holistic model that fully integrates education, workforce development, research, simulation, emergency operations training, and community engagement. The presentation will examine how the University has developed frameworks of accessible knowledge, professional training, credential and career pathways, and practical exercises that when combined represent a significant advancement in the development of community emergency preparedness. Particular attention will be given to the Health & Security Sciences Building's new emergency operations and simulation capabilities, as well as its potential to serve as a regional hub where emergency managers, first responders, health professionals, educators, government agencies, and community organizations can collaborate, test strategies, identify gaps, and share best practices. The presentation will also discuss current and planned partnerships with local, state, and federal emergency agencies for the development of additional facilities and training/educational opportunities. Ultimately, the presentation will demonstrate how Lincoln University seeks to integrate the development of both knowledge and experiential learning for emergency personnel, helping communities across Missouri and beyond become better prepared, more connected, and more resilient.

### **Response Coordination for Hazmat Releases During Train Derailments**

Doug Ferguson, US Environmental Protection Agency

Class participants will receive information regarding an unfolding train derailment scenario involving hazardous materials. Open-ended questions will be asked of participating response agencies to facilitate discussion of response resource needs, resources available, and timelines at different stages of the scenario (initial response, site stabilization, and cleanup).

### **SAVE Coalition – Progressive Exercises and Why We Do Them**

Benjamin Ross, SAVE Coalition

Since 2011, the Missouri Structural Assessment and Visual Evaluation (SAVE) Coalition, SEMA's 900-person volunteer post-disaster building safety evaluation group, has participated in 10 exercises. These exercises have ranged from National Level Exercise 2011 to small groups gathered in a field to virtual exercises with hundreds of participants to large, full-scale exercises involving

National Guard units from across the country. SAVE exercises have included participants from the Central United States Earthquake Consortium states, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers disaster response personnel from across the country, the Civil Air Patrol, members of Amateur Radio Emergency Service, and the U.S. Veterans Administration. SAVE members have also been EMAC-deployed for training on out-of-state exercises to learn from other post-disaster building safety evaluation organizations. SAVE uses exercises to test new technology, keep volunteers engaged, validate new training and procedures, maintain readiness, and further organizational goals such as developing relationships prior to real-world deployments. This seminar will demonstrate the value of an exercise program based on lessons learned from actual deployments and show how the relationships built during these exercises benefited Missourians in subsequent deployments.

**SEMA Training/Exercise:**

Michelle Nienhuisa, SEMA

The breakout session will provide participants with an overview of recent updates to the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) Training and Exercise (T&E) Program and introduce the newly developed Training and Exercise Program website.

**Shields & Cyber-Storms: AI's Double-Edged Sword in Emergency Operations**

Brian Maydwell & Jacqueline Brown, MIAC

As artificial intelligence (AI) transforms emergency response, it brings unprecedented capabilities alongside critical cyber vulnerabilities. From real-time predictive disaster mapping and automated resource allocation to deepfake-driven disinformation and AI-powered cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, emergency management sits at a high-stakes crossroads. This breakout session explores the dual nature of AI in crisis operations, offering emergency managers, IT leaders, and first responders actionable frameworks to harness emerging AI tools safely while hardening defenses against AI-enabled cyber threats.

**It's Raining Cats & Dogs: Animal Disaster Planning Speed Networking Event**

Luke Lunt, ASPCA

In this interactive session, participants will engage in focused discussions on disaster preparedness specifically for companion animals. Through structured speed networking, attendees will explore vital topics such as sheltering plans, stakeholder engagement, data and technology utilization, state of readiness, post-disaster response, and the setup of temporary pet shelters. Each topic will include guided questions that encourage participants to evaluate and improve their organization's preparedness strategies. This session is designed to foster collaboration, share innovative ideas, and equip participants with actionable insights to enhance their disaster response plans for companion animals.

**"You're Not from Around Here? That's Just Fine. Sit A Spell" - Communicating to An Audience Affected by Disaster and Not from Your Area**

Chris Newbrough, Audrain County Health Department

This course is designed for Emergency Managers, Public Information Officers, First Responders and any staff member of those agencies responsible for crafting messages in a disaster situation, such as an earthquake, tornado, other natural and man-made disasters and whose jurisdiction faces an influx of evacuees from different parts of the state or country. The focus of this breakout session will be on how to effectively message to any and all evacuees who will leave the eastern and southeast Missouri area following a large-scale magnitude earthquake along the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ). While this will focus on the NMSZ, the objectives taught in this session will be applicable across multiple disciplines.

**WebEOC Tutorial & Refresher**

Sebastian Gely, SEMA

This breakout session will cover the basics of WebEOC and provide a tutorial on using common WebEOC boards. It will consist of basic WebEOC use and navigation, as well as how to use the Situation Status Update Board and the Resource Request Board. This session is intended for new or legacy users seeking a refresher on WebEOC operations.