



SEMA News

Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
Preparedness · Response · Recovery

Spring

2015



Mannequins lend realism to the victim-identification process during the mass fatality field exercise in Columbia.

270 Test Missouri's Mass Fatality Capability

As part of SEMA's effort to develop a fully equipped and operational statewide mass fatality management capability, a field exercise was conducted Feb. 23-26 at the Boone County Fairgrounds in Columbia.

The scenario was flash flooding that left dozens dead and missing. The exercise involved actors playing victims and family members. Building on two previous mass fatality and training events held over the past year, the latest exercise focused on testing the state's disaster morgue capability with the newly developed element of a victim information center (VIC). The statewide capability is known as the Missouri Mortuary Response Team (MoMORT).

"If we have to respond to a disaster that has caused a significant number of fatalities, our mission would be to provide expert victim identification services in the most sensitive manner possible," said Melissa Friel, SEMA Preparedness Division manager. "With MoMORT's resources and highly qualified volunteer response staff, we could respond anywhere in the state."

(Continued on page 13)

Millions of Dollars in Disaster Recovery Funds Flowing Again

On March 19, millions of dollars in federal funds began flowing again to Missouri communities with disaster recovery and hazard mitigation projects awaiting federal reimbursement payments. At the time, SEMA had \$36.5 million in reimbursement requests for more than 200 local projects.

The repayments had stopped in January, when SEMA reached its spending authority limit set by the General Assembly in the Fiscal Year 2015 state budget.

On March 18, the Missouri Senate approved House Bill 16, a supplemental budget that gives SEMA the authority to tap up to \$124 million in additional federal funds for reimbursement payments. After the close of business, the bill arrived in Gov. Jay Nixon's office.

Gov. Nixon signed the bill the next day, saying, "These federal disaster funds are urgently needed to reimburse local communities across the state. I'm pleased that the General Assembly has answered my call to get these federal funds out to the communities that need them and look forward to working with legislators to ensure local communities are promptly and appropriately reimbursed in the future."

(Continued on page 13)

In This Issue

Mass Fatality Operations Exercise	1
Disaster Recovery Funds Flowing Again	1
Director's Letter	2
New Emergency Human Services Prog. Mgr.	3
NWS Communicates Precipitation Uncertainty	3
Region C Profile	4
SEMA Regional Coordinators	8
QuakeSmart Business Summit	11
2015 SEMA Conference Highlights	12
SEMA Training Schedule	15



Director's Letter

“The importance of rebuilding schools and hospitals, repairing storm-damaged roads and bridges and protecting citizens from future harm through tornado safe room construction and other mitigation projects cannot be understated.”

Ron Walker

Now that it's spring, we can begin thinking of winter in the past tense and look forward to warm weather and longer days. But this time of year can also make emergency managers a bit anxious, with one eye on the sky and one on the weather radar. Missouri's unpredictable weather could throw one last winter storm at us, or, we could just as likely get a severe storm with high winds, heavy rains and even tornadoes.

We were reminded of that on March 25, when severe storms and tornadoes ripped through eastern Oklahoma and northwest Arkansas, killing one in the Tulsa area.

The severe storm preparedness season kicked off the first week of March with Missouri Severe Weather Awareness Week and the annual Statewide Tornado Drill on March 3. But it's never too late to encourage your communities to make some basic preparations. Don't forget the helpful information and resources on the StormAware website at Stormaware.mo.gov.

Our partners at the National Weather Service have also been updating some of their websites that provide helpful tools and resources. One that I think will be of particular interest to you is an updated site that provides the NWS's statewide tornado warning plumes tool. To access this information, click on weather.gov/eax/pwp?wfo=eax and move the cursor around the interactive map to each area for which you need information.

WebEOC UPDATE

In an effort to continue improving WebEOC customer service, we have expanded the number of staff who are available to provide basic technical support. We also continue to increase the number of online training courses we offer. These include the complete WebEOC course, just-in-time training modules and quick refresher courses.

A great deal of work has also been done to make WebEOC truly a statewide resource. We have established connections between the state's system

and the WebEOC systems already established by Region D and the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) in Region A. Next we will focus on successfully feeding the state's event activity log into a single WebEOC board that users on all three systems can view. On the federal side, FEMA is now using WebEOC for internal operations and we are working to establish a select number of connections through which we can share information.

To improve user access to WebEOC, we have been developing the use of a mobile app called IMX Connect. This new app will make it easier to use WebEOC on smart devices by remembering your credentials so you don't have to retype your information to log in and sign in. The IMX Connect app also makes it possible to receive WebEOC notifications on your smart device. We are working on activating the mobile notifications on select boards. We'll share more information about this as development continues.

THANK YOU

I want to thank all of you who assisted in communicating to legislators the urgency of passing HB 16. The supplemental funding provided through this legislation has allowed us to help communities across the state by reimbursing local costs incurred during disaster recovery, rebuilding and hazard mitigation projects. The importance of rebuilding schools and hospitals, repairing storm-damaged roads and bridges and protecting citizens from future harm through tornado safe room construction and other mitigation projects cannot be understated. Thank you!

Finally, it was great to see many old friends and make new ones at this year's successful SEMA Conference in Branson.

**Ron Walker, Director
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency**

Hendricks Named SEMA Emergency Human Services Program Manager



Deb Hendricks became SEMA Emergency Human Services program manager and statewide volunteer coordinator on March 2. She replaces Dante Gliniecki, who retired from SEMA after establishing and serving in the position for more than 18 years.

Prior to joining SEMA, Hendricks served nine years with the Children’s Division of the Missouri Department of Social Services. While there, she became involved in emergency human services, focusing on children and people with access and functional needs. She also served as a State Emergency Operations Center responder in emergency human services.

Previously, Hendricks served for nearly 20 years as a state agency public information officer, with stints in the departments of Economic Development, Natural Resources and Social Services. She retired from full-time state employment in 2013.

During a disaster, the primary mission of EHS responders is to determine what services are most needed by persons in the affected area. They then work with local, state and federal emergency management agencies and faith-based and volunteer organizations to ensure these essential services are provided quickly and effectively.

“I’m excited to begin a new chapter in my career in the field of emergency management,” said Hendricks. “During my association with Missouri’s emergency management community, I’ve been fortunate to work with some of the finest people I have ever met. Without exception, they all are dedicated to helping people prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. I’m now looking forward to working with them on a full-time basis.”

National Weather Service Communicates Uncertainty in Precipitation Forecasts

As National Weather Service meteorologists in Kansas City tracked a winter storm system that would arrive in northwest Missouri by Jan. 31, building an accurate weather forecast was a challenge.

As it moved in, the system would likely create highly unstable and unpredictable weather conditions, with shifting winds, quickly dropping temperatures and potentially heavy precipitation that would start as rain but likely change to a wintry mix. Accumulations might be significant in some areas, creating dangerous road conditions. But because of the system’s instability, some areas might get rain, some might have heavy snow and other parts of the region could stay dry. It all depended on how the variables would come together.

NWS forecasters are keenly aware that emergency managers depend on accurate weather forecasts to help take appropriate public safety actions. They also know that the public counts on solid weather information.

(Continued on page 14)



Missouri Emergency Management Region Profile: Region C

Region C comprises 11 counties in east-central Missouri: Pike, Lincoln, Warren, St. Charles, St. Louis, Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve and Perry. The region's population is 2.3 million, representing 37 percent of Missouri's population.

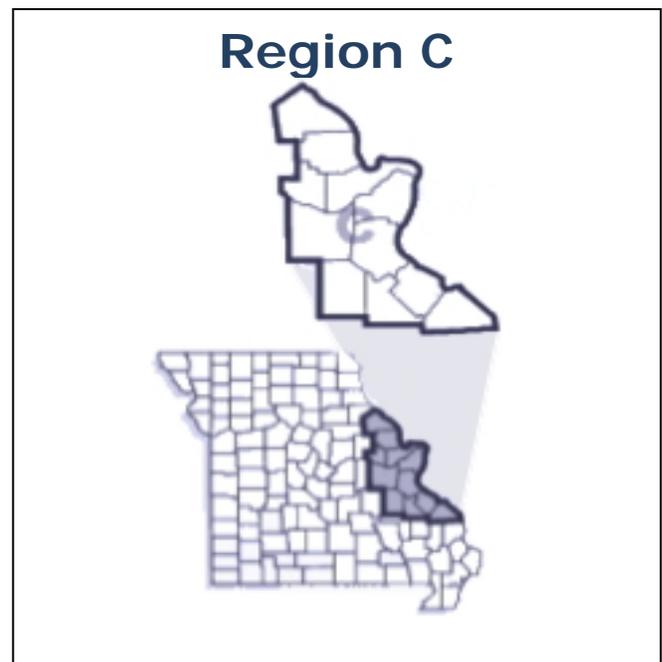
Region C includes three confluences of four rivers: the Illinois and Mississippi; the Missouri and Mississippi; and, the Meramec and Mississippi. Four Region C counties border the Missouri River, while seven counties and the city of St. Louis border the Mississippi.

The Port of St. Louis sits on more than 19 miles of Mississippi riverbank, handling more than 32 million tons of freight annually. The port is the nation's second largest inland port by trip-ton miles and the third largest by total tonnage. There are more than 100 docking facilities for barge shipping and 16 public terminals on the Mississippi River.

Some of the state's most heavily traveled interstate highways run through and intersect in Region C, including I-44, I-5, I-64 and I-70. Several major auxiliary interstates also crisscross the area, including I-170, I-270, I-370 and I-255. U.S. routes include 40, 50, 54, 61 and 67.

Railroads play a major role in the region's economy, with six Class I railroads. Included are Amtrak passenger service, two regional railroads, four terminals and switching stations and two light rail lines that move 53,000 passengers each weekday. St. Louis is also the nation's third largest freight rail hub. In addition to Lambert International Airport, the busiest in the state with 255 daily departures and more than 14 million passengers recorded last year, Region C has 14 regional airports.

There are 198 Class I high-hazard dams in region C, more than any other region in the state. There are also numerous levees due to the high number of rivers in the area.



Region C is home to some of the nation's most popular landmarks and destinations. The St. Louis Gateway Arch is the tallest national monument in the country. During the summer months, more than 6,000 people take the tram ride to the arch's top each day. Forest Park is the nation's sixth most visited U.S. urban park, hosting more than 13 million visitors annually. St. Louis also has three major league sports teams: the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team; the St. Louis Rams football team; and, the St. Louis Blues hockey team.

Region C has experienced a number of natural disasters over the past decade, including more than a dozen tornadoes and widespread flooding along the Mississippi, Missouri and other rivers. The Flood of 1993 hit this region particularly hard. From Clarksville to St. Genevieve, many areas remained flooded up to nearly 200 days. In Region C alone, thousands of families had to evacuate during the flood, with many ultimately losing their homes permanently. The historic flood also caused the region hundreds of millions of dollars in damage to personal property, agriculture, public infrastructure and to business property and income.

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Region C Emergency Management Directors

Abraham Cook, Franklin County

Abraham Cook has served as Franklin County EMD since November 2010.

Cook's professional experience includes serving as a police officer for the city of Washington. He holds a B.S. in crisis and disaster management, a B.S. in criminal justice and an M.S. in safety, security and emergency management.

Cook says the ever-changing operational and political environments at every level pose his greatest challenge in working to help and protect the public.

According to Cook, the most rewarding aspect of serving as an EMD is meeting and working with emergency managers, first responders and citizens to improve community emergency preparedness and response.

Cook lives in Washington. He enjoys walking, visiting with neighbors and competing in friendly neighborhood grilling competitions.

Dan Duffy, City of Lakeshire

Dan Duffy became the full-time EMD for the city of Lakeshire in October 2013. He was named to the post after retiring from the city's police department, where he served full-time as chief and part-time as the city's EMD, a combined position he held for 10 years.

Duffy has more than 40 years of law enforcement and emergency planning experience in both the public and private sectors. He holds a B.S. in secondary education and social science and earned a Missouri lifetime teaching certificate. He also holds graduate degrees in administration of justice and in business management.

Prior to joining the Lakeshire Police Department, Duffy worked as a security consultant for major corporations, focusing on labor disputes and workplace violence. He also served as an independent federal contractor conducting investigations for the FBI, National Parks Service and the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Duffy had previously retired after 24 years with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. At the time of his retirement, he was deputy commander of the vice division. He had also worked

as a detective in the department's narcotics and intelligence divisions. Duffy has taught criminal investigation courses and seminars across the state.

Doug Schaeffler, City of Richmond Heights

Doug Schaeffler became EMD for the city of Richmond Heights in 2012. He also serves as a captain with the Richmond Heights Police Department.

Schaeffler has been a police officer for 27 years. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration and a master's degree in criminology and criminal justice. He is also an adjunct professor in Saint Louis University's Criminal Justice department.

Schaeffler says his biggest professional challenge is effectively balancing his EMD duties with the demands of being a police department commander. Another challenge – which many may share – is keeping up with all the acronyms used in emergency management.

For Schaeffler, the most rewarding aspect of the job is the confidence his law enforcement training and experience provide in leading people, deploying resources and handling confusing and stressful situations during emergencies.

Schaeffler and his wife, Cathy, have one son, Nick.

Frank Barrow, City of St. Ann

Frank Barrow has been EMD for the city of St. Ann for 10 years. He also serves as a captain with the St. Ann Police Department.

Barrow's experience includes serving as a Code 1000 emergency notification system coordinator and working on the federal Northwest Plaza Buffer Zone Protection Plan.

Barrow says the biggest challenge in his job is juggling EMD responsibilities with other duties, such as serving as the field investigations bureau captain, training coordinator and crisis intervention team coordinator. He says one of the greatest rewards is working to keep city employees prepared for emergencies and helping citizens during disasters.

Barrow and his wife, Lynn, live in St. Ann. They have two sons, Ryan and Dylan.

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Mark Thorpe, City of Clayton

Mark Thorpe is fire chief and EMD for the city of Clayton. He has been EMD for one year after serving as deputy EMD for 13 years. He also serves as the Region C deputy regional coordinator for fire and EMS mutual aid.

Chief Thorpe has more than 34 years of fire and EMS experience. He has served 12 years as commander of the MO-1 DMAT, now known as the Missouri Disaster Response System. Previously he served 14 years as commander of the federal National Disaster Management System's Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) for Missouri.

Chief Thorpe says one of the most challenging parts of his job is working to help citizens become better prepared for disasters. One aspect that is very fulfilling is helping communities be ready for disasters.

Chief Thorpe is married with two children and two grandchildren.

Michael Daniels, Warren County

Michael Daniels was named Warren County EMD in December 2002. Previously, he worked for the Maplewood Fire Department from 1977 until he retired in 2000. He began his emergency response career as a firefighter in the U.S. Army from 1973-1976.

Daniels was instrumental in restarting the Missouri Emergency Management Association in 2013 and currently serves as chairman. He also is the Region C representative in the Missouri Emergency Preparedness Association, a role he has had since 2005. He also sits on the Region C Homeland Security Oversight Committee and serves on the SEMA director's advisory committee.

Daniels holds an associate's degree in fire protection technology from St. Louis Community College-Forest Park and a liberal arts degree from St. Louis Community College-Meramec.

Richard Murry, Pike County

Richard Murry has served as Pike County EMD since 1989.

He says the most rewarding aspect of his job is helping people, whether it is to become better prepared for emergencies or to recover and rebuild after a disaster. The most challenging part of being an EMD is recruiting and managing volunteers.

Murry and his wife, Diana Sue, have five grown sons.

Michael Wiegand, City of Eureka

Michael Wiegand is the chief of police and EMD for the city of Eureka, where he has worked for 24 years. He has 35 years of experience in law enforcement and emergency management.

Chief Wiegand is a 1998 graduate of the FBI National Academy and a graduate of the National Crime Prevention and Technology Institute. He is also a graduate of Webster University in St. Louis.

Chief Wiegand is a certified instructor in weapons of mass destruction, SEMA CERT, Missouri Peace Officer Training and Standards and for the American Heart Association. He is also an instructor at the Regional Community Policing Institute, based at Missouri Western State University in St. Joseph.

According to Chief Wiegand, the most challenging aspect of being an EMD is working with businesses to ensure their emergency plans are complete and regularly practiced. He says he gains the most reward from helping communities prepare for disasters.

Chief Wiegand and his family live in Eureka.

Sean Quinn, City of Des Peres

Sean Quinn is EMD for the city of Des Peres, a position he has had for six years. He also works full-time as the city's fire marshal.

His previous experience includes serving in the U.S. Army and with the St. Louis County Police Department. He also is a long-time member of the St. Louis County local emergency planning committee.

According to Quinn, the biggest challenge he faces as an EMD is maintaining a comprehensive emergency response plan and keeping all stakeholders updated on changes. He says the most positive aspect of the job is working with his fellow emergency management professionals to help his community prepare for, respond to and recover from all types of emergencies.

Quinn and his wife, Lisa, live in south St. Louis County and have two grown daughters, Courtney and Cassidy.

Thomas Koch, St. Charles County

Thomas Koch was named St. Charles County EMD on Jan. 1, 2015. He also works full-time as commander of the St. Charles County Police Department's Bureau of Special Enforcement, which houses the division of emergency management. The bureau also includes the county SWAT, bomb and fugitive units, St. Louis metro air support flight operations, community education and the county police training center.

Koch has 34 years of law enforcement experience, beginning with the St. Charles County Sheriff's Department. On Jan. 1, 2015, law enforcement responsibilities switched to the newly formed St. Charles County Police Department. His assignments have included patrol deputy, patrol supervisor and 16 years with the county SWAT unit.

Koch says the biggest challenge he faces as an EMD is effectively collaborating with the broad spectrum of agencies and organizations that partner with emergency management. Koch says he gets satisfaction from working with the county's emergency management staff, a small group of hard-working professionals with a big job to do.

Koch has two sons and currently lives in Warren County, but is in the process of moving. His hobbies include sports of all types.

Warren Robinson, Jefferson County

Warren Robinson has served as EMD for Jefferson County for two years. Previously he worked for the Springfield-Greene County office of emergency management as an emergency management specialist. He is also a member of the Southwest Missouri Incident Support Team.

Robinson says the most challenging aspect of emergency management in Jefferson County comes from the county's highly populated suburban areas and quickly growing commercial centers, which are mixed with large areas of forested, rural countryside where the population is highly dispersed. This presents a wide variety of potential response challenges.

Robinson says the most positive part of working in emergency management is the opportunity to develop plans and recommend policies that enhance the community's ability to prevent the loss of life during an emergency and to rebuild afterward.

Gary Christmann, City of St. Louis

Gary Christmann is commissioner of the St. Louis Office of Emergency Management. He has worked for the agency for more than 10 years and has over 23 years of emergency services experience, including in hospital emergency rooms, ambulance service, public health, local and state incident response teams and emergency management education.

Christmann currently is chairman of the City of St. Louis Local Emergency Planning Commission and the St. Louis Area Maritime Security Council. He also is a member of the Greater St. Louis Incident Stress Management Team, the St. Louis Area Regional Response System and the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant program. He also serves as deputy commander of the Missouri Disaster Response System and is an adjunct professor in the Saint Louis University School of Public Health.

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Get to Know SEMA's Regional Coordinators



Maureen Burke, Region A

Maureen Burke has been Region A regional coordinator since October 2006. Previously, she worked for more than 20 years in corporate and small-business accounting

and has a B.A. in business administration.

Burke says her biggest challenge is staying abreast of continual changes in policies and procedures at all levels of government. The most rewarding aspect of her work is developing relationships as she works with local jurisdictions on planning, response and recovery efforts.

One of her favorite pastimes is long-distance bike riding. She has completed rides across Missouri, Iowa and Tennessee. She says that during her rides she enjoys the changing scenery and meeting people from all walks of life, cultures and backgrounds.

Burke was born and raised in Kansas City and has five brothers and sisters. She currently lives in Lee's Summit.



Brandy Halbert, Region B

Brandy Halbert has been Region B regional coordinator for four years. Prior to joining SEMA in March 2011, Halbert worked for six years as a health program

representative for the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. She also served seven years as a child support enforcement technician for the Missouri Department of Social Services.

Because Region B relies heavily on volunteers to fill key emergency management and response roles, Halbert says one of her greatest challenges is recruiting, training and managing the large number of volunteers needed in the region.

Halbert says that working with the EMDs and volunteers in all of Region B's jurisdictions is one of the greatest rewards of her job.

She enjoys spending time outdoors, especially riding her bike and playing softball.

Halbert lives in Linn. She has two sons, Adam and Garet, and one grandchild, Selah.



Derek Lohner, Region C

Derek Lohner has served as the regional coordinator in Region C for 15 years. He also served for 14 years in law enforcement. He holds both a B.S. and an M.S. in

safety and security management.

According to Lohner, the most rewarding part of his job is developing personal relationships and partnerships that help in overcoming the many challenges of working in emergency management.

Denise Russell, Region D

Denise Russell became Region D regional coordinator in June 2013. Prior to joining SEMA, she was a county EMD for five years. She also has nine years of experience in the fire and emergency medical services.

Russell holds a master's degree in emergency and disaster management. She is also a Certified Emergency Manager through the International Association of Emergency Managers. She also holds a certification through the Missouri Certified Emergency Manager Program.

Russell says her biggest challenge as a regional coordinator is making sure she does all she can to serve the local agencies and to stay current on developments and best practices in her profession.

Russell says the greatest rewards come from working with the different communities in her region, watching the progress they make in their planning and preparedness efforts and assisting community leaders in recovering from disasters.

Russell enjoys gardening, shopping for antiques, reading and flyfishing. She and her husband, Ron, have two grown daughters.

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Mark Winkler, Region E

Mark Winkler has served as Region E's regional coordinator for 25 years. Named to the position in 1990, he was the first of what were then known as SEMA area

coordinators. He was also the first SEMA employee to live and work outside the Jefferson City area.

Prior to joining SEMA, Winkler worked as a planner with the Southeast Missouri Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission.

According to Winkler, the greatest challenges of serving as a regional coordinator is the low number of full-time, paid EMDs and the lack of adequate funding local emergency management programs.

Winkler says he gains the greatest reward from the lasting relationships he has forged in more than 25 years of working in southeast Missouri's emergency management community.

Brenda Gerlach, Region F

Brenda Gerlach has served as a regional coordinator for nearly five years, starting in Region I and then transferring to Region F in July 2014.



She has been a state employee for 30 years, nearly 27 of which have been with SEMA. Before becoming a regional coordinator in 2010, she worked as a human resources and procurement specialist and a public assistance grant coordinator.

Gerlach says one of the most challenging aspects of being a regional coordinator is serving as a liaison between the state and each of the local EMDs. It is often difficult representing the interests and concerns of all sides accurately and objectively.

Forming close bonds with Region F's EMDs is one of the greatest rewards of her work, according to Gerlach. She says that they are her friends as well as her colleagues.

Gerlach enjoys scrapbooking, cooking, yard work and church activities. Coming from a large family, she also enjoys getting together with her siblings.

Gerlach is a lifelong Missourian and lives in Jefferson City. She has one grown daughter, Kim.

Janice "J.J." Travis, Region G

Janice "J.J." Travis, the newest member of the regional coordinator team, was named Region G regional coordinator on Jan. 2, 2015.



Before joining SEMA, Travis served nearly two years as the assistant EMD in Howell County. She has also worked as a Red Cross emergency services director, serving stints in southwest and south central Missouri. She was also an emergency room nurse for 14 years.

Travis says her biggest challenge is working with local volunteers whose busy lives leave limited time for volunteering. Because most have full-time jobs, it can be difficult to schedule important planning and training meetings and other activities.

Travis says she gets the greatest enjoyment from working closely with EMDs and supporting them when needed. Travis enjoys riding her motorcycle and camping, as well as reading and doing volunteer work.

She has one son, Matt. He and his wife, Alicia, have three daughters, Kara, Abigail and Charlotte.

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Corey Sloan, Region H

Corey Sloan was named Region H regional coordinator on Sept. 10, 2014. Previously, he served as a fire investigator for the Missouri

Division of Fire Safety. He has also worked in local emergency management and has been a police chief, an ATF Federal Violent Crimes Task Force officer and an incident support team communications unit leader and technician. He has also worked as an EMT, EMT-paramedic, dispatcher/communications officer and volunteer firefighter. He holds Firefighter I and II certifications and maintains an active police officer license.

Sloan has an associate's degree in criminal justice, a B.A. in fire administration and fire prevention technology and an M.A. in sociology and criminal justice. He is also a graduate of the Missouri Police Chiefs' Association Command College.

According to Sloan, one of his greatest challenges is staying current with changes in emergency management-related laws, rules and regulations at every level of government and ensuring that all local entities he works with are aware of the changes.

Sloan derives the greatest satisfaction from serving citizens and working with his emergency services family in Region H and at SEMA. He enjoys giving back to his region's communities and making a positive difference in people's lives.

Sloan is a licensed general-class radio operator and self-proclaimed radio and technology "nerd." He is a self-taught amateur meteorologist and storm chaser. Sloan and his wife, Heidi, live in Cameron. Together they have six children, Katie, Mitch, Ariel, Kenzie, Kayla and Kendra and two granddaughters, Claire and Chelsie.

Brett Hendrix, Region I

Brett Hendrix became Region I regional coordinator in June 2014. Previously, he worked as a grants specialist and



grants supervisor for SEMA and for the Missouri Office of Homeland Security. While there, he worked on the Regional Homeland Security Oversight Committees, Emergency Management Performance Grant program, Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and on the State Preparedness Report.

Hendrix says the biggest challenge he has faced as a new regional coordinator is adapting to each of the unique needs of Region I's local agencies. The most rewarding aspects are serving in the area where he grew up and working with local agencies to protect Missouri lives and property.

He enjoys coaching his daughters' basketball and soccer teams. He is also an avid Missouri Tigers fan.

Hendrix lives in Lebanon with his wife, Lesli, and their two daughters, Adali and Maeli.

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Businesses Learn About Disaster Preparedness During QuakeSmart Summit in St. Louis

To learn how businesses can prepare for earthquakes and other disasters, almost 100 business leaders, emergency management professionals and others gathered for the 2015 QuakeSmart Business Preparedness Summit, held on Feb. 6 at Saint Louis University. The conference was presented through a partnership of local, state and federal agencies and entities, including SEMA's Earthquake Preparedness Program.

SEMA Director Ron Walker and Beth Freeman, regional administrator for FEMA's Region VII, both addressed the conference. Attendees also heard presentations on earthquake hazards, building structure and design evaluation and earthquake mitigation for businesses.

Gary Christmann, St. Louis Emergency Management Agency commissioner, provided a series of basic steps that all types and sizes of Missouri businesses should take to ensure they are prepared for earthquakes and other emergencies.

"Businesses have a lot at stake and carry a huge amount of responsibility to their employees, customers and community. It just makes sense to prepare for disasters," said Christmann. "It's not difficult, but because it can mean the difference between life and death, any investment in time and effort makes it well worth it."

Following are some of the basic steps businesses should take to begin preparing for disasters.

Know Your Facility

- ✓ What hazards are in and around your facility?
 - Does your business present hazards to employees or the surrounding community?
 - What hazards outside your business threaten employees (chemical or fuel storage tanks that could leak or explode, etc.)?
- ✓ Do you have a workplace emergency plan (Evacuation routes for fires; 'Drop, Cover and Hold On' for earthquakes, etc.)?
 - Do all your employees know it?
 - Do you practice regularly?
- ✓ Can employees be sheltered in your facility?
 - Do you have adequate space?
 - Do you keep emergency supplies on hand?
- ✓ Do you have backup communications?
 - Can you communicate with employees inside and outside facility; their families?
 - Can you contact first responders?
- ✓ Does your facility have a backup generator?
 - What are its capabilities?
 - Who knows how to safely operate it?

Know Your Employees

- Are they trained on how to respond to a workplace emergency?

- ✓ Are employees prepared at work?
- ✓ Do employees have special expertise?
 - Is there someone with emergency response experience or medical training?
- ✓ Do employees have access/functional needs?
 - Do you know their emergency needs?
 - Can you care for them if sheltering in place?
- ✓ Are employees prepared at home?
 - Have they made emergency plans, including for evacuation and sheltering at home?
 - Do they have an emergency supplies kit?
 - Do they know how to obtain emergency information?

Know Your Business Neighbors

- ✓ Do you know the businesses around you?
 - Do they present hazards to your business?
 - Do they have emergency plans?
 - Can you assist each other in an emergency?

Know Your Emergency Responders

- ✓ Are you familiar with local first responders?
 - What are their capabilities?
 - What are their response priorities?
 - Are they familiar with your facility?
 - How can your business engage in community emergency planning?

27th Annual Emergency Management Conference



Gov. Nixon with Lane Roberts (seated left) and Major Bret Johnson.

At the 2015 Missouri Emergency Management Conference in Branson, Gov. Jay Nixon stressed the necessity of continuing commitment to recovering communities like Joplin following the 2011 EF-5 tornado there. The Governor praised recently appointed Missouri Department of Public Safety Director Lane Roberts for his leadership following the deadly tornado. Roberts served as Joplin police chief from April 2007 until his 2014 retirement. Gov. Nixon also praised incoming Missouri State Highway Patrol Superintendent Maj. Bret Johnson. Johnson is a 28-year Patrol veteran, who helped lead the Patrol's Joplin response efforts and serves as commander of the Field Operations Bureau. Gov. Nixon thanked Col. Ron Replogle for his 31 years of service to the Patrol, the last five as superintendent. Replogle is retiring May 1.

John Hark, EMD for Marion County and the city of Hannibal and Tom Beardslee, Scott County EMD were at the conference for overcoming personal challenges and adversity. Both Hark and Beardslee are cancer survivors. The recognition was part of a keynote presentation by Dana Bowman, a former U.S. Army Special Forces soldier and member of the Golden Knights, the Army's elite parachute team. Bowman's legs were severed during a 1994 parachute training accident. After recovering, he became the first double amputee to re-enlist in the Army. Bowman retired from the military in 1996 and now is president and CEO of the HALO for Freedom Warrior Foundation. His conference presentation was about overcoming hardship and constant change.



Clark County and Hannibal EMD John Hark (left) and Scott County EMD Tom Beardslee (right) are recognized for overcoming adversity during a presentation by SEMA Conference keynote speaker Dana Bowman.



A SEMA Conference attendee (right) gets a threat/safety briefing at the disaster responder reception center exercise held during conference registration.

To experience first-hand how a disaster responder reception center (RRC) operates and to register for the conference at the same time, many attendees participated in an exercise that simulated an RRC that had been set up for a local disaster response. After being assigned a responder identity, participants were directed through seven different RRC briefing stations. By the time exercise participants had cycled through all of the stations, which took about 20 minutes, they had a better understanding of how RRCs are designed to operate and they had also completed conference registration.

Mass Fatality Exercise

(Continued from page 1)

FIELD EXERCISE

The exercise was designed to test how the different morgue and VIC operations functioned together for the first time.

MoMORT's command and control and logistics elements established unified command, worked with the local medical examiner and initiated statewide responder notification, activation and management. The exercise required deployment of all equipment and personnel needed to operate and support the state's portable morgue unit (PMU) and the VIC.

The VIC's trained volunteers work with families of the deceased. They also help people file disaster-related missing person reports, a process of gathering and tracking personal information about the missing person. Called ante-mortem data, this is shared with the disaster morgue identification center (MIC). The MIC works to identify the deceased by matching missing person ante-mortem data gathered by the VIC with post-mortem findings provided by the PMU.

During the exercise, two emotional elements of emergency response were also addressed. One is offering emotional and spiritual support to families of disaster victims and others. Providing this care to the exercise actors were mental health professionals, chaplains and other trained staff from the state's Show-Me Response emergency volunteer management system.

The second emotional element is called disaster behavioral health. Trained staff help ensure the physical and emotional health of emergency responders and volunteers during and after a disaster. It involves responder observation, family and friend intervention and post-action support.

SCENARIO: MASS FATALITY FLASH FLOODING

The exercise scenario was a flash flood outside Columbia that overwhelmed a large group of campers, leaving 40 unidentified victims dead at the scene. The Boone County Coroner's Office transported the bodies to the temporary morgue. Two other unidentified victims died at a Columbia hospital and were being held in the hospital morgue. Also, 10 missing person reports were filed with local authorities and the public was advised to report missing persons at the disaster VIC.

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Disaster Recovery Funding

(Continued from page 1)

Federal funding had been delayed because, beginning in Fiscal Year 2014, the General Assembly removed the "estimated" designation from disaster appropriations, which effectively capped the amount of federal disaster funds available to reimburse local communities for recovery projects

Local projects that are eligible for federal reimbursement include construction of tornado safe rooms, road and bridge repair and disaster debris removal and construction of public facilities, including schools and hospitals.

From the start Fiscal Year 2015 through January, SEMA had sent \$80.5 million in federal reimbursement payments. The total is SEMA's highest ever, in part because of the many projects from federal disaster DR-1980, which included the 2011 Joplin tornado.

Among those awaiting federal repayment funds was the Joplin School District, which had to rebuild Joplin High School and other schools in the district after being destroyed or severely damaged in the 2011 tornado.

"Since January, SEMA had continued to review, validate and process payment requests because these reimbursements are critical to local communities." SEMA Director Ron Walker said. "As soon as HB 16 became law, we started processing those payments. We also know that we now have sufficient spending authority through June 30, the end of the fiscal year."

HB16 also includes \$8.5 million so SEMA and other state agencies have sufficient funding to respond to emergencies and disasters that may arise before the end of the fiscal year and to reimburse local entities for the state share of recovery costs. This additional appropriation authority is necessary due to costs incurred by the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Missouri National Guard in responding to emergencies.





Victim Information Center staff obtain information from families of disaster victims during the state mass fatality field exercise in Columbia.

Mass Fatality Exercise

(Continued from page 13)

After assessing the scene, the local medical examiner asked SEMA to activate the MoMORT in Columbia. This required actually moving the necessary equipment and support assets from the dedicated storage facility in Kansas City and setting it up at the fairgrounds outside Columbia.

When the MoMORT mobilization was complete, the PMU and MIC were set up and fully operational. Primary and support personnel had also been briefed and were ready to receive victim remains. Office space located in the same building had been converted for VIC operations, unified command and other administrative needs.

To lend realism to the exercise, staff used several mannequins to practice proper handling of human remains and to go through the different victim identification procedures. Volunteers were recruited to act as family members of disaster victims to provide the same level of authenticity in the VIC. This allowed VIC staff to practice gathering sensitive information and providing support to people under difficult circumstances.

By the end of the intensive four days, 270 people had participated in the exercise. This included more than 40 exercise evaluators and observers from the state and local emergency management community. Nearly 70 people volunteered to act as family members of disaster victims, including nearly 50 EMDs and SEMA staff and 20 cadets from the University of Missouri's Department of Military Science and Leadership.

National Weather Service

(Continued from page 3)

As they watched the system, the NWS Kansas City meteorologists decided to try a new type of forecast with descriptions of what might happen.

In addition to giving the typical prediction of specific snow accumulations, explanations of the probability or potential for a location to receive those amounts of snow or ice were provided. Maps and other graphics depicting what could happen if temperatures stayed warmer or grew colder than expected were also included.

"It was shaping up to be a very complex situation to forecast and to explain to the public," said Andy Bailey, warning coordination meteorologist for the NWS office in Kansas City. "We thought this would be a good opportunity to try explaining to the public what this system could do if things were to change, in addition to predicting what the weather would do. Overall, we wanted to communicate uncertainty in a useful, yet understandable way."

EXPLAINING UNCERTAINTY

The challenge of accurately and consistently forecasting the weather is nothing new. Even with the latest technology, accurately predicting what the weather will do in a given location at a specific time is difficult. This is especially true with a complex winter weather system. The question is how to provide useful weather forecasts while effectively communicating uncertainty.

That message had been brought home earlier in the month in another region. On Jan. 21, NWS meteorologist Gary Szatkowski apologized on Twitter writing, "You made a lot of tough decisions expecting us to get it right, and we didn't. Once again, I'm sorry." That was after eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York City shut down after predictions of an epic blizzard. The dire warnings were wrong in most places.

After trying the new way of explaining snow prediction uncertainty, Bailey surveyed area media and EMDs to get their perspective on the new approach. "The feedback from our area partners was very positive," said Bailey. "I'm sure we'll keep working toward a better way of communicating snowfall uncertainty by next winter."

SEMA TRAINING SCHEDULE • 2015

DATE	EVENT DETAILS	LOCATION
April-May	Ignitable Liquids and Class B Foams POST approved; Sponsor: MERC Note: Multiple dates, times and locations offered. For details: http://training.dps.mo.gov/sematraining.nsf/TrainingSchedule?OpenForm	
April -May	Hazmat IQ Training POST approved; Sponsor: MERC Note: Multiple dates, times and locations offered. For details: http://training.dps.mo.gov/sematraining.nsf/TrainingSchedule?OpenForm	
April -May	Hazardous Materials Incident Response: Awareness POST approved; Sponsor: MERC Note: Multiple dates, times and locations offered. For details: http://training.dps.mo.gov/sematraining.nsf/TrainingSchedule?OpenForm	
April -May	Hazardous Materials Incident Response: 80 Hour Technician POST approved; Sponsor: MERC Note: Multiple dates, times and locations offered. For details: http://training.dps.mo.gov/sematraining.nsf/TrainingSchedule?OpenForm	
April-May	Hazardous Materials Incident Response: Operations POST approved; Sponsor: MERC Note: Multiple dates, times and locations offered. For details: http://training.dps.mo.gov/sematraining.nsf/TrainingSchedule?OpenForm	
April-May	Social Media for Natural Disaster Response and Recovery POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA Note: Multiple dates, times and locations offered. For details: http://training.dps.mo.gov/sematraining.nsf/TrainingSchedule?OpenForm	
April 14	Rapid Needs Assessment (APS Required Course) Sponsor: SEMA	Howell County Health Department, West Plains
April 14-17	Basic Public Information Officers Course (APS Elective Course) POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	Raytown Fire Protection District
April 21	Critical Infrastructure Key Resources Awareness POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	Springfield/Greene County Public Safety Center
April 22	Advanced Critical Infrastructure Protection POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	Springfield/Greene County Public Safety Center
April 25-26	Missouri Disaster Animal Sheltering & Handling (MO-DASH) Sponsor: SEMA	Ozark Fire Protection Dist. Station 1
April 25	Pipeline Emergencies POST approved; Sponsor: MERC; Time: 8 a.m. – 5p.m.	Morgan County Justice Center, Versailles
April 29-30	ICS400 Advanced Incident Command System POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	Dept. of Corrections Regional Training Center, Jefferson City
May 5-6	Local Volunteer and Donations Management (APS Elective Course); Sponsor: SEMA	St. Joseph Region H HSRT, St Joseph
May 6	ICS/EOC Interface (APS Required Course) POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	Warren County EMA, Warrenton
May 12-14	Wide Area Search POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	Osage Beach Fire Station #2
May 12-14	Community Emergency Response Team T-t-T Sponsor: SEMA	Osage Community Center, Cape Girardeau

May 13	Rail Car Incident Response POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	First United Methodist Church, Sedalia
May 19-21	Mitigation for Emergency Managers (APS Required Course) POST approved; Sponsor: SEMA	Boone County Fire Protection Dist. Headquarters, Columbia

Note: This list does not include invitation-only or local offering-only events. View the complete SEMA training schedule with details on the SEMA website's Training and Exercises page.