

Inside IEMA

Monthly Newsletter



Illinois Emergency Management Agency

January 2017

From IEMA Director James K. Joseph

I always find the start of a new year exciting because it brings with it fresh opportunities to make a difference for the people we serve. I'm excited by the many activities and initiatives on the horizon this year and look forward to working with each of you to achieve great things for your communities and the state of Illinois.

I just returned from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which hosted a Medical Countermeasures (MCM) Operational Resource Guide stakeholder meeting. Medical countermeasures include vaccines, antiviral drugs, antibiotics, antitoxins, etc., that would be provided to identified populations during a public health emergency, including a possible terrorist event involving biological, chemical or radiological/nuclear material, or other emergencies.

The CDC brought together about 50 representatives from state, tribal and local agencies for this meeting to discuss the content and format of the guide and recommend improvements. The guide is being developed by the CDC's Division of State and Local Readiness.

What's significant about this meeting is that this was the first time emergency management was represented in discussions about MCM and distribution of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). I believe it's critical for emergency management to be involved in this planning process as we have a vital role in the execution of that plan during a real emergency requiring distribution of the SNS.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate Jan Odeshoo, acting regional administrator for FEMA Region V in Chicago, on her 36 years of service at FEMA. Jan has been a tremendous resource and support to IEMA for many years, and we are very fortunate to have such a dedicated public servant working on our behalf in Region V. Check out the article about Jan on page 8 in this issue.

I hope you find this issue of Inside IEMA informative. As always, please contact me with any issues or concerns you'd like to discuss.



Director Joseph talks with Jessica Byrski from the National Emergency Management Association and IEMA Operations Chief Paul Rasch during a break at the CDC's Medical Countermeasures stakeholder meeting in Atlanta.

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January is Radon Action Month in Illinois

Governor Bruce Rauner recently proclaimed January “Radon Action Month” in Illinois to encourage residents to test their homes for radon, a radioactive gas that is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. It’s estimated more than 1,100 people in Illinois develop radon-related lung cancer each year, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes radon as the leading cause of home-related deaths in the U.S.

To kick off the month, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and the American Lung Association in Illinois (ALAIL) announced a statewide initiative to help Illinois school districts screen school buildings for radon.

As part of the school initiative, districts throughout Illinois can receive radon detection equipment, assistance with developing a radon testing plan and guidance on radon detector placement within school buildings. To participate in the program, designated school district employees must complete an online training course on procedures for performing screening measurements in their district school buildings.

IEMA and the ALAIL will work with participating school districts on development of a quality assurance project plan and a final report, as well as provide guidance for placement of measurement devices in one school building in each district.

The initiative is similar to a pilot program launched in 2011 that assisted 56 schools in 17 districts with testing more than 2,500 rooms for radon. IEMA found 70 percent of the buildings had radon levels above 4 picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L), which is the level at which radon remediation efforts are recommended by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Only 8 percent of the total classrooms tested had levels above 4 pCi/L, which would be expected as radon tends to be an issue only in isolated areas of most school buildings.

In many cases, radon levels in schools can be lowered through modifications to the heating and air conditioning systems, while a professional radon mitigation contractor may be needed to address elevated radon levels in some schools.

The ALAIL will deliver radon detectors to participating



During an event to launch Radon Action Month, IEMA Director Joseph presented Tracey Smith of SIU Medicine with the 2016 Illinois Excellence in Radon Award for her efforts to increase radon awareness of medical students and staff. Pictured here are Kelly Horn (IEMA), Dr. Jerry Kruse (SIU Medicine), Tracey Smith, Director Joseph and Patrick Daniels (IEMA).

schools and assist designated school personnel with testing protocol and detector placement. Cost for the detectors and ALAIL’s work will be supported by an IEMA grant funded through the federal State Indoor Radon Grant Program.

School districts interested in participating in the program should contact Kallie Sinkus at Kallie.Sinkus@lung.org or by phone at 217-718-6667. School testing will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Medical School Outreach

IEMA and the ALAIL also joined with Southern Illinois University (SIU) Medicine in January to increase public awareness of radon risks and ways to reduce radon exposure, as well as to enhance understanding of this health hazard within the medical community.

A display on radon risks, testing and mitigation currently is on display in the SIU medical library to educate medical students and medical professionals about the naturally occurring health hazard. In addition, IEMA radon program staff provided a presentation on radon during a “Lunch and Learn” for SIU employees.

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January is Radon Action Month in Illinois *(cont.)*

Video for Real Estate Agents

In January IEMA and the ALAIL also released a short video to help real estate agents meet requirements of the Illinois Radon Awareness Act. The act requires sellers to provide anyone buying a home, condominium or other residential property in Illinois with information about indoor radon exposure and the fact radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers and the second leading cause overall.

The law, which went into effect Jan. 1, 2008, was designed to increase public awareness about the health risks associated with radon.

In July 2015, IEMA's radon staff participated in a discussion group as part of a Center for Disease Control and Prevention study about the effects of states radon policies on the level of knowledge of radon issues of both home buyers and real estate agents. The agents noted that showing buyers a short video would be a helpful way to convey the required information from the Radon Awareness Act.

IEMA provided federal State Indoor Radon Grant funding to the ALAIL for development and production of the video, which is available at www.radon.illinois.gov.

Julie Dixon Recognized as IEMA Employee of the Quarter

Julie Dixon of IEMA's Bureau of Radiation Safety recently became the first agency employee to be recognized as Employee of the Quarter twice. Dixon was the first recipient of IEMA's employee recognition program in 2004, and in January was once again recognized for her exceptional contributions to the agency.

Nominations for Dixon noted her decades of selfless service to the state of Illinois, but emphasized her exhaustive efforts that successfully reduced the bureau's managed inventory by more than 200 items while coordinating the inventory of nearly 3,000 items. One nomination noted her efforts reduced "decades of ineffective property that had year after year caused loss in time, management and storage of property without purpose."



Director Joseph presents the Employee of the Quarter certificate to Julie Dixon. Also pictured are Lance Wilson (left), section head for Radiation Measurement and Analysis, and Adnan Khayyat (right), chief of the Bureau of Radiation Safety.



Jenifer Johnson was recently named chief of IEMA's Bureau of Preparedness and Grants Administration (PGA). Johnson, who will continue to serve as chief of the agency's legal staff, led PGA for several months while the bureau chief position was vacant. During that time, she worked to implement strategies to streamline policies and procedures for the more than 15 grant programs within IEMA. Her dual roles illustrate the agency's commitment to doing more with less and building upon our best practice of being good stewards of taxpayer dollars. Johnson now oversees the agency's legal, records management, grant administration, hazard mitigation and public assistance staffs.

Senior Staff Spotlight: Sreekumar Govindan

It's been just under a year since Sreekumar Govindan joined IEMA as chief of the Bureau of Information Technology (IT), but in that short time he already has tackled several major projects aimed at increasing efficiency in the agency's IT environment.

Govindan said one of his first observations about the agency was the many programs IEMA is responsible for despite its small size. He recalls the discussions at the time of his interview about the large number of applications (about 119) used by nearly 200 employees. The sheer number of applications makes it difficult for the 14 members of the IT staff to support the agency's needs, so Govindan set out to embrace enterprise-wide infrastructure and solutions used in the state of Illinois and find commonalities among applications that would allow them to be consolidated.

IEMA also is on track to move to the state's Enterprise Resource Planning platform in July 2017. Govindan said the move will enable the agency to retire applications like Finance Management System currently maintained and supported in-house, allowing his staff to focus on other business-critical processes.

Cybersecurity is a major concern throughout the world, and Govindan said IEMA is striving to be a leader in network safety in state government. The agency is compliant with Personal Identifiable Information requirements from the state's Chief



**Bureau of Information Technology
Chief Sreekumar Govindan**

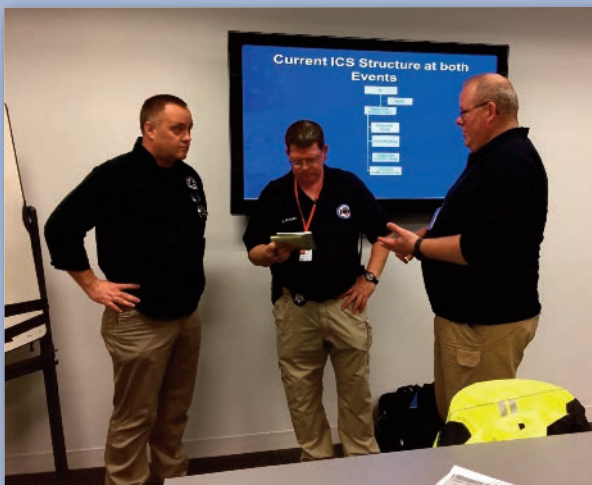
Information Security Officer and currently is working on a cybersecurity framework starting with creating awareness for IEMA's staff.

Govindan brought extensive project management skills to his position at IEMA. He has a Master of Business Administration, as well as certifications as a Project Management Professional, Certified Scrum Manager, Information Technology Information Library, and Six Sigma Green Belt.

On July 1, 2016, IEMA's information technology staff became part of the new Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology, but Govindan and his staff are still assigned to IEMA and continue to dedicate their efforts to supporting the agency's important public safety mission.

Prior to joining IEMA, Govindan was a consultant with State Farm in Bloomington. He also previously worked as the information technology manager for AIG American General and as a consultant to the Illinois Secretary of State.

Govindan was born, raised and educated in India. He and his family moved to the U.S. in 2000, and lived in Chatham until his son graduated from high school. Govindan and his wife currently live in Bloomington, where his wife works, and he commutes to his office in Springfield. His daughter is a medical resident in New York and his son is a senior industrial engineering student at Bradley University.



The Illinois Incident Management Team (IMT) recently conducted a table top exercise at IEMA headquarters in Springfield as part of the group's quarterly meeting. The exercise scenario involved simultaneous terrorist events at O'Hare and Midway airports. The IMT is a mutual aid resource to agencies and jurisdictions in Illinois for planned events and critical incidents. Pictured above, IMT members Joe Kelly (chief, Morton Fire Department), Randy Rhodes (chief, Divernon Fire Department and Secretary of State Police Department) and Derek Carl (lieutenant, Macomb Police Department) discuss strategy during the exercise.

SERC Advisory Committee Created to Promote Emergency Planning

IEMA Director James K. Joseph recently established a chemical safety advisory committee to the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) to promote hazard communications and emergency planning throughout the state.

Under the Illinois Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act, IEMA is designated as the SERC and, as such, is charged with assisting local communities effectively plan for and respond to chemical emergencies involving hazardous materials.

The new group includes members representing several state agencies, local emergency planning committees, fire services, law enforcement and industry that were identified as having a vested interest in hazardous materials safety and response.

The advisory committee's first meeting will be Feb. 1. It is anticipated the group will meet two to four times a year.

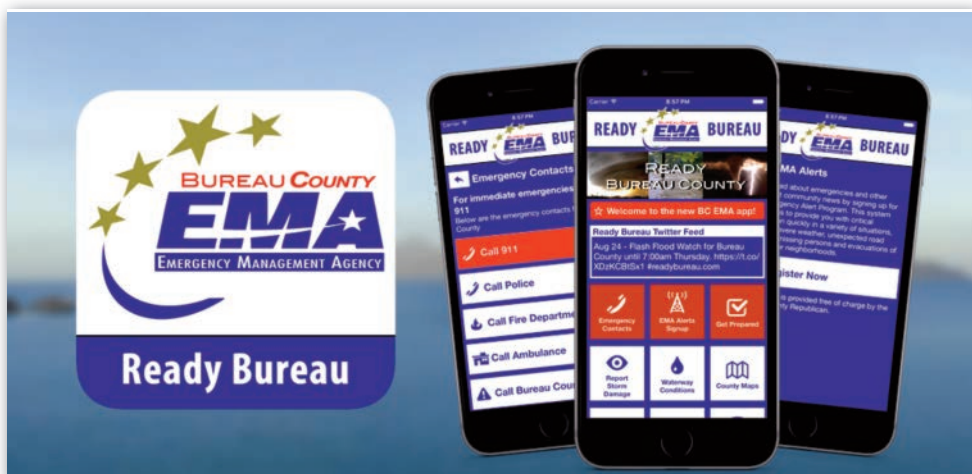
Bureau County EMA Launches "Ready Bureau" App

Residents of Bureau County now have access to a plethora of emergency preparedness and other local information through the new "Ready Bureau" mobile app developed by the Bureau County Emergency Management Agency (EMA). The free app was launched in November and already has been downloaded to Apple and Android mobile devices more than 500 times.

Keenan Campbell, director of Bureau County EMA, said development of the app took about six months. The app was then beta tested for several weeks before it was launched to the public. Campbell and his staff designed and developed the app and its content and hired a contractor to provide technical support, server software and on-going app store updates. The "Ready Bureau," app is owned by the Bureau County EMA.

While the app started as a way to put emergency preparedness information and actual event updates at the fingertips of county residents, Campbell said it has grown to include a wide variety of information, including road conditions maps, weather advisories, public health information, shelter locations, public transportation schedules, utility outages, volunteer forms and much more.

The app also allows people affected by a disaster to report damages to the EMA. Campbell said such reports will be geo-coded to help officials determine the location.



Campbell said the county also has created app pages that won't go live until a disaster occurs. This will allow them to quickly insert incident-specific information and activate the page during an emergency.

To encourage people to download the app, Bureau County EMA launched a media and social media promotional campaign that included a contest to win a weather alert radio. The agency also promoted the app's Santa-tracking feature via NORAD and encouraged people to download the "Ready Bureau" app on mobile devices being given as holiday presents.

Campbell said he is very happy with the app, but continues to seek feedback from users on ways to enhance it.

Remote Monitoring System Provides Nuclear Plant Data

Events surrounding the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident in 1979 had a significant impact on Illinois' nuclear safety program today. Of particular concern to then-Illinois Governor James R. Thompson was the flow and accuracy of information about conditions at the plant – critical information public officials need to ensure appropriate actions are taken to protect the public.

The following year, Gov. Thompson created the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety (which merged with IEMA in 2003) and charged it with protecting Illinois citizens from unnecessary exposure to ionizing radiation. The agency, which began with about 40 employees, quickly grew to be recognized across the nation and around the world as a leader in radiation safety.



The GEMS measures and identifies radionuclides in each nuclear plant's effluent stack.

consequence analyses, the results of which are used in determining protective action recommendations for the public.

The unique RMS consists of three separate subsystems: the Reactor Data Link (RDL), the Gaseous Effluent Monitoring System (GEMS), and the Gamma Detection Network (GDN).

The RDL receives more than 1,000 key parameters every minute from each operating reactor. This data includes reactor power levels, pressures, temperatures, breaker positions, logic states, meteorological data, radiation levels and other vital station data.

The GEMS provides automatic, online, continuous sampling of each nuclear power plant effluent stack. The GEMS is capable of measurement and identification of particulates, noble gases and iodines over a wide range of concentrations, from background levels to releases under emergency conditions. The GEMS can be controlled remotely during nuclear power plant emergencies to provide flexibility in sampling.

The GDN consists of a network of detectors placed radially around each of the nuclear power plants to detect gamma radiation levels in the environment. Each of the 16 detectors for each site is placed approximately two to five miles from the plant. This system is capable of detecting gamma radiation in the



Sixteen GDN detectors surround each nuclear power plant to monitor gamma radiation in the environment.

One reason for that reputation was the development of a remote monitoring system (RMS) that continuously conducts environmental and radiological monitoring at the seven nuclear power plant sites in Illinois. This includes 11 commercial nuclear power reactors and three closed reactors.

The RMS is an advanced, integrated, computer-based system that continually monitors selected plant operational parameters at each commercial nuclear power plant facility and is capable of identifying and measuring the presence of radioactive materials in the surrounding environment.

Data gathered by the RMS data is used in performing independent accident assessments and off-site

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Remote Monitoring System Provides Nuclear Plant Data (cont.)

range of background levels up to 10 Rem per hour. During an incident at one of the plants, the information would be used by health physics experts in IEMA's Radiological Emergency Assessment Center to evaluate environmental impacts of a release.

Data from the RMS is continuously transmitted to IEMA's network. If data results rise above or do not meet established parameters, the system alerts staff in the agency's 24/7 communications center, who contact the on-call radiological duty officer. RMS data can be accessed remotely by staff to assess the situation.

Agency staff played a critical role in the development of the RMS. Much of the development of both the hardware and the software was performed in-house. The system began with off-the-shelf equipment that was queried by agency FORTRAN programs to gather and store the data. Through the years, both the hardware and the software were enhanced and expanded to improve the system.

Over the past three years, IEMA personnel have been working on converting and customizing the software for data acquisition, storage, display and notification over to a PC-based system developed by InStep



Reactor specialists review data regarding conditions within the reactor received through the RDL.

Software. Much of the customization has been performed by IEMA engineers.

These system enhancements will improve the quality of the displays used by the assessment scientists, add additional functionality and flexibility to the analysis of the data provided by RMS and improve the notification process when parameters are not within range. The upgrades are expected to be completed this spring.

Targeted Violence Prevention Program Receives Grant

An innovative state program aimed at preventing ideologically inspired targeted violence recently received a federal grant to support community training and engagement programs. The Targeted Violence Prevention Program (TVPP), which is administered by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), received the \$187,877 grant award from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The program takes a public health approach to prevention by offering resources to communities that want to prevent their members from being recruited to commit ideologically inspired violence. Because preventing ideologically inspired targeted violence requires a whole of society commitment, TVPP engages a wide range of partners throughout society, including faith-based and community-based organizations, academia, social service providers, schools and law enforcement.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security requested

proposals for \$10 million in grants to counter violent extremism. This funding will allow TVPP to build community-based prevention programs that off-ramp individuals who may be at risk for engaging in ideologically-inspired violence.

ICJIA will collaborate with experts in violence risk assessment, bystander and suicide prevention trainings, violent extremism prevention, and communities to create a curriculum and training.

Researchers will conduct focus groups to help guide and adapt the program while ensuring the community's voice is included in the development. They also will conduct surveys of program participants to measure effectiveness of program content, conduct observations of the trainings, and collect administrative data to document program activities and outcomes. These measures will inform program refinement. The data also will be used to support a third-party evaluation in the future.

Odeshoo Acting Regional Administrator for FEMA V

Janet M. Odeshoo currently is serving as the Acting Regional Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Region V office in Chicago. Odeshoo has been the Deputy Regional Administrator for Region V since 1996, and has served as Acting Regional Administrator several times in the past.

Odeshoo is a familiar face to many emergency management professionals in Illinois as she has been with FEMA for 36 years. She has extensive knowledge of FEMA's many programs as she has



**FEMA Region V Administrator
Janet Odeshoo**

worked in each at some point during her long tenure with the agency.

Her expertise and understanding of the many issues emergency managers face each day and during disasters is beneficial to our efforts to serve the residents of our communities and state.

The FEMA V regional office coordinates FEMA preparedness, mitigation and disaster response and recovery activities in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Electronic Application Form Launched for REP Grants

Recent enhancements to the Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) grant application process have resulted in a modernized system that streamlines and improves the experience for grantees. The system includes a new standard, electronic grant application that is compliant with requirements of the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA).

The REP grants support local emergency preparedness activities in counties located near the six operating nuclear power plants in Illinois.

Staff from IEMA's REP program and information technology personnel worked together to adapt the electronic application already in use for other grant programs to meet the needs of REP grantees and conform with the requirements of GATA.

In addition, a new REP Grant Guidance Document and related forms were developed and distributed for

use and reference by all grantees. The guidance document provides more detail on eligible and ineligible expenses under 32 Illinois Administrative Code 501.

IEMA staff conducted online grantee training utilizing GoToMeeting, as well as an evening presentation, in January. The sessions provided an overview of the new application and process. Grantees then received login instructions and passwords to the REP grant page on IEMA's Grants Portal. Grantees can then access their individual folders for filing claims and accessing other key grant information as it is posted.

Staff will support grantees in the implementation of the guidance document by offering immediate one-on-one question and answer sessions, as well as scheduling additional GoToMeeting sessions in the coming weeks.

Serve Illinois Seeks Nominations for Service Awards

The Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service is seeking nominations for the annual Governor's Volunteer Service Awards. These awards recognize individual volunteers to highlight the importance of volunteerism and community service in Illinois.

Awards will be given to one youth, adult, senior, AmeriCorps member, Senior Corps volunteer and

business in each of Illinois' five regions. Within each category, applications will be given special priority for involvement in economic opportunity, education, environmental conservation, disaster preparedness/response, health and veterans affairs.

Nominations are due by 5 p.m. on Feb. 17. Forms are available at www.Serve.Illinois.gov.

GATA Announces New State Grant Information Resources

The Grant Accountability and Transparency Unit recently announced the Catalog of State Financial Assistance (CSFA) and the Grantee Compliance Enforcement System (GCES) framework are now available for public viewing.

The CSFA is required by the Grants Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) and provides a single, authoritative, statewide, comprehensive source of financial assistance program information. State agencies have populated the CSFA with federal, federal pass-through and state awards received. The CSFA also records grantee awards under each CSFA number.

The public can search the CSFA for agencies with active grant programs, currently funded grants, current funding opportunities, and registered grantees. The direct link to the Catalog of State

Financial Assistance is available at: <https://www.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/Grants/SitePages/CSFA.aspx>.

Illinois is utilizing a federal framework for the GCES to drive grantee compliance with grant requirements. This system promotes cross-agency information sharing to improve risk assessment processes and enhance fiscal management transparency.

GATA requires the maintenance of a list of individuals and entities temporarily or permanently ineligible to receive grant funds. This list, called the Illinois Stop Payment List, is a component of the GCES, which was implemented Jan. 1, 2017. More information about the GCES is available at: <https://www.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/Documents/Resource%20Library/Grantee%20Compliance%20Enforcement%20System%20Transmittal.pdf>.

Mitigation Planning Webinar Series Available

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Region 10 office recently announced a series of mitigation planning webinars open to officials across the U.S. The series will feature monthly topics related to best practices in mitigation planning along with guest speakers outlining approaches to mitigation.

The webinar series is for individuals from public and private sectors involved in community planning, including emergency managers, floodplain managers, community planners, wildfire mitigation professionals, local and tribal government officials, contractors and those involved in development and application of natural hazard mitigation strategies.

Following is the webinar schedule with topics:

Feb. 24, 12 p.m. (Central) – Building the Mitigation Planning Team

March (TBD) – Effective Public Engagement in Mitigation Planning

April (TBD) – Developing FEMA Mitigation Planning Grants

May (TBD) – Performing Natural Hazard Risk Assessments

June (TBD) – Integrating Natural Hazard Mitigation and Community Wildfire Protection Plans

Contact the FEMA Region 10 Mitigation Planning Program Manager at brett.holt@fema.dhs.gov for more information on the series topics. Anyone interested in presenting a 5-10 minute brief on any of the topics may send an email to the above address. All webinars will be recorded.

Previous issues of Inside IEMA are available at:
<http://www.illinois.gov/iema/Info/Pages/Newsletters.aspx>.



State of Illinois
Illinois Emergency Management Agency

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