

Inside IEMA

Monthly Newsletter



Illinois Emergency Management Agency

February 2018

From Acting Director Jennifer Ricker

February may have only 28 days, but it's certainly been a busy time around here! Despite being the shortest month of the year, I traveled nearly 2,000 miles in February, from northern Illinois to the far southern tip of the state as I met with public safety partners, attended meetings and observed flood-fighting activities.

In early February, I joined Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau as we visited the Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) for Puerto Rican evacuees. The MARC, located in the Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago, is providing critical support to people who left the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria last September. The MARC concept was adapted to meet the unique needs of these evacuees, and I believe it is a best practice model for dealing with displaced citizens following large-scale disasters.

On my way back from Chicago, I stopped by the Will County Emergency Operations Center to observe activities for the Braidwood nuclear station Illinois Plan for Radiological Accidents pre-drill and speak with our local partners.

When flooding began in northeastern Illinois, I visited the LaSalle County Emergency Operations Center and spoke with the emergency management coordinator about their operations and needs. Earlier this week, I traveled to counties along the Wabash and Ohio rivers in southern Illinois to see flood preparations and talk with local officials.

I also attended the Region 6 quarterly meeting in Peoria and the Region 8 WebEOC workshop in Fairview Heights.

Planning, exercising, response and recovery are the foundations of public safety. This month I got a first-hand view of each of these in action. The insight gained from these interactions is invaluable and I plan to continue this outreach to our many partners across the state. With the Illinois General Assembly in session much of the next three months, my travel may become less frequent as we monitor issues affecting emergency management and public safety. But I remain committed to working with and getting to know each of you in the coming months.



Acting Director Ricker listens as Ahmad Djangi, director of field operations for the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services discusses MARC operations.

In this issue

Heavy Rains, Snow Melt Cause Flooding	2
Staff Participate in Radiation Training	2
Severe Weather Preparedness Month	3
Senior Staff Spotlight – Brian Hummel	4
Fiscal Year 2019 Budget.....	4
Inside IEMA Info Corner	5
Applicants Sought for Youth Council	5
Training and Exercise Update.....	6
FEMA Seeks Members for Advisory Council	7
Household Chemical, Medication Safety Tips.....	7

Heavy Rains, Snow Melt Result in Widespread Flooding

Rivers and streams throughout the state rose rapidly in late February following heavy rainfall and snow melt. At press time, flood waters in northern Illinois were receding, while communities along the lower Illinois River and in southern Illinois prepared for crests.

On Feb. 24, Governor Bruce Rauner issued a state disaster proclamation for Iroquois, Kankakee and Vermilion counties to ensure continued state support to communities battling floods.

The State Emergency Operations Center in Springfield was activated to coordinate state personnel and assets needed to help local officials keep residents safe and protect critical infrastructure.

State assistance to flood-impacted communities to date has included sandbags, plastic, pumps and hoses, inmate crews, and boats and officers.



Inmates from the Illinois Department of Corrections Dixon Springs Impact Incarceration Program assisted with installing a floodwall along the Ohio River in Hardin County.

IEMA Staff Participate in Radiation Training Courses

Ten IEMA employees recently attended a two-day course on the principles of radiation detection. The course provided a thorough understanding of fundamental processes that contribute to the detection and analysis of radioactive material and the basic operations of various radiation detection systems.

Seven staff members then attended a two-day course on the fundamentals of gamma spectroscopy. Gamma spectroscopy is the science of identifying and quantifying radionuclides present in a sample. This course covered fundamental processes that contribute to the collection and analysis of gamma-ray spectral data to enable participants to accurately interpret the results.

This type of analysis is used in the agency's Gaseous Effluent Monitoring System at the six operating nuclear power stations in Illinois. IEMA's radiochemistry laboratory also uses gamma spectroscopy to analyze environmental samples.



Kerrie Peacock, IEMA radiochemist, loads a sample on a gamma spectrometer.

March is Severe Weather Preparedness Month in Illinois

As the recent flooding demonstrates, it's important for people to be prepared for floods, tornadoes and severe thunderstorms throughout the year. During March, IEMA will join with the National Weather Service (NWS) and local emergency management agencies to highlight the importance of preparedness for these types of disasters as part of Severe Weather Preparedness Month in Illinois.

IEMA is also joining with the Illinois Emergency Services Management Association (IESMA) to sponsor an online contest that offers Illinois residents a chance to win a weather alert radio. The "Weather Alert Radios Save Lives" contest will begin March 1 and continue through March 31.

The weather alert radio contest will be available on the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov through March 31. A total of 100 weather alert radios will be awarded to randomly selected participants who register after reading information about the radios and successfully completing a five-question quiz. Winners will be announced in April. The radios were purchased by IESMA to increase the use of the warning devices.

Nearly 30 percent of tornadoes in Illinois occur after dark when people are inside and possibly asleep. That's why it's important to have a device like a weather alert radio, which emits a loud tone along with information about the approaching hazard when a warning has been issued for your area.

IEMA and the NWS developed a Severe Weather Preparedness Guide, which provides information about tornadoes, severe storms, lightning and flooding along with recommended actions to take before,

during and after each of these weather events. It is available on the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

Severe weather preparedness tips and information also will be posted on the Ready Illinois Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/ReadyIllinois) and Twitter Page (twitter.com/ReadyIllinois).

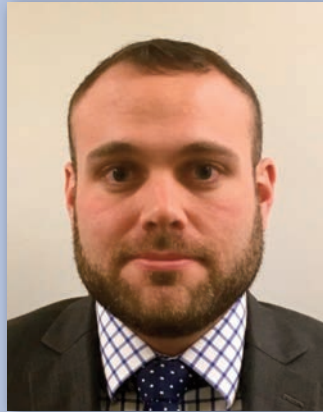
Severe Weather Facts

- **Illinois ranks fifth in the U.S. for the most tornadoes per square mile.**
- **On average, 50 tornadoes occur each year in Illinois.**
- **There were 50 tornadoes reported in Illinois in 2017, which resulted in three fatalities, 17 injuries and more than \$12 million in property damage.**
- **Straight-line winds and downbursts from a severe thunderstorm can cause more damage than nearly 75 percent of the tornadoes that occur in Illinois.**
- **Lightning is to blame for more than 100 deaths in Illinois since 1960.**
- **Flooding has been a factor in 49 deaths in Illinois since 1995 – more than the number of fatalities caused by tornadoes during the same period.**
- **Many flood-related rescues, injuries and fatalities have been the result of people in vehicles attempting to drive across flooded roads.**



Senior Staff Spotlight – Brian Hummel

The New Year brought a new face to IEMA as Brian Hummel assumed the role of urban area coordinator on Jan. 16. As the agency's liaison to the city of Chicago and Cook County, Hummel represents IEMA at meetings and events, including the Urban Area Working Group.



**Urban Area Coordinator
Brian Hummel**

Hummel says he's been busy getting up to speed on the issues impacting the urban area and developing relationships with officials at both the city and county levels.

Last August, Hummel moved to Illinois to join Governor Rauner's staff. He previously worked in Wisconsin state government, including time as chief information officer of Wisconsin's Department of Safety and Professional Services and as director of external operations for Governor Scott Walker. In the latter role, he frequently coordinated with Wisconsin Emergency Management following disasters and developed an interest in emergency management.

Hummel graduated from Northern Michigan University with a degree in criminal justice. He was an auxiliary officer for the university's police department for four years. After graduation, Hummel worked in corporate loss prevention for Kohl's in the Washington, D.C., area.

A native of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Hummel now lives in Chicago with his dog Franklin. As outdoor enthusiasts, both are adjusting to living in downtown Chicago, but Hummel says Franklin loves taking walks along the lakeshore.

For the past 12 years, Hummel has volunteered with organizations related to helping survivors of domestic violence. He has assisted with fundraising for the groups and job coaching for domestic violence survivors.

Governor Rauner Proposes Budget for Fiscal Year 2019

On Feb. 14, Gov. Bruce Rauner set out his proposed state budget for fiscal year 2019, which begins July 1. IEMA's proposed budget includes a new appropriation of \$2.5 million for homeland security and emergency management-related needs.

In addition, IEMA's proposed budget includes a \$675,000 increase, for a total of \$750,000, in another appropriation that has been used in previous years to upgrade mutual aid equipment, such as Unified Command Posts and Illinois Transportable Emergency Communications Systems.

The governor's proposed budget will be considered by the Illinois General Assembly in the coming months. The General Assembly must enact a budget that includes these appropriations in order for them to be available during fiscal year 2019.

On the federal front, President Donald Trump recently presented his federal budget request to Congress. The president's request reduces the total amount of State Homeland Security Grant Program funding available nationally from \$467 million to \$349 million and Urban Area Security Initiative funding from \$605 million to \$449 million. The request also proposes a 25 percent cost share.

The federal budget proposal also cuts the Emergency Management Preparedness Grant program national funding from \$350 million to \$279 million and Pre-Disaster Mitigation program funding from \$100 million to \$39 million.



inside IEMA info corner

MONTHLY FEATURE

The Info Corner is a new feature in the Inside IEMA monthly newsletter. Each month, we'll highlight information that provides a behind-the-scenes look at the agency's programs, personnel, issues and more. In this issue, we highlight health physics and the important roles of IEMA's more than 30 health physicists.

What is health physics?

Health physics is an interdisciplinary technical field concerned with the safe use of radiation in civilian and military applications. From medical diagnostic procedures to nuclear power stations, radiation is used or produced in many activities that benefit society.

What does a health physicist do?

The health physicist profession concentrates on exploring beneficial uses of radiation, while protecting public health and safety and the environment by preventing unnecessary exposure to radiation, whether naturally-occurring or manmade.

At IEMA, many of the health physicists are focused on regulatory programs intended to allow the beneficial use of radiation, while minimizing potential radiation hazards to the public and our environment. IEMA's regulatory programs also focus on preventing radioactive sources from being used in terrorist attacks.

In addition to enforcing regulations, health physicists work in myriad settings including academia, industry, the military, research, decontamination and decommissioning, environmental remediation and restoration, and waste management.

How do I become a health physicist?

Nearly 30 universities offer B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. programs in health physics. Other opportunities to pursue a career in health physics would be a physical science background supplemented by training and practical experience.

FEMA Seeking Applicants for Youth Preparedness Council

Recognizing the impact youth can have in their communities, FEMA currently is seeking applicants for its Youth Preparedness Council (YPC). The YPC is open to students in 8th-11th grade.

As a member of the YPC, youth can design and conduct local and national projects, add a youth viewpoint on emergency preparedness, help prepare their local area for emergencies, meet with FEMA regularly, and give input to FEMA leadership and staff.

Adults who work with youth are encouraged to share the application. The applications and additional

information about the program are available at <https://community.fema.gov/applytoYPC>. Candidates should submit a completed application form, two letters of recommendation and their academic records. Applications are due by March 18.

According to the FEMA website, council members are selected based on their dedication to public service, efforts in making a difference in their communities and potential to expand their impact as national advocates for youth preparedness.

Training and Exercise Update

Master Exercise Practitioner Program

FEMA has scheduled a Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP) in Madison, Wisconsin for June 11-15 and Sept. 17-21. The class normally is held in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

The MEPP is a series of two classroom courses (E0132, E0133) focusing on advanced program management, exercise design and evaluation practices in each phase of the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program. A MEPP Capstone exercise project is required within one year after the completion of E0133.

MEPP is designed for mid-level exercise practitioners with a minimum of three years of experience in emergency management exercise design.

More information about the program and the application are available at <https://training.fema.gov/mepp/howtoapply.aspx>. Applications will be accepted through March 26.

G402 Incident Command Overview for Senior and Elected Officials

The G402 Incident Command Overview for Senior and Elected Officials course will be held March 28 at the Flora Public Library in Flora from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. This course will provide a forum to discuss senior and elected officials strategic and executive level preparedness and response issues and challenges related to weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and other incidents of national significance.

Discussions will cover defining ways incident command can be applied, incident command terminology and major responsibilities of elected and

appointed officials related to emergency preparedness and response.

Registration for this course is available at: <https://public.iema.state.il.us/iema/Training/OnlineReg/classes.asp>. There are no prerequisites for this course.

G393 Mitigation for Emergency Managers

The G393 Mitigation for Emergency Managers course will be held May 1- 3 at Lake Shelbyville Visitors Center in Shelbyville. This three-day course is designed to provide emergency managers with the information, resources and tools to address and mitigate hazards in their communities. The target audience is any emergency manager or official who oversees mitigation efforts in their communities.

Registration for this course is available at: <https://public.iema.state.il.us/iema/Training/OnlineReg/classes.asp>. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Earthquake Building Evaluation

IEMA Region 11 is hosting a two-day course April 19-20 at John A. Logan College in Carterville on screening buildings before and after an earthquake. Participants in this course will meet a portion of the Core Capability Assessment Toolkit (Infrastructure Systems). The course will be presented by FEMA and the National Earthquake Technical Assistance Program.

The course will be held in Room H-127 and starts at 8 a.m. each day. Registration is now open <http://public.iema.state.il.us/iema/training/OnlineReg/classes.asp>.



Save the Date!

22nd Annual IEMA Training Summit
September 4-6, 2018
Bank of Springfield Center
Springfield, IL

Sponsor and exhibitor opportunities now available at:
www.illinois.gov/iema

Applicants Sought for FEMA National Advisory Council

FEMA currently is seeking applicants interested in serving on its National Advisory Council (NAC), a committee that advises the FEMA administrator on all aspects of emergency management to ensure input from and coordination with state, local, tribal and territorial governments and the private sector on federal plans, programs and strategies for all hazards.

The NAC provides consensus recommendations to the administrator and gives FEMA access to expertise, information and advice on a broad range of issues. Topics of recent recommendations included provision of medical countermeasures, duplication of benefits in the Individual Assistance Program and tribal partnerships training.

NAC members represent a geographically diverse mix of officials, emergency managers and emergency response providers from all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, tribes and the private sector. Individuals appointed to these positions represent the whole community and bring their experience and expertise, along with their diversity of views and willingness to express them.

All appointments are for three-year terms beginning in September 2018. Applications must be received by March 18. More information about the council and available positions is available at <http://www.fema.gov/membership-applications>.

Keep Kids Safe from Household Chemicals, Medications

As spring approaches, many people are feeling the urge to dive into spring cleaning both inside and outside their homes. It's also a good time to check out the supply of hazardous chemicals in your cabinets, closets, basements and garages.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each day more than 300 children in the U.S. seek treatment at an emergency department and two children die as a result of poisoning. Consumer chemicals with clear warning labels are an obvious hazard, but household cleaners and medications can be poisonous as well. Children are naturally curious and will investigate, often by eating or drinking, anything they can get into.

Educate yourself about the products you bring into your home. Read the labels, follow the directions for use, and become familiar with the hazards. Store hazardous household products and medications in their original packaging where children can't see or get to them.

Post the nationwide poison control telephone number, 1-800-222-1222, at every phone in your home and program it into your cell phone. Calls are free and confidential, and the centers can be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the number if someone

may have been poisoned. If the poisoned individual collapses, has a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened, call 911 immediately.



Finally, dispose of unneeded household hazardous waste and unneeded or expired medications. Inquire about household hazardous waste disposal events and collection programs in your local community. National Take Back Day will occur on April 28 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and thousands of locations will be open nationwide for disposal of unused medicine. Check takebackday.dea.gov for locations and additional information on prescription drug dangers and disposal options.

Visit poisonhelp.hrsa.gov for more information on poisoning prevention.

(Information for this article was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, American Association of Poison Control Centers, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's Take Back Day websites)

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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