GOING RURAL
The Center for Preparedness Education is taking the show on the road with our newest Rural Road Show.

KEEPING A WATCHFUL EYE ON EMERGENCIES
NEMA’s New Watch Center concept explained.

NEBRASKA PREPAREDNESS PARTNERSHIP
Building readiness through public-private partnership.
This magazine is made possible with support from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health; Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response unit.

Do you have a picture that depicts Nebraska's preparedness? Maybe you are a budding author? Here's your opportunity to shine.

The Center would like to highlight your exercise, drill, training or real event in our next issue.

Submit articles, pictures or ideas by June 29, 2018 to center@preped.org or call (402) 552-2529

"The title UNCENTERED was chosen by our team to describe thinking out of the box or Center, if you will-- uncharted territory from traditional theories and methodologies."

ELAYNE SAEJUNG
Is there anything more simultaneously thrilling and nerve-wracking than changing course and starting something new? Beginning any new professional or personal venture can feel like getting on a roller coaster – an equal mix of excitement and trepidation about the ride you’re about to take. Being the newest member of the Center staff, I am familiar with that feeling.

As an attorney, I have spent my career dealing primarily with Medicare regulations and healthcare compliance. Changing course and entering the world of public health has been an exciting transition for me. A transition that’s been made much smoother by the other Center staff, who have created a warm environment where questions are always welcome. Knowing that I am surrounded by people who have my back is a great way to start down a new path.

For any readers new to the world of emergency preparedness, there may be a similar sense of fear and excitement. As you dive into an area that you may not be familiar with, you might find yourself having lots of new questions. If you have not dealt with full scale exercises or a hazard vulnerability analysis before, it can all feel a little daunting.

The Center for Preparedness Education encourages you to rest assured that there are many resources and a wide community of support available to assist you. If there are any ways we can partner with you to make your transition into the realm of emergency preparedness an easier one, let us know. I hope that you will find, as I have, that the adventure of starting something new is made easier with encouragement and collaboration.

Editor's Notes

The Center for Preparedness Education welcomes our newest staff member - Rachel Lookadoo
Calling all potential leaders... The Great Plains Leadership Institute is accepting applications for next year’s class.

- Is this the year to strengthen your knowledge, skills, and ability to lead others?
- Could you benefit from expanded relationships with other health and well-being leaders in the region?
- Are you ready to make a greater impact within your team, organization, and community?

Established in 2005, the Great Plains Leadership Institute is a year-long competency-based training program designed for established and emerging leaders in organizations in our region whose primary mission is to improve the health and well-being of populations and communities. A robust experiential curriculum includes residential and distance learning, mentoring and coaching, and collaborative practice projects.

For more information and application materials browse our website or contact Katie Brandert at katie.brandert@unmc.edu.

“This opportunity has taught me so much about myself including how as a leader I’m perceived by those around me. I’d highly recommend anyone who wants to grow take this journey.”

Tonya Ngotel, Year 13 Scholar and Center for Preparedness Staff

The Center's own Barb Dodge (standing middle row) and Leslie Scofield (standing 3rd from the left) were part of year 11.
NEMA's Watch Center
Submitted by: Jodie Fawl
Public Information Officer, NEMA

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency established the State Watch Center in late 2016 to support the collection and dissemination of information from a broad range of key stakeholders.

NEMA assistant director Bryan Tuma said the Watch Center focuses on the all-hazards threat environment and ties the planning and response capabilities of state government to the preparedness measures adopted for the State of Nebraska.

“The Watch Center serves a coordination role by ensuring a common understanding of the situation is shared by all relevant state agencies and key stakeholders,” Tuma said.

The Watch Center is the initial point of contact for the agency and monitors conditions, emerging threats, or events to assess situational awareness and develop a common operating picture. It supports the Operations Section which has responsibility for the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).

NEMA established a Watch Center with the following goals in mind:

- Refinement of information sharing processes involving key stakeholder agencies. Local emergency management officials, state agencies, the Nebraska Information Analysis Center, the Military Department Joint Operations Center, the FEMA Region VII Watch Center, contiguous states, and many other public safety entities all receive updated information from the Watch Center.

- Products and services for statewide situational awareness and the capacity to develop a common operating picture for the agency and stakeholder organizations. The NEMA Operations staff uses the information to determine the activation level of the SEOC, to assist the Nebraska Governor and Adjutant General with decisions related to the allocation of state resources, to provide local elected officials with perspective on conditions on a regional and statewide basis and to aid in the efficient identification of critical needs, based on known conditions in the field.

- Development of daily briefing materials and other products or services with the input of key stakeholder organizations to support information sharing strategies across a wide range of disciplines. The Watch Center provides a daily brief which is distributed to more than 400 contacts each morning, as well as a one-page dashboard that provides users with a snapshot of key information. The Watch Center serves as a focal point to gather important weather information from the six National Weather Service offices that support Nebraska.

The Nebraska Watch Center creates a daily dashboard that highlights any current issue including weather that might affect the state.
Watch Center

- Watch officer system used by the agency to ensure that external stakeholders are provided access to services, especially beyond the core operating hours of the Watch Center and NEMA.

- Operating procedures, incident protocols and key contact information which is documented in an updated Watch Officer Book. This information provides Watch Center staff with readily accessible and current information required for agency personnel to properly respond to requests for services.

- Monitoring of social media and other non-traditional media sources to evaluate current conditions or emerging threats.

Brent Curtis, administrative assistant III at NEMA, is supervisor of the Watch Center.

“The State Watch Center is the eyes and ears of NEMA in terms of what is going on in the state,” Curtis said. “Our Watch Center is taking the best practices we have observed from FEMA regional operation centers, from the Florida Watch Office, and from the daily situation reports we have seen several states prepare; and incorporating that into methods and procedures that best serve the State of Nebraska and its partner stakeholders.”

Follow the Watch Center on Twitter: @NebWatchCenter.

Information gathering, analysis and reporting is the goal for the Watch Center. The Watch Center seeks out and monitors information from other agencies and departments including the National Weather Service, Nebraska National Guard, Nebraska State Patrol, Nebraska Department of Transportation and others with pertinent information.

“So far, the response we have received from federal, state and local agencies has been resoundingly positive,” Curtis said. “Our next step really is to enhance those lines of communication with state and local entities—to establish a better two-way dialogue with local public safety entities.”

“Our overall goal is to establish a timely and accurate common operating picture so all partners are working from the same information,” Curtis said.

Operations Section Manager Earl Imler said the Watch Center is already improving statewide situational awareness through enhanced information gathering and reporting.

“We hope we are better able to anticipate local resource needs and respond to those needs in faster,” Imler said. “The goal is that anytime the SEOC is open that the State Watch Center will work to provide up-to-the-minute information to the SEOC staff and decision makers.”
Strategic National Stockpile - SNS

By: Tonya Ngotel, Center for Preparedness Education

The Center’s for Disease Control (CDC) houses the nation’s largest supply of life saving pharmaceuticals and medical supplies that are readily available for use should we need them.

* FEDERAL RESOURCE

The national pharmaceutical stockpile was created in 1999 and was renamed the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) in 2003. The SNS is a scaleable resource that contains enough medical supplies to support multiple incidents and locations simultaneously.

* STATE RESPONSIBILITY

In 2009 Nebraska was affected by a novel influenza virus called N1H1. Nebraska DHHS took the lead under the then medical director Dr. Joann Schaefer. Using the support of the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) Nebraska activated the SNS.

Upon receiving the supplies 25 DHHS employees divided the 55 pallets for transport across Nebraska. Pallets included more than 64,700 courses of antivirals.

* LOCAL BENEFIT

Every disaster starts and ends at the local level, the SNS activation and distribution is no different. Omaha’s city readiness coordinator, Terri Morrow is tasked with creating, updating and exercising the SNS plan for Douglas County. She explained to me that she is currently working with faith based institutions who will be critical in the role of distribution.
The Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP), under the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) located in Anniston Alabama instructs a week long course on the SNS. As an attendee last month I learned the process of SNS activation, reviewed plans from other states/local entities and was able to participate in the logistical component of receiving the SNS.

Instructors from the CDC shared their recent experience with the SNS in Puerto Rico and included lessons learned from other deployments. Fellow students incorporated their experiences into the class by sharing their plans and templates for closed pod agreements and distribution site plans. I found it invaluable to see what other states/cities were using and comparing it to our system.

The most valuable take away from attending this course was my greater understanding of the larger SNS program. As a exercise training officer with the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency back in 2005 we conducted a full scale exercise that involved bringing out the push package (which I leaned is being phased out), re-packaging that for the hub and sub-hub sites and actually transporting those supplies across the state.

As I sat in class and reflected on those days long gone I was relieved to hear much of the process is still the same, only names and faces had changed. I’d highly recommend anyone with a role in the SNS system take this free week long course.

For more information on the course visit cdp.dhs.gov

"As a Nebraska citizen knowing that the SNS is ready and that Nebraska has a plan is reassuring. Attending this class as a public health professional and understanding the system was CRITICAL"

Tonya Ngotol
In preparation for the 2019 Nebraska Public Health Full Scale Exercise NE DHHS is gaining the advantage by taking the initiative to prevent further harm to Nebraska families and first responders. During a time of heightened situational awareness and a need for more advanced protection, we are reaching out to statewide healthcare coalitions, key leadership, program managers, emergency management services, law enforcement, the CDC and Nebraska Public Health Lab, to prepare and respond.

"This was a great opportunity for the Health Care Coalitions (HCC’s) to maintain a clear situational assessment and common operating picture throughout the state and to keep stakeholders informed in the event of an on-going response.

The workshop was a benefit for all involved”.

Sean Runge, Exercise Training Officer Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
2017 was one of the costliest U.S. disaster years in history.

Every year preparedness professionals from across the region come together to discuss the latest topics impacting the field of emergency preparedness at the Nebraska Emergency Preparedness Symposia. From hurricane response to public health emergency declarations on the opioid epidemic, this year’s conference has a TON of lessons learned. And what about the buzz that UNMC is embarking on cutting-edge simulation and training? This year, Simulation in Motion-Nebraska is joining us with state-of-the-art hands-on training in a mobile unit! Join us for the opportunity to hear the many stories from responders, practice hand-on skills with technology, and learn about other topics at the forefront of emergency preparedness.

The Nebraska Preparedness Symposia is a conference sponsored by the Center for Preparedness Education with the support of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, for professionals to network and learn about emergency preparedness.

INTENDED AUDIENCE:
Public health, health care, health education, behavioral health, emergency management, EMS, fire, critical infrastructure, private industry—and other interested parties.

REGISTER TODAY

REGISTRATION CLOSES: April 1 (Gering) and May 1 (Omaha)

FOR MORE INFORMATION: VISIT WWW.PREPED.ORG, CALL 402.552.2529, OR EMAIL CENTER@PREPED.ORG
Emergencies Happen!

Protect and prepare your business from disasters. The Nebraska Preparedness Partnership are here to help.

Learn how NPP can help your business prepare.

HOW CONNECTED ARE YOU?
Sandra Hobson, NPP Program Coordinator

Nebraska Preparedness Partnership (NPP) was established to provide this coordinated effort and build public-private relationships prior to incidents/disasters to build a more resilient community and state. Founded in 2014, the NPP structure includes a Leadership Committee and Board of Directors comprised of representatives from public, private, and non-profit sectors. These groups have worked together and alongside the fire department, law enforcement, and emergency management agencies to design and initiate programs in the Tri-County area (Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties). With the support of public-private partnerships in neighboring states, FEMA, and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), NPP is continuing to grow with the intention of using a phased approach to roll out to the entire state by 2021.

Benefits of membership in NPP include:

- Earlier business re-entry to get businesses back to business to support economic recovery
- Representation in the Emergency Operations Centers to enhance communication and improve information sharing
- Business resource directory for response and recovery resource sharing and support
- Mentoring on incident response
- Continuity planning and training with combined private and public knowledge and experience
- Private and public integrated exercises

The larger the membership, the stronger our network and resiliency will be. We are working hard to make the State of Nebraska one of the most resilient, and to be a model for the remaining midwestern states in establishing their public-private coalitions.

Please see our website(www.neprep.org) for more information on who we are and how you can join our membership.
The goal of the workshop was to update the functional and access needs plan within the Panhandle Regional Medical Response System. But that sounded like just another meeting, quite frankly - boring.....

So, we used the Do-Tank process to create Momentum and Energy in the panhandle. Harnessing that energy through hands-on learning we created plan updates, a all-hazards go-kit and future training ideas that participants of PRMRS could get behind!

Attendee's heard first hand from Linda Redford, Region 1 Office of Human Development who spoke to the needs and resources in the area and by Melody Leisy who shared real time data from across the Panhandle. The group than began creating!

Anything can happen with you think outside the "box". The pictures below show a participant using everyday tools to help create a tornado go kit and the use of the sticky wall to generate planning ideas.
"We're excited to take on this project, to help build and foster connections between public health and rural Nebraska"

- LESLIE SCOFIELD, CENTER FOR PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION

We have often heard that it's a challenge for folks in rural areas to make it to our workshops due to travel distance, time off work, and limited funding. Additionally, we understand that rural communities face challenges in planning, response and recovery. As such, the Center decided to “take the show on the road”, bringing education and facilitation resources to further existing efforts in public health emergency preparedness planning.

The workshops, hosted by public health, are being conducted March 19-23 in Norfolk, Beatrice, and North Platte.
Preparing for the worst: Decontamination simulation held at WFR station

BY DAN CRISLER, PUBLIC OPINION STAFF WRITER
REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION

As the threat of bioterrorism and nuclear war remains in the backdrop of the modern world, Prairie Lakes Healthcare System and the The Center for Preparedness Education from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha prepared for such a scenario with a decontamination simulation at the Watertown Fire Rescue station near Derby Downs Wednesday afternoon.

With 21 volunteers from Northeast Technical High School, Lake Area Technical Institute and other community entities on hand to serve as the contamination victims — which in this case meant becoming a human sundae covered in chocolate and strawberry syrup — for the 22 healthcare employees from around the state tasked with cleaning those victims off with handheld showers and baby shampoo followed by a health assessment.

Some victims proceeded through the decontamination process upright and walking.

One of those victims, LATI nursing student Tosha Hinker, said, “It was a really neat experience to see what an actual disaster would kind of be like going through the process.”

Fellow LATI nursing student Kimberly Eide agreed.

“It put into perspective what it would be like if we were part of the disaster response team,” she said.
Some of the more unfortunate victims had to be washed down in the decontamination tent while laying on a backboard.

One of those victims, Jenkins Living Center Certified Nursing Assistant Cassie Swedeen, described the experience as slightly harrowing even knowing it was a simulation.

“Honestly, it was kind of scary. I thought that it would be OK. But when you get in there and everybody’s trying to tell you’re OK even though they are frantically washing you, it is kind of scary,” Swedeen recalled.

The fast pace was necessitated by the fact that emergency personnel try to get each victim through the decontamination process in less than 10 minutes.

With Wednesday’s training event being the first of its kind in South Dakota at the hospital first receiving level, PLHS Registered Nurse Joyce Hallauer, who helped coordinate the event, said PLHS identified preparing for a biological attack response as a top priority.

Of course, Hallauer and others hope that such a response will not be enacted in reality.

“That was the discussion outside the tent. Just seeing the exercise gives you the goosebumps. Hopefully we do not ever have to put this into play,” Hallauer said.
# UPCOMING EVENTS

The Center for Preparedness Education

## MARCH
- Rural Road Show

## APRIL
- 11
  - Exercise Design Course
- 12
  - 16th Annual Symposia

## MAY
- 7 & 8
  - HSEP Course
- 09
  - 16th Annual Symposia
  - Basic Disaster Life Support Webinar

---

For more information, upcoming events and training resources check out our website at preped.org or call 402-552-2529.