

Douglas County, KS Emergency Management



2010 ANNUAL REPORT



"Ensuring Douglas County cities and citizens are disaster aware and disaster prepared."



FROM THE DIRECTOR, TERI SMITH

At Douglas County Emergency Management, we know that disasters can strike anywhere and anytime in our community.

WHAT IS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT?

Douglas County is subject to a number of potential natural disasters such as fires, flooding, heat waves, tornadoes and winter storms. There are also hazards from nuclear, biological, or chemical accidents— as well as terrorist acts.

The Emergency Management Agency in Douglas County works daily to ensure the proper means exist not only for government, private or response agencies; but also for individuals to be able to plan, prepare, respond to and recover from any emergency/disaster that may occur. This is reflective of the four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

In working with various community partners, we strive to ensure all cities and citizens are disaster aware and disaster prepared.

Douglas County faces many threats from natural disasters, environmental accidents, and technological events that require Emergency Management constantly look at how best to protect our citizens and property. This Agency worked diligently in 2010 to ensure that Douglas County was prepared for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters and emergencies. This past year, emergency drills were run; preparedness classes were taught; plans were developed and communications systems were kept open in preparation for an event that we hope will never come.

In the current times of revenue shortfalls, there has been little change in funding levels for local emergency management programs, though the scope of responsibilities continues to increase. The question facing emergency management today is how long resources will be available to sustain a quality program considering economic uncertainties and continuing budget cuts. The emergency management function must remain both dynamic and flexible, while administration prudently establishes priorities which best serve the mission.

In closing, I would like to thank all those in the emergency response community, along with Emergency Management volunteers and staff who support and participate in our plan development, exercises, and training sessions. They form a team with the awesome responsibility of improving and enhancing our capabilities to protect the citizens of Douglas County. Douglas County Emergency Management will continue to facilitate this involvement in making a successful and safe 2011.

WHO IS DOUGLAS COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT?

MEET OUR STAFF:

Teri Smith, CEM
DIRECTOR

Jillian Rodrigue
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Sheila Meggison
PLANNER

Alexandria Norman
COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS
COORDINATOR

Cindy Schmidt
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

DUTY OFFICERS:

Mark Cairns

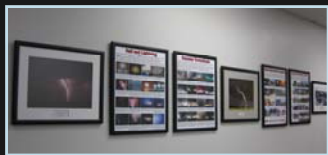
Kate Dinneen

Bob Newton
County Public Information Officer

MOBILE COMMAND VEHICLE:

Marvin Wiedeman, Jr.
MANAGER

Will Shockley
MANAGER



EM staff created educational posters and arranged for gorgeous prints of weather phenomena to be made and framed for our EOC hallway. Great job, they are amazing!

EM VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:



AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Auxiliary Communications Team (ACT) volunteers are licensed amateur radio operators who provide adjunct support through alternative communications capabilities to local governmental units in Douglas County, Kansas through our Emergency Management Department before, during or after emergency or disaster situations.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM



Douglas County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a program designed to help individuals prepare for, and respond to emergencies/disasters. The goal is for emergency personnel to train members of the community in basic response skills, so if first responders are overwhelmed in a disastrous event, CERT members may integrate into the response capability and help save and sustain lives until help arrives.



SKYWARN

SKYWARN volunteers are authorized as weather spotters who report severe weather activity occurring in Douglas County, Kansas. Emergency Management offers these volunteers specialized weather spotting training January through March each year.



EMOC STORM ACTIVATIONS & WINTER STORM PRESIDENTIAL DECLARATION

One of the many responsibilities of Emergency Management staff is to monitor weather events that may affect Douglas County cities and citizens. In 2010, EM Staff "activated" the Emergency Management Operations Center over 40 times to coordinate response and recovery operations, including activation for the 2009 Winter Storm which became a federally declared disaster. These activations included sending notifications to local partners, hosting webinars, conducting VAR alerts, damage assessments, media interviews, and activating volunteers.

Emergency Management is also responsible for deploying the Mobile Command Vehicle for incidents, disasters, and training exercises throughout the county. This year the MCV was deployed to 9 events/incidents for over 180 hours of operation.

STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AWARDS, AND HOURS

This year, the *Douglas County CERT program* received FEMA's Honorable Mention award in the public preparedness section of their National Citizen Corps awards. Director *Teri Smith* completed FEMA's Advanced Professional Series in Emergency Management, and KU's Certified Public Manager Program. She was also elected President-Elect of the Kansas Emergency Management Association. Our Planner, *Sheila Meggison*, received her Kansas Certified Emergency Manager certification; and she and our Community Preparedness Coordinator, *Alex Norman*, were both accepted to EMI's Master Exercise Practitioner Program to be completed in 2011. Throughout 2010, staff took part in 63 coordination meetings, 154 planning meetings, gave 35 presentations, conducted 4 walk-throughs, responded to five (5) hazmat incidents, coordinated 41 severe weather activations, and participated in seven (7) fairs.



COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS EFFORTS IN DOUGLAS COUNTY

Within this past year, Douglas County Emergency Management has made significant strides in its community outreach to educate and encourage cities and citizens to be more disaster aware and disaster prepared. We began 2010 with a new project, the “Pursuit of Preparedness” campaign. Thanks to donations of emergency kit items from various local businesses, we were able to create 100 emergency kits to be distributed free of charge. EM partnered with the Boys and Girls Club and handed out the kits to third and fourth graders at several schools following a presentation on preparedness by EM staff and volunteers. Most notably, staff and volunteers combined to give 9 great presentations simultaneously around Lawrence for the Boys and Girls Club— a first!



National Preparedness Month in September brought a new type of preparedness outreach. EM, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department and the Roger Hill Volunteer Center came together to co-host with Channel 6 to feature a preparedness themed episode for their show “One on One Trivia.” We hosted the show at Biggs BBQ in Lawrence. There were four contestants and three rounds of exciting trivia. What a neat way to encourage preparedness— and so much fun, too. Also new this year, EM created a “Pledge 2 Prepare” online awareness campaign. Community members could visit our website or social media sites and click on the link bringing them to a form where they could pledge to do one act of preparedness in 2010.

National Preparedness Month also brought our Annual Douglas County Preparedness Fair held at the Fairgrounds. 18 agencies combined to host informational booths and various apparatuses to showcase their impact on the community and how you and your family can be better prepared for an emergency or disaster. Over 150 people attended making it a true success and a lot of fun! Thanks to all who participated and attended, it was great.

COUNTY-WIDE FULL SCALE HAZMAT EXERCISE

Douglas County Emergency Management received a \$40,000.00 Hazardous Material Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant, which provided funding for a contractor to design and facilitate a county-wide full scale exercise in Douglas County. Twelve local response agencies and 50 volunteers gathered to participate on Tuesday, June 29, 2010. Three main areas that were tested involved activating the Douglas County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), field work of incident site management, and Lawrence Memorial Hospital’s (LMH) mass casualty plan. The exercise began with a pretend 9-1-1 call at the Youth Sports Complex, where stored chemicals had spilled and combined to produce a poisonous gas. Volunteer victims simulated physical reactions to the gas and were treated by hazmat crews wearing gas masks and full protective gear. While emergency crews treated victims at the incident site, staff at LMH set up decontamination units and triage areas as part of their mass casualty plan.

The media also took part in the exercise focusing on controlling the flow of information to the public during a major disaster. Overall the exercise went very well and was successful in testing Douglas County’s Local Emergency Operations Plan; and providing an integrated, centralized, efficient and orderly management of response resources and interface with multiple agencies in Douglas County in a major emergency scenario. We look forward to a regional exercise in 2012.



HMEP GRANT ACTIVITIES

The Hazardous Material Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant that funded our previously mentioned full-scale exercise, also funded two hazardous material trainings for local and regional first responders in 2010.

In June we hosted the basic HazMat IQ class, which is a nationally-acclaimed hazmat training. Our responders thought it was such a phenomenal training we sought more HMEP funding to host an Advanced HazMat IQ class. We were the first in the United States to host and conduct the Advanced HazMat IQ class, and it was great!

SOCIAL MEDIA & NETWORKING

2010 saw the popularization of emerging social media outlets and the integration of social media networking into the global culture. For those unaware, social media is a way to transmit, or share information with a broad audience; where everyone has the opportunity to create and distribute. Social media networking on the other hand, is the act of engagement— where groups of people with common interests come together on social media sites to build relationships and share information. Neilson published that the top three social media sites' (Facebook, YouTube, and Wikipedia) users combined to spend over 110 billion minutes, or 22% of their time, on these sites. That's 66% more time spent on these sites than 2009.

Douglas County Emergency Management saw this emergence wasn't just a trend, but a permanent shift in how the global culture communicates. Our department established Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts to share department information, news, severe or winter weather updates, preparedness tips and many other things. With almost 700 followers we hope to better engage our community, helping to fulfill our mission of disaster aware and disaster prepared.

SEVERE WEATHER SYMPOSIUM

Each third Saturday in March Douglas County Emergency Management hosts the Douglas County Severe Weather Symposium. This is the only Symposium of its kind offered in Kansas. Four speakers are brought in from across the Midwest to present topics relevant to enhancing DCEM volunteers and the public's awareness and understanding of severe weather. The Symposium is also an opportunity to enhance the partnership between Emergency Management, local media outlets, and the National Weather Service as a Roundtable Q&A session completes the lineup. This year's speakers include Joe Lauria, Meteorologist at FOX 4; Scott Blair, Forecaster with the National Weather Service in Topeka; David Imy, Operations Branch Chief at the Storm Prediction Center; and Tim Samaras, engineer and Director of TWISTEX. Join Emergency Managers, Storm Spotters, Media, Meteorologists, and Weather Enthusiasts from across the Midwest for Douglas County Emergency Management's 2011 Severe Weather Symposium on March 19th at the Lawrence Arts Center.



KEMA BOARD— ANNUAL TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C. BY: MIKE SELVES, KEMA

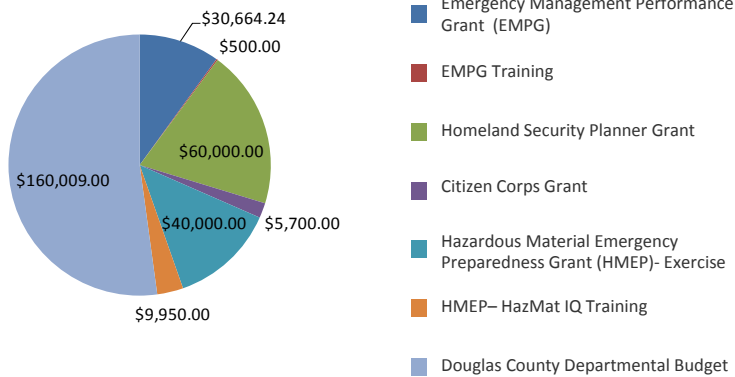
In early March, Mrs. Teri Smith, the Douglas County EM Director, was selected (for the second year) to participate in the annual KEMA Government Affairs delegation's trip to Washington, DC. She represented the KEMA members of the 3rd Congressional District. During the trip, the delegation visited both Senators and all four Congresspersons.

They enjoyed significant success in getting commitments from all members to support increased appropriations for the EM Performance Grant program as well as support for an emergency appropriation to replenish the FEMA emergency relief fund. Mrs. Smith's leadership during this year's visit has been recognized and she has been requested to lead the delegation for the 2011 visit. Her selection reflects the great confidence KEMA has in her abilities as this will be a very challenging and important visit in that three out of the four Congresspersons are entirely new to the Congress.



Pam Beasley, Allen Co.; Pam Kemp, Clay Co.; Lon Buller, Harvey Co.; Teri Smith, Douglas Co.

2010 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FUNDING SOURCES



With this budget and grant monies, Douglas County Emergency Management was able to review and complete plans, conduct multiple preparedness efforts, support outside agency operations through the use of the EOC and MCV, fulfill yearly statutory requirements, and conduct and/or sponsor numerous trainings and exercises for local response agencies and the public to further our mission of cities and citizens in Douglas County being disaster aware and disaster prepared.

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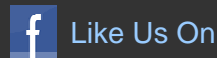
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UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2011

WEATHER 101- MARCH 10, 7PM, SOUTH JUNIOR HIGH

Hosted by the National Weather Service in Topeka, this session features information about severe thunderstorm development and a discussion of severe weather safety followed by a few more advanced topics. This course is FREE and open to the public.

SEVERE WEATHER SYMPOSIUM- MARCH 19TH, 7:30AM LAWRENCE ARTS CENTER

The Symposium is designed to continue training and expanding knowledge of storm spotters in advanced storm development, spotter safety, and the importance of spotter reports. The presentations will include incredible storm videos; experts in the field from the National Weather Service and the private sector, and will conclude with a round table discussion. Cost is \$15 and open to the public. Registration will begin in January 2011.

DOUGLAS COUNTY CERT AND OUR NEW MINI-CERT PROGRAM

Emergency Management provided two sessions of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in 2010. The spring session graduated 18 members, with six of them becoming Emergency Management volunteers. The fall session graduated 14 members, with four becoming volunteers.

As a new approach to CERT in our community, our staff developed a mini-CERT course aimed at vulnerable populations. It takes the standard 24-hour CERT course and adjusts it to an 8-hour course geared specifically to issues more prevalent with vulnerable populations. Over the summer, the residents of Babcock Place were the

first participants for this novel course. Topics covered included: basic preparedness, fire safety, basic first aid, personal awareness and safety, and coping with emergencies. The final "scenario" was a home hazard hunt. Twenty-two participants attended at least one of the classes. A total of 17 Babcock Place residents graduated from mini-CERT.

We will be continuing to host the mini-CERT class over the next two years to residents at Clinton Place and Edgewood Homes. A refresher course plans to be held annually at each of the residences thereafter.



To our knowledge, this mini-CERT concept is the only course of its design within the national CERT program.

Our department also sent four volunteers to Wichita in August for a one-day training on how to moulage. The four volunteers then shared their knowledge with other CERT volunteers. We now have approximately 12 CERT volunteers who are capable of doing moulage for trainings.