

PREPARED

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS

Could It Really Happen Here?

by Roger Hoffner, Arapahoe Office of Emergency Management

Colorado

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of

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MANAGEMENT

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ASSOCIATION

NATURAL
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MITIGATION
Council

Bill OWENS
GOVERNOR

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If I were back east with the temperatures we are now having, and I was in the role of Emergency Manager, would I be looking at the heat issue differently? Of course I would. But do we have a potential for issues similar to those here? About a month ago I started hearing from the national Weather Service and a private meteorologist, that we were in for a long, hot, dry summer.

This got me to thinking about what happened in Chicago a few years ago, when over a thousand people died with heat related illnesses. Could colorful Colorado and the Denver area possibly be have a heat wave that would cause deaths and maybe catch us off guard? I decided it might be a good idea to try to put together a meeting with some of the key responders in Arapahoe County to see if they felt the same way. On July 7, about twenty of the invited guests showed up. There were police and fire chiefs, Amateur Emergency Radio Services, Tri-County Health, American Red Cross, Colorado Office of Emergency Management, and four Emergency Managers from other cities in Arapahoe County. I was impressed, but at the same time wondered if I had just taken on another project that I really didn't have time for.

Anyway, I started to explain my concerns and the two critical issues I saw:

- what if there were a heat wave and we lost power, and
- what if there were a extended heat wave in the high 90's and into the 100's for several days?

My question was, "Have we identified the population that would be affected and do we have a plan and the resources to handle it?"

After some discussion, the opinion reached we we needed to do some work. Some of the items determined:

- public education can save lives;
- Red Cross could set up cooling shelters if the power was on;
- we needed a pamphlet of information to distribute, now!; and
- we needed a list of resources available in the county and cities.

Red Cross had a heat pamphlet that we decided was what we wanted to hand out, but they had only a few hundred available. We received permission to reproduce it in black and white and at 12:30 p.m., we submitted a print request to the Arapahoe County Print Shop for 20,000 copies. At 4:30 p.m., Sheriff Sullivan picked up about 10,000 and started distributing them to the fire departments, police departments, and other emergency managers. By 7:00 p.m. that night, 15,000 pamphlets had been distributed.

We decided if the power went out, we could use some of the large evaporative fans and generators (from Y2K) to cool school gymnasiums. A list of available resources, including extra fire department fans had to be compiled for a follow-up meeting the next Tuesday.

I contacted Wal Mart and asked what 100 box fans might cost and if they could get them. The group had talked about how a fan in a hot, still room could save a life. By the following Friday, 100 fans were available to give out if needed.

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FT. MORGAN RECEIVES FEMA'S "STAR COMMUNITY" NOMINATION

PROJECT IMPACT: Morgan County, Colorado

Population: 30,000 in County

Year Designated: 1998

Risks:

Flooding: Morgan County has a history of overland and flash flooding. Severe winter storms, thunder and electrical storms, tornadoes and wildfires have contributed to these. Severe thunderstorms have produced riverine and sheet flooding that have threatened life and property.

High Wind and Tornadoes: Morgan County sustained \$31.8 million in insured damage in two separate severe weather storms in 1998. There were 50 tornadoes in this area between 1950 and 1998. In one event in 1996, there was over \$900,000 damage to private and business property alone.

Additionally: Morgan County has experienced damage from blizzards, micro bursts, severe lightning storms and hazardous material incidents as well as wildfires.

Key notes from the nomination form.....

What unique characteristics exist in your community to apply Project Impact? What aspects of the community's Project Impact effort are unique/special?

Morgan County was very successful in conducting large convening sessions to help focus the community's efforts for Project Impact. Tornado hazard and flooding were identified as being of most concern to the citizenry. Without an early alert and warning system, the populace has often been caught unaware in times of crisis. Tornadoes and floods have surprised this community time and time again. The location of this community has made it unique for tornado activity and ideal for developing information and using "safe shelter" information developed by FEMA and the University of Texas.

This community has a strong "can do" attitude and works to make partnerships a "win/win" proposition for everyone.

The excellent relationships that exist between the media, schools and the county have fostered numerous activities they have jointly worked on to produce excellent models of "safe shelter" and disaster resistant buildings.

Who are the champions of the initiative? Who has made a difference and how?

Project Impact has been met with very positive enthusiasm from all quadrants of the community. The County Commissioners have been very strong supporters and have attended both National and Regional summits in support of this initiative. The local media in Fort Morgan Times Newspaper and KFTM Radio have been very supportive with public service announcements as well as special feature articles. The Fort Morgan Chamber of Commerce has been instrumental with initiating projects by speaking and giving presentations to civic groups and businesses. The Morgan County School District has been a major partner in developing "Safe Rooms" in models and in recent construction of new facilities. "Safe Room" models as well as an "All Hazards House" have been built by the middle school students. These models have been retrofitted to trailers and tour the Morgan County and Northeast Colorado areas for display and information purposes. This has added dramatically to the community's awareness on ways to build safer and keep people safe during frequent tornado activity. It has also contributed greatly to the communities' sustaining this initiative into the future.

What are the key projects reflecting good mitigation?

The key projects in Morgan County have been the "safe room" demonstration model projects and actual building of safe rooms in newer constructions. The community of Weldona (in Ft. Morgan county) completed a new day care facility utilizing flood mitigation measures for elevation. The Weldona Valley School FFA chapter built a tornado safe room in the facility for the children. This safe room was actually used recently when 3 tornadoes visited this community. Over 30 preschool students were able to take shelter in this safe room, during those events. The parents of these students were so relieved to know their children were safe, that they have been making inquiries as to building safe rooms in their own homes. There have been purchases of flood-prone property and flood mitigation actions that will render flood-prone land into an open space/park and act as a retention basin to prevent future flooding in the community.

The Morgan County Board of Commissioners instituted new flood plain regulations for future growth, and built a five-acre retention pond west of the community of Fort Morgan.

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Colorado Emergency Planning Commission (CEPC) Activities

by Richard Bardsley, COEM

Annual LEPC Conference

The Colorado Emergency Planning Commissions (CEPC) Annual Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Conference will be held on September 14-15, 2000, at the Denver West Village Holiday Inn, located at Indiana and Colfax in Golden, Colorado. This year there are a number of major logistical changes for the conference. The changes are:

1. The LEPC Conference will be a stand-alone conference this year - it will not be held in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Workshop for Emergency Managers (WEM) and Mitigation Council Mitigation conference as it was last year.
2. Funding has been restored for conference-participant per diem and transportation costs in accordance with the State of Colorado Fiscal Rules.
3. Individuals will be responsible for making their own room reservations. Participants traveling 50 to 100 miles are authorized a room on Sept. 14. Those traveling over 100 miles to attend will be authorized a room for Sept. 13 & 14. The CEPC will pay for conference attendees' rooms.
4. The attendance policy has also changed. Single-jurisdiction LEPCs may now send three (3) LEPC members to the conference. Multi-jurisdictional LEPCs may now send four (4) LEPC members to the conference. If you would like to send additional members to the conference, please submit the required application, and they will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Metro LEPCs may send as many members to the conference as they desire - however, applications will be required, as the CEPC is providing breakfasts and lunches.

Conference informational letters, with applications and draft agendas, were forwarded to all LEPC chairs prior to the end of July.

HMEP Grants

The US Department of Transportation (DOT) Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grants have been approved by US DOT for another year. This will be the eighth (8th) year that this grant has been available for Colorado. Tentatively, the State of Colorado and the CEPC will receive \$51,000 for planning and \$115,000 for hazmat training. The training funds will be transferred to the Division of Fire Safety for continuation of their ongoing hazmat training program.

Application packets for the planning portion of the HMEP Grant were sent to all LEPC chairs, selected state and local government agencies and various other agencies prior to the end of July 2000. The suspense date for the return of the completed application is September 15, 2000. The planning funds may be used for any activity related to planning and exercising activities. However, the same restrictions as in the past will be in place regarding the purchasing of equipment such as computers.

Obtaining Emergency Military Assistance



The Colorado Army National Guard (COARNG) has asked us to remind Colorado Law Enforcement and Emergency Management agencies that requests for emergency military assistance need to be directed to COEM.

In the past, the COARNG has received calls directly from various agencies. The Governor, or his designated representative, must formally task them to assist in a state emergency, and COEM is the normal conduit for the Guard to receive notification and authorization to operate in the state. The exception to this process is that the Adjutant General can mobilize Guard assets when there is a clear threat to human life or loss of property. The Guard may, for example, launch a helicopter to search for a lost child or rescue an injured climber. After mobilizing resources to meet the immediate need, the requestor must contact COEM. The Guard has authority in this instance to assist for the first 24 hours, after which COEM must approve Guard actions.

If you have any questions regarding the procedure, contact Colorado National Guard Headquarter at 303.677-8860/61 or the 24-hour number: 303.677-8887.

Colorado Emergency Management Self Assessment Tool

by Bill Cordova, COEM Southeast Regional Liaison

Jurisdictions participating in the State & Local Assistance (SLA) program, administered through COEM, have been asked to complete a **Self Assessment Tool (SAT)** reflecting the capacities and capabilities of the emergency management programs in their jurisdictions.

The primary purpose of the **SAT** is to provide a mechanism for local emergency managers to perform an assessment of their agency's operational readiness and capabilities. The results will also be beneficial in assisting jurisdiction's establish improvement priorities and provide an analysis of its program. It will provide baseline information which can be used in program analysis, strategic planning and goal setting; development of measurable performance indicators; and allow assessment results to be tracked so emergency managers can focus on those areas requiring the most attention for improvement.

Emergency managers are encouraged to use the results of the assessment to inform their elected officials and citizens about the effectiveness and capabilities of emergency management in their community. The assessment results will also allow the state to identify local needs in order to determine where best to direct state assistance.

The Value of Self Assessment

Local elected officials often face decisions which impact the provision of emergency services to citizens. They also face fiscal pressures to do more with less, and can often times find themselves hard-pressed to justify increased expenditures unless improved or expanded services can be directly attributed. This effort is often hampered by the lack of defined criteria by which the community can judge the level and quality of the emergency management program it needs or desires.

It is critical that local emergency managers have a comprehensive measurement tool which can be used to evaluate their jurisdiction's operational readiness and thus provide a means to inform local elected officials and the citizens of the communities they serve. Some reasons for performing a periodic self assessment are:

- It provides for a point-in-time organizational assessment to ensure effectiveness of your emergency management program.

- It can help in informing newly elected officials of the importance of the emergency management program in your jurisdiction.
- It can be useful in helping to raise the level of co-operation and assistance in times of need, from other local departments and agencies within your organization and community.
- It provides the basis for your jurisdiction to develop a "baseline" for local emergency management capability.
- It allows for review of operational readiness before potential seasonal weather-related emergency events or other hazards which may impact your jurisdiction and may be helpful to develop public awareness to build your jurisdiction into a disaster resistant community.
- It may be useful in changing the public's attitude from reactively responding to emergencies or disasters to one where citizens actively help themselves in times of emergencies.

The **SAT** provides a common format for the assessment process for local emergency managers. The local assessment process seeks to help answer three basic questions:

1. Is your emergency management program sufficiently comprehensive enough to meet the needs of the citizens in your jurisdiction?
2. Are your emergency management organization's goals, objectives and mission being achieved?
3. Is your emergency management program able to direct strategic deployment of resources in the event of an emergency or disaster and help citizens avoid becoming disaster victims?

Self Assessment Tool Benefit

The benefits of the SAT to local emergency managers can be many. For instance, the tool might help to

- create a shared vision within your community for emergency management programming;
- strengthen emergency management partnerships and help create a basis for common local standards among the emergency management community; and
- define an emergency management baseline for strategic planning to address deficiencies and achieve desired local capabilities;

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FT. MORGAN RECEIVES FEMA'S "STAR COMMUNITY" NOMINATION

(Continued from page 2)

The installation of the County's first early alert and warning system was completed in partnership with the Williams Family Foundation, a local partner, and NOAA for notification to the entire community of pending disasters.

As mentioned earlier, the Fort Morgan Middle School has implemented an Emergency Preparedness curriculum for students in grades 7th and 8th. These students have also built demonstration models of "safe rooms" and a full size "in-home" shelter to FEMA specifications. Additionally, an "all hazards house" model demonstrating wildfire mitigation, flood proofing, hail-resistant roofing, shatter-resistant glass, retrofitting of household appliances, in-home fire alarms, as well as CO2 monitors and NOAA weather radio alerts has been constructed.

What motivates the community to be proactive?

The recent disaster activity from both tornados and floods has galvanized this community into a proactive stance. The community has a strong volunteer base and has rallied around Project Impact to take steps to make their community more disaster resistant. This community has a strong "can do" attitude and works to make partnerships a "win/win" proposition for everyone. Sincere community caring and sense of "can do" effort has provided tremendous support for this initiative. The enthusiasm from the schools, the County Commissioners, the Media and others has inspired the entire community to consider ways to help make Morgan County disaster resistant.

What is the community doing to sustain the momentum of their effort? Or what steps is the community taking to maintain/institutionalize their Project Impact initiative past the grant?

Mitigation has become the key word for the community in its approach to development and ordinance enforcement. The community officials have been eager to look at ways this process can be implemented to insure that hazard awareness and mitigation are keystones in all aspects of growth as they consider in the future. The community has instituted new flood plain regulations along with long-term commitments from private as well as public partners to maintain and develop future mitigation strategies, as well as financial commitments which should insure that Project Impact is sustained well into the future.

How is the diversity of the community reflected in their process?

Involvement of the Fort Morgan and Weldona School Districts has been substantial. This has included the broadest diversity available in the community, as it includes the children of its' residents. The effects of the projects have been far reaching from private homeowners in low-income neighborhoods, to the business communities of every municipality in the county. Actions taken under Project Impact have and will continue to affect every resident in the community. The community is vast in its diversity and the children are reflective of this fact. These children will be the future leaders of this community, and through this process, have learned the importance of hazard mitigation and emergency preparedness.

Has the Congressional representative of this community been supportive of the initiative?

There were both letters of support and active participation from congressional representatives at both convening and signing ceremonies. Congressman Bob Shaffer's office has been well represented throughout this process.

Are there any federal agencies active as partners that we can highlight? If so, who is the primary POC and how should we contact them?

The National Weather Service in Boulder, Colorado has been very instrumental in supporting Project Impact. The Warning Coordination Meteorologist, Bob Glancy has taught Tornado Spotter Courses to community residents and first responders as part of Project Impact Severe Weather Campaign. The Weather Service and officials across a broad spectrum have joined together to support the implementation of a NOAA Weather Radio transmitter, further enhancing the community's early warning notification.

How have partnerships developed?

Partnerships have been developed through active out-reach by the local Project Impact Coordinator, and through local media outlets to spread information about Project Impact. The Fort Morgan Times has been instrumental in providing coverage from the beginning of the convening sessions, signing ceremony, and projects as they progressed, along with public safety announcements. Through these and other in-formation opportunities active partnership building and activism continues to grow for Project Impact initiatives.

Who are the key partners?

Key partners include the Fort Morgan and Weldona School Districts, the local Chamber of Commerce, the Fort Morgan Times, Willard Reid Lumber Company, local insurance agencies, other local business owners, Morgan

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County and City officials and their respective departments.

How do the projects benefit the community?

Morgan County, Colorado, is a much safer place to live through the Project Impact initiatives taken place in the last year and a half. Early warning did not exist before and is now a reality to thousands of people. This will save many lives in flooding and tornados. People now know that there are many things they can do to protect themselves and others in the face of devastating tornados. The "safe room" information has been widely distributed and adopted by members of the community. Flooding will not be as severe as in years past due to the mitigation efforts accomplished in Project Impact in the county. Businesses and homeowners alike are benefiting from projects designed to make their community safer against these hazards.

Has the community taken a traumatic/potentially traumatic situation and made a positive turnaround?

Tornado and flooding have both had impacts on the community. The lessons learned in these events have brought the community together to face the reality and seek solutions to making those impacts less severe in the future. An actual tornado event happened since the Project Impact initiatives began. This has helped the community in realizing the "safe room" initiative at a local day care center not only relieved parents' concerns but was a very worthwhile and effective way of dealing with these events throughout the community. The positive response from the community to help define and accomplish Project Impact goals has been, and continues to be, a driving force in keeping this initiative sustained into the future.

Congratulations Morgan County!

Colorado Emergency Management Self Assessment Tool

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- support a local strategy for enhancement of emergency management capability;
- justify budget requests for program development, staff support, and resource acquisition;

- assess existing emergency management mutual aid partnerships; and
- promote the state's understanding of local emergency management assistance needs.

SAT Design Format

The SAT process provides a means for evaluating the operational readiness of local emergency management programs in Colorado and their respective capabilities to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies or disasters. This dynamic process may necessitate interaction with other local officials and agencies to clarify specific responses to this self assessment.

The SAT format is based on the thirteen functional areas of an emergency management program. Emergency Management Function (EMF) categories include:

- EMF 1- Laws and Authorities
- EMF 2- Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment
- EMF 3- Hazard Management
- EMF 4- Resource Management
- EMF 5- Planning
- EMF 6- Direction, Control, and Coordination
- EMF 7- Communications and Warning
- EMF 8- Operations and Procedures
- EMF 9- Logistics and Facilities
- EMF 10- Training
- EMF 11- Exercises
- EMF 12- Public Education and Information
- EMF 13- Finance and Administration

While categories may change over time, all emergency management related activities can reasonably be stated within these functional categories. Each functional area addresses specific attributes and characteristics of an emergency management program so as to set out broad criteria by which the emergency management program's performance or capacity in a particular area can be assessed. Emergency managers are asked to indicate any given response is based on:

- Real-World Experience (RW)**, taken from an actual event or experience; or
- Exercise Experience (EE)**, drawn from a related exercise, drill or test; or
- Untested (UT)**.yet remains untested; or
- Not Applicable (NA)**, for any question or category of questions determined to not apply.

This self assessment may result in subjective responses. It is, therefore, reasonable to expect some variability from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, in responses provided to the various questions.

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FEMA ANNOUNCES HISTORIC TRIBAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

On September 26-28, 2000, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VIII will host a tribal emergency management conference titled, "Honoring our Partnerships, a vision for emergency management in Indian country". This will be a historic event in U.S. tribal relations, as FEMA takes steps toward implementing its tribal relations policies.

"We expect to attract tribal chairs, emergency managers, and other tribal leaders from all 28 tribes in our Region, as well as our state emergency management partners, and county emergency managers who deal with tribal issues," noted Rick Weiland, director of FEMA Region VIII, which encompasses Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. "Through this conference we hope to improve emergency management capabilities on the reservations, to learn from successful tribal emergency management practices, and to solidify government-to-government relationships between tribal leaders and FEMA Region VIII."

Each day of the conference, which will be held at the Civic Center in Rapid City, South Dakota, will focus on a slightly different aspect of emergency management:

September 26 *Honoring:* Recognizing tribal leadership, building relationships, and fostering commitment to emergency management in Indian Country.

September 27 *Vision:* Providing emergency management skills training, and formalizing Region VIII's tribal relationships.

September 28 *Perspective:* A retrospective look at disasters on tribal lands: Pine Ridge, Turtle Mountain, and Spirit Lake Nation.

"The outcomes from this conference will help to save lives and property in Indian country, and will have a significant impact on tribal/FEMA relations," Weiland said.

Together with regional and national FEMA personnel, state emergency management staff, and the media, the conference is expected to draw upwards of 250 participants.

For more conference information, visit FEMA's website at www.fema.gov/reg-viii/tribal/Tribal.htm

Colorado Emergency Management Self Assessment Tool

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The Colorado Office of Emergency Management will not use the evaluation results to draw direct comparisons of the results of one jurisdiction against those of another.

As emergency managers work through the SAT process, it is important to stay focused. At first reading, it may appear there are duplicate questions, however, such duplication is necessary to comprehensively assess activities from both a planning and operational perspective. As emergency managers examine their respective programs against these criteria, they will gain a "self profile" on the strengths and weaknesses of their agency's program. Successive SAT evaluations should be useful for emergency managers to annually update their *Strategic Plan* and to provide some comparability of their responses from year to year.

43% of all statistics are worthless.

Could It Really Happen Here?

(Continued from page 1)

We had determined the primary population at risk were the elderly. I developed a second pamphlet with the Red Cross information but with the Arapahoe County Emergency Managers Group (Arapahoe, Littleton, Englewood, Greenwood Village, Aurora and Glendale) information on the cover. We also established two recorded message phone numbers; one from Tri-County Health and another donated by Greenwood Village that had a message from the emergency managers.

I've had a couple of interviews with the media who want to know if I knew something they didn't, but isn't this what we do as Emergency Managers? Prepare? I pray we don't have to use one fan or have one serious illness or worse yet, one death. But, should it become a reality, I'd like to believe our time spent preparing will make the response a little easier to handle.

Over \$7 Million in Energy Impact Grants Awarded to Colorado Communities

Over \$7 million in Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance funds has been awarded to community projects throughout the state. Projects that received funding range from Delta County rail safety improvements to dam repair in the City of Victor; from economic redevelopment assistance in Trinidad to funding for technical assistance to regional council of governments.

“Providing funding for these local communities is essential,” said Gov. Owens. “I am pleased the state is able to assist these Colorado communities in providing needed services to their residents.”

The Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance program assists communities in offsetting the direct impacts of energy and mineral development and in meeting other needs indirectly related to such development. The funds are administered by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs and come from the state severance tax on oil, gas, carbon dioxide, coal and metals and from the state’s share of royalties paid to the federal government for the extraction of minerals and mineral fuels on federally-owned land.

Bob Brooks, executive director of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs said, “Hundreds of projects have been made possible through the Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance program with severance taxes and mineral lease royalties paid by the oil, gas and mining industries. These industries are important to the state and to the communities in which they are located. They not only provide the energy we rely on, provide local jobs and inject dollars into the state and local economies, but through the taxes and royalties they pay into the Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance program, help local communities address other energy-related impacts. We appreciate their support.”

Most of the projects that benefit from the program involve improvements to basic public facilities and infrastructure. During this most recent funding cycle, 50 projects received funding.

The grants and low-interest loans were made during the summer funding cycle. A nine-member state Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Advisory Committee provides funding recommendations on requests being considered.

More information on Energy and Mineral Impact Grants may be found at: <http://www.dola.state.co.us/fs/emia.htm>.

Thunderstorms & Lightning: A Preparedness Guide

by Chris Floyd, Disaster Services Director, Capital Area Chapter, American Red Cross

Thunderstorms are our most common experience of severe weather. The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts an average of 30 minutes. Despite their small size, thunderstorms are dangerous. Every thunderstorm produces lightning which kills more people each year than tornadoes. Heavy rain from thunderstorms can lead to flash flooding. Strong winds, hail, and tornadoes are also dangers associated with some thunderstorms.

Of the estimated 100,000 thunderstorms that occur each year in the United States, only about 10% are classified as severe. The National Weather Service considers a thunderstorm severe if it produces hail at least 3/4 inch in diameter, wind 58 mph or higher for tornadoes. The five main offspring of thunderstorms are: lightning, floods, straight-line winds, large hail and tornadoes.

Lightning occurs with all thunderstorms. It averages 93 deaths and 300 injuries each year. It also causes several hundred million dollars in damage to property and forests annually.

Flash floods/floods are the number one thunderstorm killer... nearly 140 fatalities each year. Most flash flood deaths occur at night and when people become trapped in automobiles.

Straight line winds are responsible for most thunderstorm wind damage. Winds can exceed 100mph! One type of straight line wind that can cause extreme damage is a *downburst*, a small area of rapidly descending air beneath a thunderstorm. Downbursts can reach speeds equal to that of a strong tornado and can be extremely dangerous to aviation.

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Regional News & Views...



*Views From the Northwest
by Steve Denney
Regional Liaison*

As development gains momentum in Western Colorado, emergency managers are faced with an increasing work load. The Northwest Region is fortunate to have a high percentage of emergency managers who are paid at a minimum of half-time. In this region, five (5) emergency managers are paid full-time; four (4) are paid for half time or less; two (2) are in an "other duties as assigned" status; and one (1) is a volunteer. This large number of full and half time emergency managers is not the norm throughout the rest of the Western Slope or state. Even with assigned staff, as emergency management related concerns continue to grow in volume and complexity, the work load is outpacing emergency managers' ability to deal with all relevant issues.

The issues facing the region are no longer limited to standard emergency planning considerations. Growth is putting increasing pressure on delivery of basic emergency services such as law enforcement, fire suppression and emergency medical. As calls for service increase, emergency managers are being asked to mediate conflict between service providers, both private and public, whose resource capabilities are being stretched to the limit.

Some emergency managers are viewed as meddling in the business of first response agencies when they get involved in issues of service delivery.

In some instances, rural districts who have contracted with municipal providers are being told that contracts may not be renewed. In other cases, rural medical clinics are closing and EMS personnel face the likelihood that already high call volumes may increase even more as people may no longer be able to obtain health care services within their hometown. At the same time, homeowners are seeing significant increases in insurance costs as ISO ratings increase in response to growth pressures placed upon current special district boundaries.

One might make an argument that emergency managers have no business mediating these basic service delivery issues. The problem with that argument is that without basic fire, law and EMS there is no emergency management response capacity within a community.

Operating on the premise that emergency management has a role in response and recovery operations, it is logical to argue that mediation of conflict between providers is an essential part of this business.

As regional coordinators work with local program managers to identify strategic initiatives which will enhance local capacity to respond to and recover from disasters, we have to be sensitive to all facets of an ever changing dynamic of basic service provision. One mechanism for accomplishing this task is to enlist more policy makers in the process of developing these initiatives.

Currently, each political subdivision within the state is required to be within the jurisdiction of and served by a local or inter-jurisdictional agency responsible for disaster preparedness and coordination of response. In many counties that system is working very well. However, in some instances, the terms of the relationship between municipalities, special districts and the county emergency management program is not clearly defined nor understood. In particular, some emergency managers are viewed as meddling in the business of first response agencies when they get involved in issues of service delivery.

A partial remedy, not solution, for this dynamic may be a clearer articulation of what it means to be within the jurisdiction of and served by an inter-jurisdictional agency (ie. a county emergency management program). It is right and appropriate for governmental entities to desire to control their destiny regarding emergency management issues. Each political sub-division within the state is offered the opportunity to develop and maintain its own emergency operations plan. When a political subdivision chooses not to maintain its own emergency management program, the State Legislature has provided an opportunity for any agency within a county to participate within a county-wide disaster preparedness entity, the county emergency management program. For the county program to be effective, it requires input and active participation from all agencies who operate under its umbrella.

It may be worth the time for emergency managers to visit each of the **municipalities** and **special districts** that provide emergency services within the county and discuss the nature of their emergency management programs. In order for this discussion to be meaningful, both top management and elected officials should be involved. As growth has increased pressure on services, it has certainly increased the number of people who are vulnerable to natural and technological hazards. What questions should the emergency manager ask and what issues need discussed?

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Regional News & Views...



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Does the political subdivision have an emergency operations plan?

Who is the individual responsible for testing and maintaining that plan?

Does the political subdivision believe it is part of the county emergency management program?

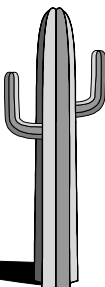
From the political subdivision's viewpoint, what are their obligations to the county emergency management program?

From the political subdivision's viewpoint, what are the county's obligations to them?

Are there expectations on either side which are not being met?

As events of ever increasing frequency and complexity occur within Colorado, our ability to effectively manage response and recovery operations will be tied directly to community-wide agreements on the nature of our emergency management system.

Views from the Southwest



Views From the Southwest
by Patricia Gavelda
Regional Liaison

Emergency Management: Brazilian Style

This past spring, from March 7 through April 10, I was fortunate to have been selected a member of the Rotary Club International's Group Study Exchange (GSE) program. The GSE program is a professional and cultural exchange representing a cross-section of local business and professional leaders. A GSE team consists of four non-Rotarian business or professional people and a Rotarian team leader.

The GSE program pairs Rotary Districts throughout the world to send and receive study teams in an effort to promote world understanding. The main objective of Rotary is service, in the community and throughout the world. Rotarians build goodwill and peace, provide humanitarian service, and encourage high ethical standards in all vocations. The Rotary motto is "Service Above Self".

My GSE team traveled to the state of Minas Gerais, Brasil. Because of my profession within the emergency management field, my days of vocational study during the tour focused on ways in which the Brasilians address civil defense in their country. Their system is similar to ours in the United States. In the following, I will attempt to capture the nuances of what I learned, briefly describe their system, identify the various hazards & threats within the regions I visited, as well as report on the different offices, agencies, local and elected officials with whom I came in contact.

The main hazard threats facing the region of Brasil in which I traveled included floods, drought, debris/landslides, and wildfire. "Faca chuva ou faca sol", roughly translates as "too much rain or too much sun". They experience a dry season (April-September) and a wet season (October-May). Much of the hillside development is unregulated and populated by the poorest citizens. These "favelas" or shanty towns, are very concentrated, densely populated, and built with whatever materials (cardboard, sheet metal, plywood) can be picked up on the streets. Much of the soil in the areas I visited is clay-like. It remains baked during dry spells, and erodes, slips, and slides during the rainy season.

In addition to building on the hills, floodway/floodplain development exists, but is not as prominent as it was in the past. I visited several riverine areas. In the city of Ipatinga, an area along the flood plain had been affected by seasonal rains. About five years ago, the entire community was destroyed by flood. The prefectura (local government) moved the citizens to government-provided housing units. The area is now a greenway and park. In the cosmopolitan city of Governador Valadares (also called "Governador Vala-dollars" because of the city's influence by the United States) an island exists within the confluence of several rivers flowing through the city. The island is basically a paleological floodbar, and is connected to the main city by a number of bridges. It floods periodically, but is still densely inhabited. The mitigation efforts I saw there include elevating the dwelling structures on pylons, and using the lower area for car ports.

Another flood-of-record area the town of Itabira. In 1979, it rained for 25 days straight; the rainfall totaled approximately 800 millimeters. The vertical town reminded me very much of Manitou Springs. It is an older area of Brasil surrounded by "mato" or wildland, which is a type of forested area, but not as dense as a rainforest.

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During this flood event, Itabira was totally isolated, because the two bridges leading into and out of town were washed away. Air travel by helicopter or plane was the only way to bring in outside help. It took several years to rebuild the infrastructure of the town and to re-engineer the bridges.

The threat of wildfires exist in Brasil, and many events begin outside of towns in outlying favelas, where most cook using an open flame. Fire was not a grave concern in the areas I visited because of the periodic rains. Some towns didn't even have a fire department. The home building materials were mostly concrete block, stone or marble. People don't seem to perceive much of a threat by home fires. However, since the great fires in the Amazon Basin in the recent past, several prefeituras are trying to budget for fire departments. The military police (polica militar) are also the "corpo de bombeiros" (firefighters). And the bombeiros are also the lifeguards on the beaches of Rio - rough duty!

Another cross-cultural element that exists within emergency management the world over--and was exemplified during my GSE trip--is the fact that disasters tend to strike the poor more often and fiercely. In Brasil, the sheer population of the country made this perhaps more clear than here in the United States. The lands surrounding most cities is a "commons" area, which allows poor people to build and live in hazardous zones. The local governments are very concerned and do whatever they can to try and control this type of growth, but often the pace at which the favela is built is staggering. And where would the people go? Because many agricultural endeavors are becoming more mechanized, Brasil is experiencing an influx of impoverished people who used to make a living from farms moving to populated areas. This magnifies the problems of people in high-risk areas.

Interestingly, many Brazilians said that whatever is good for the United States is good for Brasil. Their system of government is similar to ours, as is their civil defense network.

In 1996, a national assessment of risk was completed. From that assessment, the Brazilian government has developed a strategic plan to address the current, traditionally high risk areas and new areas of growth as they continue to develop further into the interior of the country. As in the United States, Brasil addresses the four phases of emergency management: 1] prevencao de desastres (prevention), 2] preparacao para emergencia e desastres (preparedness), 3] resposta aos desastres (response), and 4] reconstrucao (reconstruction). All disasters are handled locally until state and federal resources are activated through a declaration process. This process depends on one of four levels of disaster: "desastres de nivel I" are small accidents/disasters (pequeno porte), "desastres de nivel II" are medium events (medio porte), "desastres de nivel III" are big events (grande porte), and "desastres de nivel IV" are catastrophic events (muito grande porte).

These levels correspond with our "modes." Each level is characterized by certain criteria, public calamity, and an increased intensity of the event.

The city of Belo Horizonte is the capital city of the state of Minas Gerais. Here, I met with the state organization for civil defense known as CEDEC (Coordenadorias Estaduais de Defesa Civil). Belo Horizonte and the surrounding area has about 4 million people ranging from very sophisticated urban and industrial regions to more

remote towns, farmlands, and underdeveloped lands. CEDEC is responsible for the 853 cities within the state of Minas Gerais. The state is divided into regions which generally follow the river drainages and other geographic features. The other states in Brasil are divided similarly, and are overseen by their state CEDECs. The population of Brasil presently is about 168 million with 20 million people in Sao Paulo. Some municipalities have a civil defense director and some rely on the polica militar, the corpo de bombeiros, and the state or federal government in times of disaster. They have organized local, state, and federal response procedures, and each state has regional coordinators.

I spent a day touring flood and landslide areas with the local civil defense director in Ipatinga. The environment is a concern in all the regions. Waterways and potable water fall partially under civil defense. Many are upgrading their water treatment methods. I was also fortunate to have visited the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Natural Renewable Resources - Instituto Brasileiro Do Meio Ambiente E Dos Recursos Naturais Renovaveis (IBAMA). It is the Brazilian equivalent of our Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

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Some issues, such as the poverty of disasters, have no borders. Emergency management in Brasil, as in the U.S., needs more funding. The Brasilians noted not much money is budgeted to disaster agencies. There were only four computers at the Minas Gerais CEDEC offices. As one can see, Brazilian civil defense also deals with a number of acronyms. It was uncanny in looking at their plans and damage assessment forms - there seemed to be no language barrier!

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to Brasil. I was able to network with emergency management folks and discovered we all seem to deal with similar factors and trends, whether in North or South America. I was presented with a variety of plans, studies, civil defense forms, publications, and awareness/public education pamphlets. They are all written in Portuguese, but to an emergency manager, it isn't much of a problem to translate the language of disasters. The GSE experience illustrated just how interconnected we are in this world. Despite our geographic and language barriers, sometimes it all comes down to human nature and "faca chuva ou faca sol."

Views from the Northeast



Views From the Northeast
by **Bob Wold**
Regional Liaison

Concerns about flash flood and tornado season dried up early this summer as extremely hot, dry weather conditions ruined much of the crop production and caused local officials to begin to worry about the possibility of a long-term drought. Aside from minor flooding in Elbert County in July, the lack of flood disasters like those that occurred in 1997 and 1999 has at least allowed emergency managers opportunities to undertake a number of notable preparedness and hazard mitigation projects.

Project Impact Accomplishments

Both Morgan County and the City of Fort Collins can now look back at a long list of public safety achievements that were stimulated around Project Impact.

Both communities have used the FEMA recognition and supporting funds to undertake ambitious, multi-faceted programs to educate citizens about local hazards and to improve the ability of local agencies to provide timely warning and notification information to the public.

In **Fort Collins**, a new automatic telephone dialing system is the centerpiece of a comprehensive early warning system that also includes an electronic stream and precipitation gage system, EMWIN and LDAD weather satellite forecasting capabilities, a voice and text cable TV override system, and a new local AM radio station that provides continuous emergency, weather and preparedness information. The Fort Collins Office of Emergency Management also has developed an extensive web page and an innovative system for assisting emergency dispatchers with calls related to weather-related hazards such as tornadoes, flash floods, hail and lightning. The Natural Disaster Information Cards for Emergency 911 Dispatch Centers are being used in communications centers statewide and can be accessed via the new web page at www.ci.fort-collins.co.us/c_safety/oem/index.htm.

In **Morgan County**, the new "auto-dialer" gives public safety officials a tool for transmitting recorded warnings or emergency information quickly to the public via telephone in advance of an impending emergency. The state-of-the-art technology complements other warning systems in the county, including outdoor sirens, NOAA weather radios, local cable TV override and the Emergency Alert System. A comprehensive hazard education campaign also is underway and includes the design of public service information for news media, production of a hazard awareness video, printing and distribution of preparedness catalogues and brochures, and development of an emergency management web site. Morgan County has also partnered with local schools to construct models of both an in-home tornado safe room and a disaster-resistant home.

Cooperative Planning Activities

The **Northeast Colorado Emergency Managers (NCEM)**, a regional planning association representing Weld, Morgan, Washington, Logan, Yuma, Phillips, Sedgwick, Kit Carson, Lincoln, and Elbert Counties, fosters hazard awareness and personal safety in the 10-county region using a variety of educational tools. The production of safety brochures that address local hazards (in English and Spanish) and the presentation of safety information at schools, fairs and public events are two of the techniques that NCEM has used to promote individual and family preparedness. This year, the education campaign has been broadened to include a new NCEM web site and production of an all-hazards preparedness catalogue for incorporation into grade school curriculum.

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Yuma County successfully tapped a variety of grant sources to acquire systems that will allow warning information to be rapidly passed to all areas of the county and to people in many neighboring jurisdictions. The new automatic telephone dialing system covers both Yuma and Washington Counties and a new transmitter allows National Weather Service warnings and watches to be received all over the county for the first time. Yuma County has also purchased NOAA weather radios in bulk and distributed them to schools, hospitals, nursing homes, day care centers and to other locations with residents having special needs.

At the first sign of this summer's heat wave, the **Arapahoe County Emergency Managers Group** called together representatives of emergency management, fire services, and public health agencies and the American Red Cross to coordinate plans for dealing with potential emergency situations. Contingency planning by the task force focused on public education activities, including printing of safety brochures and establishment of an information "heat line," and on outreach efforts to identify and care for isolated elderly citizens and other vulnerable members of the population.

The Arapahoe County Emergency Managers Group, which is represented by emergency managers from the County, Aurora, Littleton, Englewood, Greenwood Village and Sheridan, also sponsored a successful application to attend FEMA's Integrated Emergency Management Course in Emmitsburg, Maryland this November 13-17. John Brackney from the Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners also sponsored the application for the intensive, exercise-based course, which will bring 75 senior county and municipal officials to the east coast for a week of training designed to build the awareness and skills needed to protect life and property in the event of a major disaster in the county.

Weld County and the Colorado School of Mines are teaming up on a project that utilizes the skills of fall semester students to perform a pre-engineering study and hazard analysis at select locations in the county that have experienced problems in the past. The students will produce a technical report for each area studied, including recommended actions to community officials and Weld County OEM for eliminating the identified hazards.

Training and Exercises

Introduction to Emergency Planning will be conducted September 13-14 in Sterling. The two-day course has been refined based on last year's pilot class and features new, traditional and alternative approaches to planning for natural hazards, hazardous materials accidents and terrorist events. The course also addresses guidelines for recovery planning and includes a new section on Internet-based planning resources. Break-out sessions will be conducted on day two to permit students to obtain more detailed information on the planning style and format that fits their jurisdiction's needs.

The first state-sponsored training "academy" for new emergency managers and other local officials will be held October 19-21, 2000, in Las Animas. The three-day course is a new addition to the training calendar and is a direct result of recommendations from emergency managers during last year's annual conference. The course will include condensed versions of several core introductory courses, including emergency planning, exercise design and principles of Incident Command System.

Exercise TOPOFF in May provided ample opportunities to exercise emergency plans relative to potential terrorist events, especially in Denver, Aurora and Arapahoe County, which were the focus of exercise play. The **City of Aurora**, for instance, conducted five separate exercises in the weeks leading up to the big national exercise.

Plans are in place for two functional exercises of U.S. Bureau of Reclamation-owned dams in Larimer and Yuma Counties in September, 2000. The exercises are intended to evaluate the operational readiness of reservoir emergency plans and to help improve local planning for warning and evacuation in downstream jurisdictions. The Soldier Canyon Dam (Horsetooth Reservoir) exercise involves simulation of an earthquake-triggered dam failure that floods Fort Collins, and the Bonny Dam exercise will involve a severe rain event complicated by a threat of terrorism.

"We apologize for the error in last week's paper in which we stated that Mr. Arnold Dogbody was a defective in the police force. We meant, of course, that Mr. Dogbody is a detective in the police farce."

-Correction Notice in the Ely Standard, a British newspaper

CSEPP News...

Training 2000

by Ted Medley, Training & Exercise Officer, COEM

The Colorado CSEPP Team conducted a two-day Alternate Year Exercise. The first day was a response exercise on April 26, 2000, while the second was a recovery exercise of selected functions on April 27, 2000.

The response was co-directed by a federal and a state representative. The federal co-director was from the Soldier and Biological Chemical Command (SBCCOM) while the state co-director was the CSEPP exercise and training officer. The state co-director requested varying levels of federal support and FEMA Region VIII appointed a project officer to coordinate the effort and serve as a member of the Exercise Planning Team. This was a scenario-driven exercise in which the state, Pueblo County, and Pueblo Chemical Depot's EOCs, communications and automation links were exercised. Primary participants were key staff and decision-makers who focused on evaluating plans and procedures and resolving challenges pertaining to coordination and assignment of responsibilities.

The recovery exercise was directed by the state CSEPP Exercise and Training Officer (ETO) with assistance from the FEMA Region VIII project officer. The ETO was responsible for exercise development, conduct, evaluation, and issuing an exercise report. The FEMA VIII Project Officer was responsible for budgeting and providing qualified evaluators who were tasked to evaluate selected recovery sub-objectives and evaluation elements:

1. Command and Control
2. Traffic and Access Control
3. Re-entry
4. Field Response

The SBCCOM, FEMA, Region VIII, and the CSEPP Team jointly developed the two-day AY 2000 Exercise in a spirit of coordination and cooperation. The team work has enhanced the ability of the organizations to work together efficiently and effectively in any future exercise.

Recovery Exercise Background

The Colorado CSEPP Team has completed a recovery plan to include a sampling strategy; organizing assets; integrating federal, state and local recovery organizations; coordinating site restoration actions; and managing the recovery efforts to a successful conclusion.

Recovery issues are usually a primary topic when we meet with citizens around the depot and this has emphasized the need for recovery planning in order to keep faith with the people who would be impacted by a chemical event.

In addition, a recovery objective has been drafted; coordinated with federal, state, and local CSEPP agencies; and published. The objective provides a framework for evaluating:

1. Organizational plans
2. Organizational structure and operating procedures
3. Integration of federal, state, and local recovery organizations.
4. Coordination of site reentry and restoration actions.
5. Management of the recovery efforts to a successful conclusion.

The exercise provided an evaluation of selected portions of the recovery plan with emphasis on the process for partnership and cooperation. The focus was on relationships, priorities, resolution of challenges, and ideas for a system that must be simple and clear, yet comprehensive enough so that federal, state, and county agencies fit together. The following organizations participated:

Pueblo County

Department of Emergency Management
 Geographical Information Systems Office
 Pueblo County Sheriff
 Pueblo City/County Health Department
 Pueblo Rural Fire Department
 Pueblo West Fire Department
 Pueblo Emergency Response Team
 American Medical Response Ambulance Company

State

Rapid Assessment
 Initial Detection (RAID) Team

Federal

EPA Region VIII Superfund Technical Assessment & Response Team (START)

The Colorado RAID Team has been integrated into the Colorado CSEPP response and recovery mission because of their capability to determine the extent of measurable off-post deposition.

One of the primary goals of the exercise was to integrate federal, state, and local agencies into an organization where the whole is greater in effect than the sum of the parts. The goal was achieved. The agencies used ICS in combining their efforts to successfully accomplish the mission. The leadership of each agency pledged to use the system which combines responsibilities for not only the effective management of the incident, but also the collective responsibilities of incident support, assuring that all assisting resources are effectively linked to the management system.

BIO TERRORISM EXERCISE IN DENVER METRO AREA

*by Greg Moser
Counter-Terrorism Planner, COEM*

Denver and Aurora hosted the largest US biological terrorism exercise to date during late May 2000. Exercise TOPOFF, short for Top Officials, was a congressionally mandated event, co-sponsored by the Department of Justice and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This first-of-its-kind exercise provided senior leadership at the local, state, and federal levels with a practical opportunity to examine the complex issues of response and management of a large-scale biological related crisis.

The ten-day exercise was driven by the notional release of highly lethal, highly contagious pneumonic plague in a large public gathering in Denver. Active play began with the initial recognition and medical and criminal investigation of a biological terrorist attack. Actual field play in Denver and Aurora involved local first responder communities, health departments and hospitals. The coordination of activities and resources at all levels of government required the adaptation of existing procedures, innovation of new ones, and the development of broad new partnerships to address the unique challenges of a large-scale bio terrorist attack. The deployment and use of the assets of the recently established National Pharmaceutical Stockpile was another groundbreaking event providing valuable lessons that will benefit our response efforts nationwide.

Other important areas of the exercise were public information, mass casualty management, continuity of government, and public quarantine. Currently, we are in the process of coordinating the integration of lessons learned into future planning and training.

TOPOFF provided an excellent opportunity to examine the complex issues of response and management of a major natural or man-made biological crisis, encouraged the expansion of our response partnerships, and provided an excellent context for improved readiness for a major health crisis.

Thunderstorms & Lightning: A Preparedness Guide

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Hail causes nearly \$1 billion in damage to property and crops annually. Large hail stones can fall at speeds faster than 100 miles per hour. The costliest US hailstorm occurred in Denver, Colorado, in July, 1990, with total damages of \$625 million.

Lightning is perhaps the most spectacular phenomenon associated with thunderstorms. Most lightning deaths and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors, most often in the summer months and during the afternoon and early evening. In the past decade, over 15,000 lightning-induced fires nationwide have resulted in several hundred million dollars a year in damage and the loss of 2 million acres of forest. Your chances of being struck by lightning are estimated to be 1 in 600,000 but could be reduced by following safety rules.

For more information on thunderstorm safety and disaster preparedness, the Mile High Chapter of the American Red Cross is located at <http://www.mhcarc.org/home.html>.

Colorado Natural Hazards Mitigation Council 1997-1999 Report

The Colorado Natural Hazards Mitigation Council 1997-1999 Report is now available through the Colorado Office of Emergency Management. For a complimentary copy, email marilyn.gally@state.co.us or call 303.273.1775.


The report contains a brief update on hazard mitigation committee accomplishments for the past three years, as well as brief descriptions of successfully completed hazard mitigation projects.

"I installed a skylight in my apartment... The people who live above me are furious!"
~Stephen Wright

We'd like to hear from you...

We'd like to hear from you if you have items of interest appropriate for our newsletter. Articles, comments, meeting news, web sites, stories, etc., should be addressed to:

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 "Cats are smarter than dogs. You cannot get eight cats to pull a sled through snow."

~Jeff Valdez 



COEM Training

October 2000

New Emergency Management
Training Academy
October 19 - 21, 2000
Location: Las Animas
Course Manager: Bill Cordova, COEM

November 2000

The EOC Course
November 28, 2000
Location: Montrose
Course Manager: Steve Denney, COEM

No courses in December 2000

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