

DISASTERCOM



DERA Newsletter

41 Years of Service

June 2003

Tornadoes Damage Central U.S.

The National Weather Service reported more than 412 tornadoes in the first 11 days of May. At least 44 people have died in the week of storms to hit the South and Midwest.

Tornado Damage Reports

Illinois: May 10, tornadoes roared along a 130-mile corridor in Illinois, causing damage and injuries in 20 towns. The small town of South Pekin was among the hardest hit, with an estimated 80-100 homes damaged by a twister.

Kansas: At least seven people were reported dead as of May 5. Hardest hit May 4 were Crawford and Cherokee counties in the southeast.

A third of the town of Franklin was wiped out and the governor declared seven counties disaster areas. Liberty, Gladston and Pleasant Valley to the north of Kansas City were hit hard. North Kansas City Hospital went into disaster operations on auxiliary power at approximately 5:15 p.m. and treated upwards of 50 people for injuries that evening.

Kentucky: About 24,000 homes and businesses lost power when thunderstorms struck Louisville during Monday morning rush hour May 5. Then again almost a week later twisters hit Rineyville and Harrodsburg. Damage reports yet forthcoming at press time.



(Photo by John Sommers, II)

Kentucky Search Dog team handler Warren Mitchell, center, with his dog named Maggie, look for a missing woman whose mobile home was tossed into the Salt River by a pre-dawn tornado Sunday, May 11, 2003, in Harrodsburg, Kentucky.

International Strategic Master Plan

The ISMP-1 project (first phase of an International Strategic Master Plan exploratory survey and study), is about to start. Thus far, 23 entities from public and private sector in North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia have signed up as members of the project consortium, 11 from the USA. ISMP-1 is non-political, non-proprietary, and participant-driven. Interactive sessions on this forward-looking study have been scheduled by the Emergency Infrastructure Information Platform (EIIP) for July 23, and by way of a web-based, multi-month symposium by the Public Entity Risk Institute (www.riskinstitute.org).

Tornado Damage Reports

Missouri: At least 18 people are dead and eight missing. A state of emergency was declared in 17 counties. One of the hardest hit communities was Pierce City, a town of 1400 with 25-30 downtown building destroyed. The Red Cross estimated that 100 homes were destroyed.

Oklahoma: President Bush declared the state a federal disaster area May 10, after two days of tornadoes that devastated homes and businesses near Oklahoma City. Thursday's storm was blamed for 134 injuries. Friday's storm caused 11 injuries.

Tennessee: At least 13 people are dead and two were missing. One tornado carved a 65-mile path across the state and caused heavy damage when it hit Jackson. Parts of the city of 60,000 remained without power May 5 and a curfew was in effect.

United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction

Selection Process 2003

Join us in rewarding individuals and institutions from around the world who contributed through innovative practices and outstanding initiatives, to reducing the risk and vulnerabilities of communities to natural hazards.

Closing date for Nominations:

August 15, 2003

For more information please visit: www.unisdr.org and www.eird.org

DisasterCom is the quarterly newsletter of DERA International. News items and articles are always welcome.

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Editor: Catherine Lawhun

Membership in this Nonprofit Association is open to all who share our commitment to effective disaster preparedness and response.

See Back Page for Membership Application

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A Note from your Editor

Our hearts are heavy with the loss of life and destruction of personal property that has befallen so many this Tornado season. But, as we extend our deepest sympathies to those affected, let us also rally to encourage those providing relief and response so unselfishly.

Pondering, "What good could come from all the damage, destruction and death that accompanied this onslaught? I offer this partial list to consider:

- Increased focus on relief and response closer to home.
- Re-introduction of Wind Hazard Legislation
- Increased emphasis for better design and construction methods and practices
- Significant exercising of newly created web based warning technologies
- Increase in understanding the importance of building codes enforcement
- Heightened interest in public education.
- Outpouring of generosity and assistance by growing numbers of volunteers.
- Amplified communication between family members and dear friends nationwide.

Hoping, also, for a deeper appreciation of the health, property and concern that remains.

Yours,

-Catherine Lawhun

Catherine Lawhun is also President of Many Waters Resource Network, Inc. www.many-waters.com whose non-profit component is registering available volunteer engineering professionals for disaster response nationwide. For more information call 888-570-1344

Wind Hazard Reduction Coalition

The goal of the Wind Hazard Reduction Coalition is to support the creation of a National Wind Hazard Reduction Program (NWHRP). This program would seek to address Better design and construction methods and practices, Better emergency response, Use of modern technology for early-warning systems, Building codes enforcement; and Public education and involvement programs. For more information, e-mail govwash@asce.org

In Washington.....



ASCE-May 7, 2003 - Engineering Group Supports Re-introduction of Hurricane, Tornado and Related Hazards Research Act.

Congressman Dennis Moore(D-KS) joins American Society of Civil Engineers President Thomas L. Jackson, P.E. (left) and Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) (right) to announce bipartisan legislation to reduce damages from wind disasters. (Continued on page 4)

The Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness

13th World Conference on Disaster Management

Toronto, Canada -June 22-25, 2003

If you are planning to attend, please note:

The World Health Organization has lifted it's travel advisory to Toronto!

WHO Director-General Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland cited three changes in Toronto over the last week: the magnitude of probable SARS cases has decreased; 20 days have passed since the last case of community transmission occurred; and no new cases in other parts of the world have been linked to Toronto. Visit www.wcdm.org

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Food to Thousands Lesotho, Africa

The Salvation Army in South Africa is working with the United Nations World Food Program (UNWFP) to help distribute food to more than 150,000 people in the country of Lesotho, Africa.

Since November 2002, a Salvation Army emergency disaster team, led by Major Andrew Mohloaghae and Captain David Widdowson, has been responsible for feeding people in the Butha Buthe area in the northern part of Lesotho. They have been providing basic food items in monthly installments to the people living in this famine affected area. Through The Salvation Army's program the number of people being fed has enormously increased from 3,000 in November to nearly 39,470 people earlier this month. The team is estimating it will feed 50,000 people in Butha Buthe in May and June. The numbers will continue to rise as a new partnership agreement takes effect expanding The Salvation Army's responsibilities to include the whole Mafeteng region in Central Lesotho. The UNWFP has been operating in the region but has requested support from The Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army will gradually take over the feeding program in the Mafeteng region in three phases, starting in May when the emergency team will feed an additional 35,000 people. In June, another 35,000 will be added followed by another 30,000 people in July bringing the total number of people in the region being served to 100,000. By the end of July The Salvation Army will be responsible for feeding 150,000 people across the country.

Every month the situation worsens as crops continue to fail in the fields due to the extreme variation of weather conditions. In addition, the number of HIV/AIDS victims also has increased causing many people to become too ill or weak to plant their crops. Still, it is hoped there will be enough local crops at harvest time to sustain some areas for three months. However, there is a strong possibility the feeding program will need continue until June 2004. The Salvation Army's Emergency Services Office in London, England, has released \$100,000 to facilitate the expansion of this needed program.

USFA announces Household Hazmat 101

Interactive web-based course
<http://trainina.fema.gov/emiweb/IS>

National Guard Bureau's

Automated Exercise and Assessment System

Easily deployed on personal computers, the AEAS can be used to test readiness for WMD incidents, receive immediate feedback on command decisions, observe the consequences of those decisions, and receive response assessments on multiple levels.

Daniel Donahue, Chief, Public Affairs and Community Support Office, and Special Assistant to the Chief, National Guard Bureau has directed the development of AEAS, designed by SAIC scientists and homeland security experts.

SAIC representative Mike Kerrigan demonstrated the software live at their exhibit at the Medical Response Conference in Orlando in February.

AEAS allows the participating community to use its actual resources against an incident in a geo-typical community.

It is capable of accommodating up to 20 participants on individually networked computers. Each participant plays one of 41 different roles panning the entire spectrum of emergency response activation. The software has simulated e-mail and radio traffic generated by the players. The entire assessment process takes approximately 12-14 hours and begins with an actual survey of available local resources which are logged into the system to be utilized during the expanding scenario. At the conclusion of the exercise, AEAS provides a detailed, printable after-action report (AAR). The report contains a diary of all exercise actions and their consequences. The report also compares the participants' actions with an approved standard developed during the emergency responder stakeholder review board vetting process to assist jurisdictions in evaluating and improving their readiness and response actions. Selected information from the AAR becomes part of the standardized national baseline assessment of readiness for the National Guard Bureau and other identified agencies.

The software is free to any jurisdiction and interested emergency response and emergency management officials may request a copy of the CD
at:<https://firstmuster.ngb.army.mil/aeas/>

Science Applications International Corporation, SAIC, provides three installation and training packages and one train-the trainer package. Contact Mike Kerrigan at (407) 243-3751 or email aeas@orl.saic.com

New Member Roster

Dr. Margaret Garvin
Stone Mountain, GA

Luis Acevedo
Jersey City, NJ

Romeo B. Lavarias
Miramar, FL

William F. Mead
Thorofare, NJ

Mike Guevremont
Winchester, VA

Barry McDonald
Corbin, KY

Raphael LaRocca
Columbia, MD

Scott Stoller
Simpsonville, SC

Mior Roslan Bin Mior Mohd Jaafar
Selangor, Malaysia

Gene A. Bess, WØGAB
St. Robert, MO

Donald R. Read
San Diego, CA

Tami A. Calugi
Atlanta, GA

Nicolette Bagwell
Denton, TX

William Ludwig
Cochranville, PA

Gerry Keenan
Jackman, ME

Dan Means
Salem, OH

Ioannis Avlonitis
Nicosia, Cyprus

Dan M. Kirby, K5AIR
Stockton, MO

Welcome to DERA!

*It is our sincere aim to help you
achieve your professional and personal goals*

In Memoriam

James K. Lucas
WA6UZP, AFT5GY / SK

*Jim had been a very active member
since 1993 and headed our Section on
Amateur Radio for the past five years.*

*His friendship and tireless
contributions will be missed greatly.*

Newly Released!

OSHA's Evacuation Planning Matrix

OSHA developed an Evacuation Planning Matrix to provide employers with planning considerations and on-line resources that may help employers reduce their vulnerability to a terrorist act or the impact of a terrorist release.

OSHA draws on the FBI definition of terrorism and defines terrorist release as the release of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear material (commonly identified as a Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD)) or of another hazardous substance, performed as a violent act dangerous to human life and intended to further political or social objectives.

The Matrix is NOT a compliance tool for conducting a comprehensive compliance evaluation of an emergency plan developed to comply with the Emergency Action Plan Standard (29 CFR 1910.38) or the Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard (29 CFR 1910.120(q)). Rather, this document covers the general aspects of emergency planning and includes broad questions to help employers review their plan in light of an indoor or outdoor terrorist release. The document also offers basic planning and preparedness measures for workplaces in each of three risk zones and on-line resources for assistance.

http://www.osha.gov/dep/evacmatrix/evacplan_appb.html

Risk Assessment

The potential for greater numbers of deaths to occur with a weather incident is not nullified by the increases we have made in forecasting and warning technologies. Risk increases proportionally as persons per square foot increase, temporary situations that occur at sporting events and amusement parks. While many of the companies that own amusement parks and facilities hire private weather consultants and have emergency plans, many don't. Many smaller or less structured groups like inter-mural school sports or Little League teams also don't have organized plans for severe weather emergencies. Meteorologists, whether from the NWS or a private concern, simply cannot forecast every tornado that touches down. It is beyond the capability of current technology. And even more importantly, they can't **force** people to act **intelligently**.

Florida Tornadoes



A Presidential Declaration for Individual Assistance, IA, has been awarded for those impacted by the March 27th tornadoes in Miami-Dade.

Damage assessments continued to grow since the initial assessment. It is estimated that 350-400 structures were impacted. Sixty homes have been red tagged (unsafe structures), 68 yellow (significant), 275 minor. These figures will climb as the building department now begins a more in depth inspection by entering impacted homes which FEMA, the Red Cross, DCA, and County assessors did not enter previously. Homes, over 50% damaged (cost to repair exceeds 50% of replacement cost by countywide ordinance) will have to be rebuilt to current, recently strengthened, codes. Many homes will be impossible to rebuild or retrofit to new standards without full demolition and rebuild. The new tougher standards are part of a mitigation effort legislated from a bill brought before the House in 2000 by Senator Lee Constantine (R-Orlando).

Miami-Dade County Commission has allocated \$750,000 in county emergency funds and has waived building permit fees for senior citizens within poverty guidelines.

The Florida Department of Community Affairs has sent \$217,000 RCMP funds to the Miami-Dade Community Action Agency (CAA) to do retrofit of damaged homes. (Overall structurally unsound homes - requiring major repairs and/or demo will probably not qualify). William Moriarty, CAA, is excited about working with the Non-Profit organization FRIEND (Miami-Dade's Interfaith / Interagency Network) and their cooperative skilled volunteers to leverage these funds to repair roofs and do other retrofit activities. He asked, "how soon can the volunteers get started."

OSHA's Anthrax e-Tool

eTools are illustrated, interactive web-based training tools on occupational safety and health topics
<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/anthrax/index.html>

Nationwide Statistics

NOAA Statistics - Number of Tornadoes						
	2003		2002	2001	2000	3 Yr. Avg.
	Prelim	Final	Final	Final	Final	
JAN	0	?	3	5	16	8
FEB	11	?	2	30	56	29
MAR	49	?	45	33	103	60
APR	118	?	116	135	136	129
MAY	7	?	204	241	241	229
JUN	?	?	97	248	135	160
JUL	?	?	68	120	148	112
AUG	?	?	86	69	52	69
SEP	?	?	60	84	47	64
OCT	?	?	55	116	63	78
NOV	?	?	95	110	48	84
DEC	?	?	21	22	26	23
Total	185	0	852	1213	1071	1045

Re-introduction of Hurricane, Tornado and Related Hazards Research Act

All 50 states are vulnerable to the hazards of windstorms.

Losses in life and property can be substantial. In 1992, hurricane Andrew resulted in \$26.5 billion in losses and 61 fatalities. In 1989, hurricane Hugo resulted in \$7 billion in losses and 86 fatalities. In 1998, a calm year according to experts, wind related storms resulted in more than \$5.5 billion in damages, and at least 186 fatalities.

At approximately \$5 million, the Federal investment to develop and promote knowledge, practices, and policies that seek to reduce and where possible eliminate losses from wind related disasters is woefully inadequate. In contrast the Federal government invests nearly \$100 million per year in reducing earthquake losses through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program.

A Federal investment in Wind Hazard Reduction could pay significant dividends in lives saved and decreased property damage.

TOPOFF 2

From the U.S. Department of Homeland Security pre-exercise media release

Beginning May 12 at 3:00 p.m. EDT, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Department of State, in cooperation with Federal, State, local, and Canadian partners, have undertaken a five-day, full-scale exercise and simulation of how the Nation would respond in the event of a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) attack.

The exercise consists of simulated attacks in the Chicago and Seattle metropolitan areas. The State of Washington, King County, and the City of Seattle respond to a hypothetical explosion containing radioactive material. The State of Illinois, Cook, Lake, DuPage and Kane Counties, and the City of Chicago respond to a covert release of a biological agent. Nineteen Federal agencies and the American Red Cross will become involved during the five-day exercise. The National Capital Region, including the District of Columbia, State of Maryland, and Commonwealth of Virginia, are participating in the first day of the exercise.

The Government of Canada, including the Province of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver, are also engaged in exercise play. Canada's participation in TOPOFF 2 is in keeping with the commitment to conduct joint exercises, as outlined in Point 30 of the Smart Border Declaration Action Plan. Approximately 18 Federal departments and agencies with counter-terrorism and consequence management roles are involved, as well as the province of British Columbia. Canadian participation is coordinated by the Department of the Solicitor General and the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness. Canada and the United States have a history of conducting joint counter-terrorism exercises dating back to 1989.

Protection against terrorism requires that organizations at every level of government and in the private sector work together in partnership to prepare for events and deal with their consequences," said U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge. "TOPOFF 2 provides the opportunity to test our preparedness, and at the same time identify ways to improve response in the future."

"TOPOFF 2 embodies the spirit of interagency and international cooperation that surfaced in the aftermath of September 11th," stated Secretary of

State Colin L. Powell. "It is this cooperation that will help defeat terrorism worldwide."

Amelia Gruber, agruber@govexec.com further reports:

The TOPOFF 2 exercises are part of a \$16 million, congressionally mandated series of drills simulating terrorist attacks using weapons of mass destruction. Since November 2001, seminars and workshops have helped prepare federal agencies for the upcoming drill.

All of the agencies and organizations involved in the drill will remain equipped to deal with any actual terrorist attack that could occur during the simulation, the Homeland Security Department said. The drill will result in minimal disruption to the host cities, the department added. Results of the drill will be kept secret for security reasons.

CDC certificate available for SARS Broadcast Feedback

The Center for Disease Control presented: "Increasing Clinician Preparedness for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)" A Public Health Training Network Live Satellite Broadcast, Webcast & Audiobridge on Thursday, May 8, 2003.

CDC's goal was to provide the following audience with awareness and reinforcement the of concepts of early recognition, diagnosis, and containment.

INTENDED AUDIENCES

Clinicians, including emergency medicine physicians, primary care physicians, infectious disease specialists, healthcare epidemiologists, infection control professionals, other healthcare providers, and public health advisors to the clinical community.

You may view the archived webcast at <http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/PHTN/webcast/sarsll>

CDC ASKS FOR YOUR ONLINE FEEDBACK ABOUT THE BROADCAST Registration and evaluation via the CDC/ATSDR Training and Continuing Education Online System at <http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/phtnonline> is encouraged.

Participants who register for and evaluate the satellite broadcast or webcast program by June 8, 2003 will be awarded a certificate of attendance.

In addition, CDC invites all viewers to submit a short review on TrainingFinder.org. Your feedback will help to improve these programs and can be seen by other interested professionals.

Medical Volunteers

The current Policy Statement approved by the ACEP Board of Directors 2002 involving Unsolicited Medical Personnel Volunteering at Disaster Scenes reads:

Volunteer medical personnel (eg. Physicians, nurses, emergency medical technicians, etc.) should not respond to a disaster scene unless officially requested by the jurisdiction's established ICS. All personnel must understand the authority and resources of the local EMS and health care systems, the importance of staffing their facilities as their primary responsibility, and the dangerous conditions associated with on-site operations.

Aid to IRAQ

The first Salvation Army convoy carrying propane cooking gas arrived in Umm Qasr, Iraq, on April 22, 2003. An assessment of humanitarian needs in southern Iraq showed that clean water and cooking fuel were the most desperate needs. Representatives from the World Food Program (WFP) asked The Salvation Army to provide cooking gas to war-damaged cities in the region. There is a sufficient amount of food in the region, but with no gas to prepare it, the food was of little use to residents.

The gas was a gift, valued at \$116,000, negotiated by The Salvation Army with the Kuwait Government and Kuwait National Petroleum Company. It was transported in seven special trucks coordinated and delivered by The Salvation Army. When the trucks arrived, the fuel was unloaded by 30 Iraqi volunteers and stored in a secure warehouse at the Umm Qasr Port Facility.

The distribution of the gas will proceed in partnership with the Save the Children Fund (SCF), who is coordinating the humanitarian effort in the region including the cities of Umm Qasr and Basra. It will provide the people of Umm Qasr with a two month supply of cooking gas. "The town of Umm Qasr has been out of cooking fuel for over a month. They are starting to cut down the few remaining trees in the area for firewood," said Jonathan Patrick, operations officer for Save the Children Fund, Basra, Iraq.

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