

# **2007 Bi-Annual Report**

## **Adams County Emergency Management Agency**



Mike Mc Laughlin  
County Board Chairman

John W. Simon II  
Director



# 2007 Bi-Annual Report

## Adams County Emergency Management Agency

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### Mission Statement

To strengthen Adams County's ability to readily, effectively and efficiently prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against all types of natural or man-made emergencies and disasters through coordinating resources of local, state, and federal agencies.



## **The Role of Emergency Management**

Emergency Management is a coordinated effort between governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations to prepare for, respond to, recover from and mitigate against disasters. The foundation for emergency management programs begins at the federal level with two key pieces of legislation – The Robert T Stafford Act and the Homeland Security Act of 2002. These laws create the framework for the development and administration of disaster preparedness and response programs at the federal, state, and local level. The legislation clearly indicates that emergency management is a shared responsibility of federal, state and local governments; however, history has proved that stronger local emergency management programs result in a better educated and more prepared and cooperative population in regards to disasters.

In Illinois, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act (IEMA Act) clearly defines programs and policies that are required of local political subdivisions to be prepared. The act mandates that each county, municipalities with a population over 500,000, and the City of Chicago develop and maintain an accredited emergency management program.

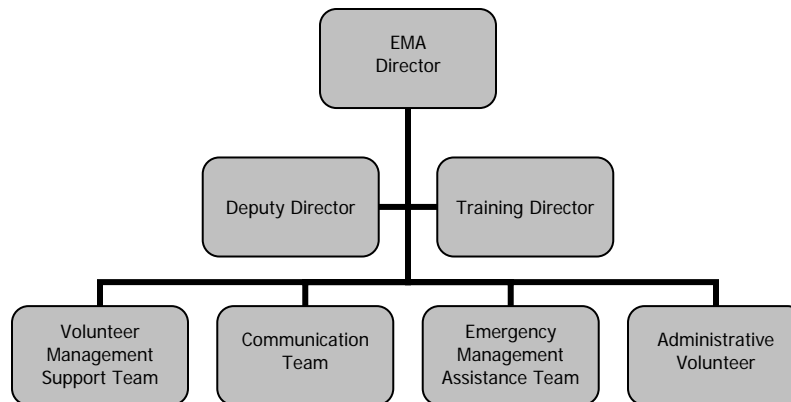
The Emergency Management Agency ordinance, August 2002, establishes the Adams County Emergency Management Agency as the department responsible for disaster preparations and coordination of efforts in response and recovery. The agency has ten specific functions to accomplish the mission and to satisfy state and federal law. These functions are:

- Develop emergency plans
- Develop and conduct training and education programs for government officials, responders, and the public
- Develop and coordinate disaster exercises
- Implement the National Incident Management System by activating the Emergency Operation Center, Incident Command Post(s), and coordinating the deployment of resources
- Provide warning and emergency public information to government officials and the general public
- Prepare and coordinate the public assistance process following federally declared disasters
- Provide training and coordination for search and rescue missions
- Provide coordination and liaison between local governments and the state and federal agencies
- Serve as Administrative Point of Contact and fiscal agent for citizen corps program
- Administer the Local Emergency Planning Committee for chemical preparedness



### Department Organization

The daily and emergency operations of the county's emergency management agency are conducted by one full time Director and two part time personnel - Deputy Director and Training Director. The staff is complemented by over 30 volunteers serving in various capacities.



### Department Staff

The paid staff of the agency consists of a full-time Director, part-time Deputy Director and Training Director. The Deputy Director will act in the Director's place in his absence and works on special projects affecting the operations of the agency. The Training Director is responsible for managing training and exercise programs throughout the county.

John W. Simon II  
*Director*

John Doellman  
*Deputy Director*

Roger Huner  
*Training Director*



### **Communication Team**

The communication team is comprised of volunteer amateur radio operators who support the communication function during disasters. They will assist in setting up communication stations at locations such as shelters, reception centers, staging areas and many others assisting the EMA and other disaster relief organizations. Frequently these individuals are called upon to assist with storm spotting and to relay information to the Adams County EOC and the National Weather Service. Currently the team has twelve members.



Amateur Radio operators taking an Emergency Communication Course

### **Emergency Management Assistance Team**



Search team members during exercise

Emergency Management Assistance personnel are individual volunteers that assist in areas such as search and rescue, damage assessment weather spotting and other areas not specifically covered. Through the development of this team, the primary focus has been on search and rescue. Search and Rescue members are available to do ground search for non-violent / non-fugitive subjects. They are trained to standards accepted across the nation. Currently there are six members.



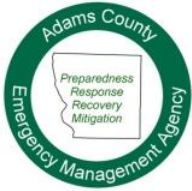
### **Administration Volunteer**

In 2006 the Emergency Management Agency requested a volunteer through the Retired Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP) to assist with data entry. Edna Tenhouse was assigned for that task and has chosen to continue working with the agency. Tasks included reorganizing the filing system and preparing to move to the new facility. Ongoing tasks include preparing course instruction materials, processing mailings, overseeing special projects and many other tasks. Edna has logged over 250 hours of work for the EMA.



### **Volunteer Management Support Team**

The Volunteer Management Support Team (VMST) was created to develop a process for receiving, screening, and assigning spontaneous volunteers in times of disasters. Looking back at disasters locally and nationally one factor is a given – people will show up to help solicited or unsolicited. The objective of this team is to filter these volunteers by assigning them to the most appropriate job, therefore maximizing the effectiveness of our resources. The intention is to have the ability to establish a volunteer reception center in a central or remote location, dependent upon the needs of the incident, and upon receiving requests from disaster relief agencies to match spontaneous volunteers with those requests. Adams County is the third jurisdiction to establish a VMST in Illinois and currently two of our eleven members are on the state-deployed team.



## Program Highlights

### **Illinois Emergency Management Mutual Aid System (IEMMAS)**

#### **Illinois Incident Management Team (IMT)**

Illinois has created multiple mutual aid networks for deploying resources by the State EOC to incidents. Emergency Management teams have been developed in partnership with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and the Illinois Emergency Services Management Association (IESMA). Incident Management Teams (IMTs) assist with establishing Incident Command Posts in the field while the Illinois Emergency Management Mutual Aid System (IEMMAS) teams focus on guiding and supplementing Emergency Operation Centers and advising policy makers and chief elected officials. Both of these teams are designed to provide mutual aid with highly skilled emergency managers to jurisdictions affected by disasters.



Director Simon briefs Unified Area Command participants for six counties

In 2005, John Simon was requested by the IEMA to respond as part of an IEMMAS team to Mississippi and was specifically responsible for managing the planning function for the lower six counties affected by Hurricane Katrina. This deployment was for two weeks and interacted with representatives from local, state, and federal officials. Other IEMMAS assignments have included a three day deployment to the State Emergency Operation Center and the East Saint Louis EOC for the July 2006 windstorm and a two day deployment to Macon County for the ice storm.

In 2006, the IEMA placed an Incident Management Team (IMT) in operation. Twenty-three members from across Illinois were selected for the initial team and John Simon is assigned to the planning function. The team will continue to grow and add members across the state. Training Director Roger Huner has since been accepted on the Illinois IMT and other volunteer members are applying.



### Adams County Emergency Operation Center

On December 6<sup>th</sup> 2006 the agency held an opening meeting for the Adams County Emergency Operation Center (EOC). Adams County has not had an operational EOC for decades and this will now allow policy makers to work in concert with other agencies efficiently. This facility, co-located with the Quincy / Adams County 911 Center, will serve as a central coordination point for large or widespread disasters focusing on strategy and resource management. Over 17 agencies come together from both the City of Quincy and Adams County departments along with certain non-government organizations to coordinate the community's response to disasters. The center will communicate with incident command post(s) in the affected areas and will coordinate resources and establish priorities for responders. While this facility does not replace on-scene tactical decision making it does provide support to facilitate better information flow and coordination from outside community resources. It is also the link to gain access to state and federal resources. Normal activation will occur in response to an event; however, situations occur that the EOC may be activated to a monitoring level such as impending severe weather and increases in the Homeland Security Advisory System to a condition RED. In cases of approaching severe weather the Emergency Management Agency will staff the EOC and deploy storm spotters consisting of EMA communication volunteers and rural fire departments. Weather reports will be routed back to the EOC and information shared with 911, the National Weather Service and local media to provide the most accurate and timely warning information to the public. Recently in a meeting with the National Weather Service in St. Louis, Mr. Jim Kramper said this about the Adams County Emergency Management Agency



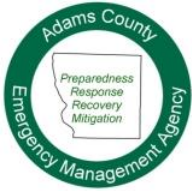
“Adams County for many years has had no activity. We rarely receive a report from that area placing a large gap in our northern coverage area. Over the past year the Adams County Emergency Management Agency has implemented a network of spotters and processes for reporting weather. Their reports provide us with the ground truth of what is actually occurring allowing for timely warning to the public. Their system is a model for other counties to follow”



### **Emergency Planning**

- A major effort during the past two years has been to update the Countywide Emergency Operations Plan. This document identifies by function roles and responsibilities of agencies and organizations assisting in disaster response and recovery operations. The IEMA administrative rule requires counties to review and update plans every two years to qualify for accreditation. Updates and major revisions will continue to occur over the next year as new requirements have been added and suggested by the IEMA.
- The potential for a pandemic has been covered in the news media worldwide and has been the motivation for an in-depth planning effort by the Adams County Health Department and the Emergency Management Agency. In 2006, the Health Department and EMA held a joint pandemic flu summit educating community leaders on the possible effects of such a disaster and to brainstorm ideas with them on response mechanisms available. Discussions continue on developing plans to ensure the continuity of government should a pandemic occur.
- Following Hurricane Katrina, the State of Illinois along with others realized the implications of failing to specifically plan for individuals with special needs. Special needs individuals would be defined as those who require partial or complete assistance on a routine basis. The health department in cooperation with the EMA has developed a special needs advisory panel to assist with input for sheltering, transporting, and caring for these individuals. Some of the focus has been on public education and outreach. Educational seminars were held to inform the community and gain support for this planning effort. Volunteers assembled 5,000 “Special Needs Resource Kits” including preparedness material, fill in the blank planning info, and items to start their disaster supply kit. Shelters have been identified and the group continues to evaluate supplies and transportation mechanisms.





## **Responder Training and Public Education**

In 2006 the EMA split the position of Deputy Director into two separate positions to include a Training Director. This allows the agency additional depth but most importantly a person to focus on the administration of training for EMA volunteers, responders, and the public. Roger Huner was hired to manage these tasks and has also completed multiple trainer courses allowing the EMA to be self sufficient and conduct many courses "in house". Roger has completed trainer courses in terrorism bombings, Incident Command, Exercise development and evaluation, and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. The ability of the EMA to administer and conduct these courses in-house will allow us to efficiently meet the needs of our community.

On February 28<sup>th</sup> 2003 President Bush directed the Department of Homeland Security to develop a national framework for incident management applicable to all levels of government and the private sector. The result was the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and included standards in



Students in practical exercise during week long Incident Command System class

which to operate such as with the Incident Command System, information management, the establishment of emergency operations centers (EOC), and standards for equipment interoperability. The Presidential Directive required that jurisdictions become compliant with NIMS to continue receiving federal funds and assistance. One of the large requirements is standard training for responders

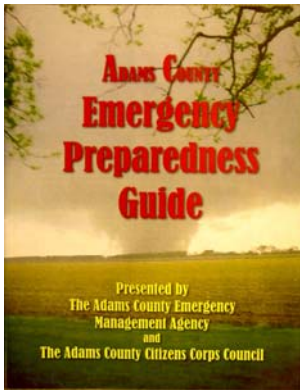
across the country. Every individual within an agency that has an emergency response role must complete

some level of Incident Command System training and an overview of the NIMS concepts and principals. In Adams County we have facilitated 14 NIMS classes instructing 418 students logging 4,115 classroom hours.



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### Adams County Emergency Management Agency



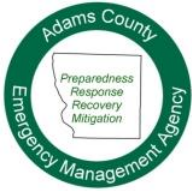
In January of 2007, the EMA took on at no cost to the county, an intern, Erica Russell. The internship was for three months and she designed a 20 page full color emergency preparedness guide. This guide designed for the public presents an overview of hazards that exist in Adams County along with all agencies and organizations that sit at the Emergency Operation Center and their roles. The guide includes a step by step approach to disaster planning in the home. Through a grant from the Citizen Corps program, 21,000 copies were printed for distribution.

Over the past many years search and rescue training has not been widely promoted in Adams County. Although search and rescue missions do not occur frequently, when they do occur responders must have the knowledge and tactics on how to locate individuals. IEMA previously taught search and rescue courses; however, in 2003 no longer supported the program. The EMA has patterned from the IEMA curriculum “Ground Search and Rescue Searcher Skills” and have



2007 Spring Class at Camp Saukenauk

completed four courses instructing 137 students logging over 2,128 student hours. The course presents basic skills necessary to conduct search operations in all types of terrain. This course has not only been attractive for our responders within Adams County but students have traveled from the Quad Cities, Chicago, Decatur, and the southern tip of Illinois to attend our class. Partnerships have been developed with the Boy Scouts of America / Camp Saukenauk and the Siloam Springs State Park to conduct the two day training.



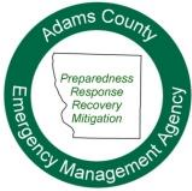
### **Requests for Assistance**

In response to Hurricane Katrina and the mass evacuations that occurred during that disaster, the State of Illinois requested the City of Quincy to house evacuees. A coordinated effort ensued with agencies not typically involved with disaster response. The EMA lead the coordination and planning for an event that never actually occurred.

In October of 2005 Quincy Police requested assistance for a resident of the Illinois Veterans Home that wandered off from the facility. Over the next 21 hours search crews searched neighborhoods, parks, wooded areas and the grounds of the Veterans' home. In all, over 30 agencies responded from ten different counties. A search management overhead team was created with EMA leading the coordinated effort. This search was the one of the largest sustained incident command system operations in the county since the flood of 1993.

The EMA has been requested for numerous hazardous materials incidents. These events have ranged from a small spill of mercury in a home to a chemical storage facility fire near Camp Point. In each of these events the EMA, at a minimum, is required to facilitate notification of proper state officials to ensure the protection of the environment. In many instances the EMA would coordinate the consequence management such as evacuations. In all we have responded to five incidents since 2005.

One of the largest threats to Adams County is severe weather. Coordinating and facilitating timely public information and warning is crucial to protecting the public. Over the past two years the EMA has developed a Severe Weather Plan to deploy weather spotters before severe weather, facilitating timely and accurate information from the field and enabling the EOC and the National Weather Service to provide warnings based upon intelligence rather than computer modeling alone. The EMA has provided coordination to four severe storms in 2006 and activated the EOC and spotters five times to date in 2007. Following two of these storms, damage was created that destroyed barns, moved structures, and interrupted critical infrastructure. The EMA had an on-scene presence to assist with the clean-up and restoration efforts.



### **Future Program Goals**

- Implement a regional incident management team. The National Incident Management System requires jurisdictions to manage large and complex incidents using the Incident Command System. By fully implementing an ICS management structure for incidents it ensures that operations are conducted in a safe manner, support mechanisms for responders are considered and utilized, and actions taken during an incident are properly recorded for legal and financial purposes. Therefore, a fully established ICS structure will provide documented justification for expenses incurred during the event. This team mirrored from the state deployed IMT would be utilized to manage large incidents that do not necessitate a state response and to establish / augment an organized incident management system prior to the state team arrival.
- Implement mass notification software. Technology today demands that the public be promptly notified of impending danger or given information in regards to an ongoing incident. Software is available to notify large numbers of the population simultaneously or in very short time duration. These systems are supported through two different infrastructure systems such as landline telephone or cellular technology.
- Develop and execute a full scale long term disaster exercise. The State of Illinois requirements to maintain EMA accreditation is to conduct a full scale exercise every four years. Annually, the EMA in cooperation with other agencies must hold at least one other exercise. Although the full scale is not the only exercise requirement, it is by far the most costly. A long term full scale exercise will test the sustained operations of the county while stressing our resources enabling us to evaluate our plans and identify our gaps and weaknesses.