



# OKEM



Oklahoma Emergency Management Association

July, 2006

Quarterly Newsletter

## 2006 OEMA Conference: *What's New & Hot!*

This year's conference is set for August 15 thru 17<sup>th</sup> in the Reed Center in Midwest City!

The conference registration and check in starts at 8:15 Tuesday Morning. The Executive committee has worked extremely hard this year to meet or beat the high standards that the OEMA community has come to expect.

What's new & Hot seems to be an appropriate theme for this year's conference. For example there will be reviews of the local response to "Katrina" as well as reviews of Oklahoma wild fires, Statewide Mutual aid compact along with important new information from the Oklahoma Dept. of Environmental Quality.

It is definitely advisable to bring you briefcase for these reviews, speeches and workshops. A lot of Information!

## Excessive heat guidebook: *Do you have one?*

*Contributor Ed Calianese, WCM, NWSFO, Tulsa Oklahoma*

In case you haven't seen this yet and may be interested in its findings and conclusions, the EPA has recently produced a document based on research conducted about excessive heat events. EPA worked with Federal, state and local, and academic partners to develop guidance to assist communities in preparing for and responding to excessive heat events.

The Guidebook was developed by EPA's Office of Atmospheric Programs (OAP) and EPA's Aging Initiative (in the Office of Children's Health) in collaboration with NWS, NOAA, CDC, and the Department of Homeland Security (FEMA), with input from a wide range of local officials and national experts on heat events.

The guidebook can be downloaded at:

[http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/about/pdf/EHEguide\\_final.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/about/pdf/EHEguide_final.pdf)

EPA has also prepared a "Guidebook in Brief" which contains a summary of key messages from the Guidebook:

[http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/about/pdf/EHEguide-brief\\_final.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/about/pdf/EHEguide-brief_final.pdf)

Additional background information is available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/about/heatguidebook.html>

## The Future of FEMA... In or Out of DHS!

There seem to be two solutions for the future of FEMA. Actually, three views. There are some that think that it should be abolished completely, however, there are two bills that made it through committees. The following are summaries of the bills for you to make your decision.

*(Source:*

[www.iaem.com/committees/GovernmentAffairs/](http://www.iaem.com/committees/GovernmentAffairs/))

House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure and House Committee on Homeland Security Approve Bills With Different Approaches To Strengthening FEMA;

**H.R. 5316**, the RESPOND Act: Restoring Emergency Services to Protect Our Nation from Disasters Act of 2006, was approved by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on May 18 and by the House Committee on Government Reform on May 19. The RESPOND Act restores FEMA as an independent cabinet-level agency, strengthens FEMA, and creates a national system to improve emergency preparedness at all levels of government. As of May 25, the bill had 76 co-sponsors, including 8 of the 11 members of the House Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparations for and Response to Hurricane Katrina. To view the Press release follow this link: <http://www.iaem.com/documents/HR5316pressreleaseTICComm.doc>

**H.R. 5351**, the National Emergency Management Reform and  
*(Continued on page 5)*

## *What's inside...*

McReady . . . . .	page 3
Website. . . . .	page 3
Update on EAS . . . . .	page 3
Mutual Aid . . . . .	page 4

Haz-Collect . . . . .	page 4
Reports from the Area . . . . .	page 4
Goodbye to a Friend . . . . .	page 6
Communication . . . . .	page 5
Taking of the edge . . . . .	page 7

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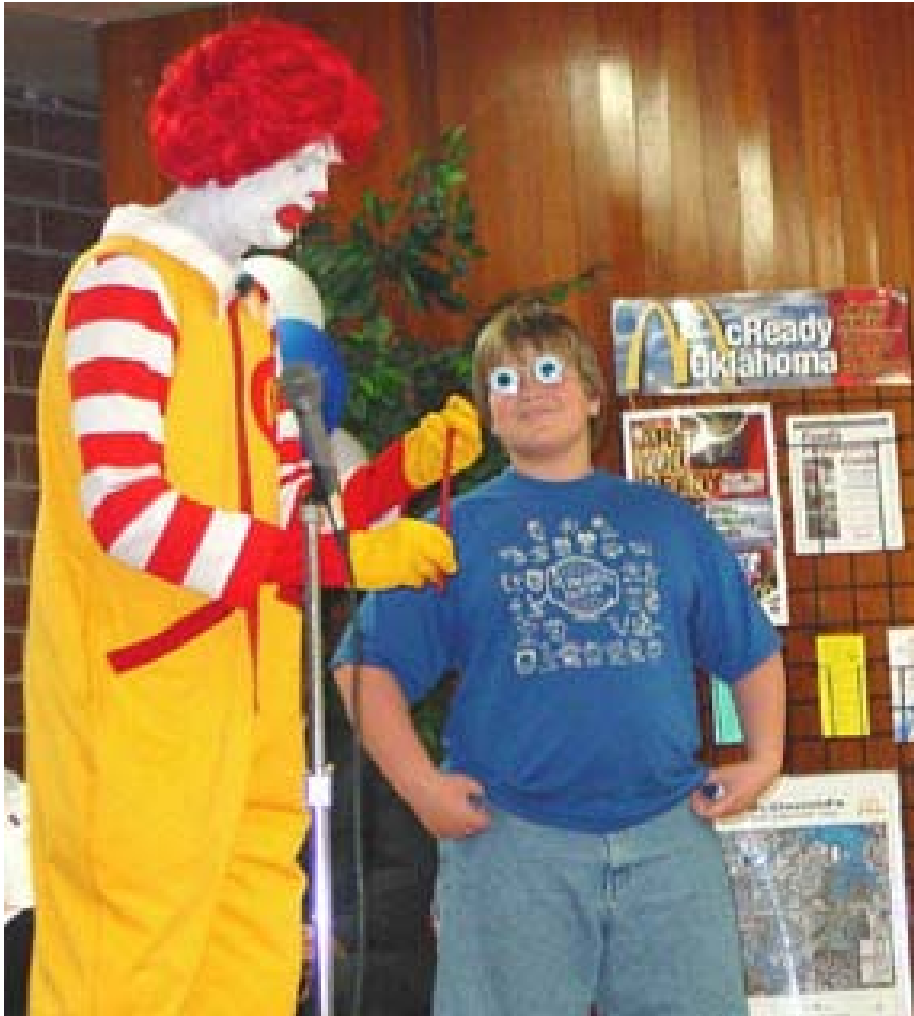
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## McReady! Another Success!

April was McReady Storm Preparedness Month. The program In an effort to better prepare the state of Oklahoma for another severe weather season, the McReady Oklahoma partners made special brochures, family preparedness guide booklets and children's activity pages that were available at your local McDonald's restaurant. Below is just one of the pictures from the statewide activities. You can read more and see a lot of pictures at <http://www.mcready.org/>



## Bush orders update of Emergency Alert System

June 27, *Washington Post* - **Bush** orders update of Emergency Alert System. President Bush Monday, June 26, ordered Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff to overhaul the nation's hodgepodge of public warning systems, acknowledging a critical weakness unaddressed since the 2001 terrorist attacks and exposed again last year by Hurricane

Katrina. The Emergency Alert System, best known for weather bulletins and Amber Alerts for missing children, should be upgraded to explore communicating by cell phones, personal digital assistants and text pagers targeted to geographic areas or specific groups, U.S. officials said. In a 30-paragraph executive order issued by the White House without comment, Bush assigned

## Our Website! It's Back! [www.oema.us](http://www.oema.us)

The Webmaster is Matt Lehenbauer and has put together a great Website for the Association. Although still under construction there are a lot of links that he has been able to activate so far.

On the site you'll find a calendar of events (make sure you get your event on there), information and pictures of public events for the public and the media (like the McReady Program). There is also a section of "Tools" for the Emergency Manager. These are downloadable such as:

- *General Computer Software*
- *Automated Advisories/Alerts Severe Weather Monitoring & Plotting,*
- *NIMS/ICS Software and Reference Materials,*
- *Reference Maps, Emergency Operations Plans and Reference Materials with more Tools to follow soon.*

On-line education is getting more popular all the time and the OEMA's website is up to the challenge as the site has several sources for EM training and Severe Weather Training.

Looking for a new challenge? The Web site even has a page for Job Openings!

The Webmaster is Matt Lehenbauer, and he has done a great job! Thanks Matt!

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Chertoff to implement a freshly stated U.S. policy "to ensure that under all conditions the President can communicate with the American people," including in cases of war, terrorist attack, natural disaster or other public danger.

The move follows mounting criticism that the nation's alert systems are out-moded relics of the Cold War.

## Mutual aid in effect July 1st

**House Bill 2585**, by Rep. Rex Duncan and Sen. Charles Wyrick, creates the Intrastate Mutual Aid Compact and goes into effect July 1. The bill establishes a statewide mutual aid agreement between local jurisdictions, thereby eliminating the need for written mutual agreements. All mutual aid is provided at the discretion of the providing jurisdiction. It should be noted that jurisdictions retain the option of providing mutual aid on a case by case basis. Moreover, any city or county wanting to opt out completely may do so by passing a resolution and forwarding the resolution to OEM. The new law also addresses tort liability, compensation and immunity for participating responders from cities, towns, counties and tribal entities.

**HB 2585** also allows the Governor, through OEM, the ability to answer requests for mutual aid, in accordance with the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), from other states and jurisdictions by requesting mutual aid resources from local jurisdictions in Oklahoma. If the local jurisdictions agree to provide the support, then their resources, personnel and equipment will become agents of the state. This will allow rapid deployment and will provide the local jurisdictions with state liability and compensation protection when deployed using the EMAC program.

Additionally, the new law meets the requirement by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that all states institutionalize the use of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and adopt the Incident Management System (ICS) for all on-scene management of disasters and emergencies. This standardization of training and procedures will increase the efficiency of response by all agencies and organizations.

This will also be a topic on the agenda slated for Tuesday of this year's Conference in Midwest City.

## HazCollect! EM's, It's For You!

*(Ed Calianese, WCM, NWSFO, Tulsa OK. contributor)*

As you may know, the HazCollect Operational Acceptance Test was conducted through July 21st. The current plan is for HazCollect to be implemented nationally sometime in August after the test is completed and after any problems with the system that the test uncovers are fixed.

As you may recall, HazCollect is a system that allows you the Emergency Manager to quickly send non-weather emergency messages to your community through NWS warning communication systems. The main software package that will allow you to enter the messages into the system is called the Disaster Management Interoperability Services (DMIS) - WebEOC and other similar applications are also expected to work with the system. If you intend to utilize the HazCollect system, then you will need to register at the DMIS website to obtain the software. This software will allow you to compose messages that can be transmitted into the HazCollect system, from where they will be disseminated through NWS communications systems (e.g. NWR, EMWIN, NWWS, etc.).

I'll send updated information regarding HazCollect in the coming months but for now, you may want to begin this transition by acquiring the software from DMIS, if you haven't already done so. Their web page is:

<http://www.dmi-services.org/>

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## Reports from Across the State

### Area-Vice Presidents Reports:

**NW...**Harold Tyson reported that Texas County had been awarded two grants. One is CEDAP for equipment and the other from Homeland Security for and \$80,000.00 Mobil De-con Trailer. Texas County had a full MIPS exercise with 637 people coming threw. Harold Tyson reported that a Cameo Class will be Aug 4/5<sup>th</sup>. In June a large meeting on Foreign Animal Diseases was held in Guymon and plans are in the works for an exercise. Texas County had 7 tornadoes with \$700,000. dollars in damage to 2 homes and a pig farm. Blaine County has a new EM director. Pass Director Anita Cowan has retired. Texas county EM will attend training in Orlando Florida for CEDAP grant.

**SW...** Billy Bankston reported that the SW Area conducted a workshop on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> in McAlester. McAlester had a CAMEO class July 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>. Durant held Hazmat training July 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>. Billy Bankston reported a regional meeting on May 30<sup>th</sup> by Area Coordinator, Sam Talamandez. June 16<sup>th</sup> storms resulted in no power at the Lodge where summer arts institute is held, as a result 3 new large generators were bought by their board of regents. Cameo Class in Lawton Dec. 6-7

**NE....** Bob Anderson reported that wildfires have slowed down. Claremore received their first Haz-mat truck. Port of Catoosa had a tank explosion; mutual aid came from surrounding areas. Blackout in Claremore on May 19<sup>th</sup>, which caused the 911 system down for 5 minutes. CERT classes in Claremore have already started and the NE area workshop was June 26, 27, 28<sup>th</sup>.

**SE...**Toye Massey reports the Herb Gunter will retire on June 1, 2006. Toye Massey reported via email that the SE area had its first workshop in June with 30 people attending. The SE will have a Cameo Class in McAlester July 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, Hazmat training in Durant July 28<sup>th</sup>, a rope rescue class at the Choctaw Nation in Talihina in July

In reference to the associations new website, Matt Lehenbauer any events can be listed on the OEMA calendar , just email him the info and he will put in on. Matt will also have a PowerPoint going at the merchandise booth at the fall conference showcasing the website.

## Statewide communication briefing From Gayland Kitch

I chair the Communications Committee this year for your Oklahoma Emergency Management Association. As such, I've heard a lot of discussion recently about current and future systems, their capabilities, weekly testing, potential grants, and communications in general. With this in mind, I'd like to take a moment of your time to review what we currently have, how to access them, review our testing, and finally ask for some input.

### CURRENT RADIO SYSTEMS

The State has three systems for statewide emergency management communications. These are the "OPSECURE" HF system; the 155.235 mhz VHF-direct system; and the "SEMA" talk groups on the DPS 800mhz system (which includes four VHF cross band repeaters to extend some range).

### OPSECURE - HF

This system utilizes HF radio communications, which are typically used for long-range communications. There are about two dozen jurisdictions that are licensed for this equipment. The State utilizes:

- 5.140 mhz as the primary frequency;
- 7.477 mhz as the backup;
- 2.804 mhz USB from 1800-0830.

If you are interested in this form of communications or have questions, please contact Putnam Reiter at the State or Don Lynch at Shawnee.

### 155.235 mhz

155.235 mhz is the "statewide" emergency management VHF frequency. This is a "direct" or point-to-point frequency. Note that there are some areas of the state that this is licensed to other entities, so there are places where it is not useful for emergency management.

CTCSS "private line/PL" has been added in several places to separate EM traffic from other entities. These PL tones that I know about are:

- 151.4 Oklahoma City area
- 203.5 Stillwater area/crossband repeater into SEMA-3
- 141.3 Claremore area/crossband repeater into SEMA-3
- 136.5 Ardmore area/crossband repeater into SEMA-3
- 162.2 Altus area/crossband repeater into SEMA-3

(Please contact me if you know of additional tones that are used.)

Note that there are four crossband repeaters which take the local 155.235 mhz emergency management traffic and rebroadcast it on the 800mhz SEMA-3 talk group described below. This allows emergency managers who are outside of the normal 800mhz coverage area to talk with the State EOC (and any other director within the coverage of the entire 800/155.235 cross band system). These repeaters are located:

S Kiowa County; Ardmore; Stillwater; Claremore.

I do not know the current operational status of any of these crossband repeaters. Local directors in the four locations, can you advise???

### 800 mhz

There are a couple of "state emergency management agency" (SEMA) talk groups on the DPS state 800mhz radio system. SEMA-3 is monitored by many of the agencies that have 800mhz capabilities. In addition, there are the four cross-band repeaters that interface the 155.235 VHF system with the SEMA-3 talk group.

### WEEKLY TESTS:

Statewide Emergency Management radio tests will be conducted every Wednesday as follows:

- HF Op Secure: 9:00am, conducted by Shawnee EOC;
- VHF 155.235: 9:10am, conducted by Moore EOC;
- 800 SEMA-3: 9:20am, conducted by Edmond EOC.

WE ENCOURAGE ALL EMERGENCY MANAGERS TO PARTICIPATE!

## FUTURE OF RADIO SYSTEMS FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

(contributor; Gayland Kitch)

What do we want for radio communications with the State?. Many of us believe that we need and want RF (radio) communications with the State EOC. We intend to have a small group meet and present our findings and requests to Director Ashwood in the very near future. If you have suggestions and/or comments (and/or would like to participate), please contact Don Lynch or myself as soon as possible.

**Gayland Kitch** OCEM

Director of Emergency Management & Communications

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## The Future of FEMA

....*cont'd from page 1*

Enhancement Act of 2006, was approved by the House Committee on Homeland Security on May 18. The bill takes steps to improve communication and coordination at the federal, state and local levels; strengthen disaster preparedness and response capabilities nationwide; and eliminate waste, fraud and abuse. FEMA remains in DHS, but preparedness is returned to FEMA. During an incident of national significance, the FEMA director becomes part of the Cabinet. As of May 25, the bill had 40 co-sponsors. To view the Press release follows this link:

[http://www.hsc.house.gov/PDFs/PR\\_Katrina\\_pre-Hearing050906b.pdf](http://www.hsc.house.gov/PDFs/PR_Katrina_pre-Hearing050906b.pdf)

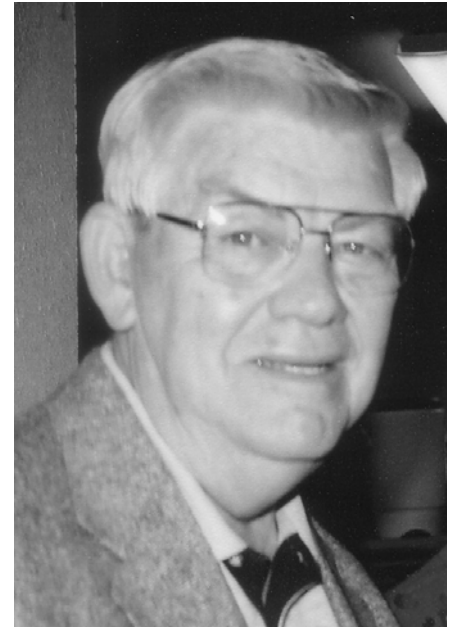
(Source:

[www.iaem.com/committees/GovernmentAffairs/](http://www.iaem.com/committees/GovernmentAffairs/)


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## Goodbye to a Good Friend ....


On Sunday, April 9, 2006, **Gerald Downing** passed away, and Emergency Management lost a true asset. Gerald was known and respected by many. Although he wore many different hats in his life, we in Emergency Management remember him as a great director who brought Emergency Management in Latimer county to one of the best Emergency Management programs in the state. He worked hard to see that Latimer County was prepared for any disaster that might arise. Gerald was instrumental in getting the local radar that sets on Hackney Hill, a great asset during storm watches. He applied for and obtained grants for sirens throughout the county as well as weather radios for the schools and hospitals in the county. Gerald worked closely with the National Weather Service in helping to start the Storm Ready Program, with Latimer County being the first county in the nation to be certified as Storm Ready in February of 1999. He attended many Emergency Management related classes, including the OK First Certification class and becoming a certified Emergency Manager and traveled to Emmitsburg, MD to the Emergency Management Institute. Gerald also served as President of the Oklahoma Emergency Management Association, these are just a few of his accomplishments in Emergency Management. Although, Gerald retired in 2001, he stayed active in Emergency Management for as long as he was able, attending meetings, schools and assisting anyway he could. Gerald Downing was a good director, a good man, and a good friend, he will be greatly missed!




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McReady Month 2005 kickoff. Sky Ranch Elementary - Moore, Oklahoma. (www.mcready.org) News 9's Gary England, along with friends, demonstrate how to "Shelter in Place".

### *Taking off the edge....*

Many Emergency Managers as well as volunteers as from time to time need a humorous distraction! So I have included some "funnies" in this edition. The following was sent to me and I wanted to share these stories of "overheard cockpit conversations;"

**Tower:** "Eastern 702, cleared for takeoff, contact Departure on frequency 124.7"

**Eastern 702:** "Tower, Eastern 702 switching to Departure. By the way, after we lifted off we saw some kind of dead animal on the far end of the runway."

**Tower:** "Continental 635, cleared for takeoff behind Eastern 702, contact Departure on frequency 124.7.! Did you copy that report from Eastern 702?"

**BR Continental 635:** "Continental 635, cleared for takeoff, roger; and yes, we copied Eastern... we've already notified our caterers."

A Pan Am 727 flight, waiting for start clearance in Munich, overheard the following:

**Lufthansa** (in German): "Ground, what is our start clearance time?"

**Ground** (in English): "If you want an answer you must speak in English."

**Lufthansa** (in English): "I am a German, flying a German airplane, in Germany. Why must I speak English?"

Unknown voice from another plane (in a British accent):  
**"Because you lost the bloody war!"**



# OKEM

July, 2006

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## Useful web sites:

Oklahoma Emergency Management  
Association:  
[www.oema.us](http://www.oema.us)

Oklahoma Dept. of Emergency  
Management:  
[www.odcem.state.ok.us/](http://www.odcem.state.ok.us/)

National Weather Service Office,  
Norman:  
[www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/)

Oklahoma Floodplain Managers  
Association:  
[www.okflood.org](http://www.okflood.org)

Association of State Floodplain  
Managers:  
[www.floods.org](http://www.floods.org)

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