



OKEM



Oklahoma Emergency Management Association

February, 2005

Quarterly Newsletter

Legislative Day At the Capitol

Plan now to join emergency managers from across Oklahoma at the State Capitol on Monday, March 7. Our Day at the Capitol will begin with a legislative briefing at 10 a.m. at the state Emergency Operations Center. Then with talking points in hand that afternoon we'll take our issues to lawmakers at the State Capitol. Don't worry. Absolutely no legislative experience is necessary. As an emergency manager, you are the one that your legislators needs to hear from, and this event makes it easy for you to participate in the legislative process.

Now is a good time to contact your representative and senator. Let them know you'll be at the State Capitol on March 7 and invite them to attend the OEMA Reception that afternoon.

Schedule of events for the *Day at the Capitol*.

- 10 a.m. Emergency Managers arrive at State EOC
- 10:15 a.m. Legislative Briefings
- 11 a.m. Break
- 11:15 a.m. Emergency Management Updates
 - Albert Ashwood, OEM Director
 - Kary Cox, OEMA President
 - Update on OEM Programs, Activities
- 11:45 a.m. Lunch - EOC
- 1 p.m. Meet at the State Capitol
- 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Legislative Reception - 4th Floor Rotunda, State Capitol

Fall Conference Plans Announced

It is time once again to start planning for the annual Oklahoma Emergency Management Conference and Trade Show. The dates this year will be Aug. 23-26, 2005 and we will be back in Tulsa, Oklahoma this year at the Southern Hills Marriot. Please mark your calendar and plan on joining us.

Excess Ice and Rain Starts 2005

On the evening of January 4th a powerful upper system moved toward Oklahoma. As this system approached the state, warm and moist air was lifted over surface sub-freezing Arctic air. With the continued warm and moist air above the sub-freezing surface air, freezing rain occurred north of a line from Altus to Norman to Tulsa. In the southeast part of the state, excessive rainfall was a concern as storm total precipitation is 4 to 5 inches.

Power Outages

In the hardest hit areas of the state as much as 2 inches of ice has caused downed tree limbs and power lines. An estimated 8,400 Oklahomans were without electric service. Power outages were reported by OG&E as well as some electric cooperatives in Western, Northwestern Oklahoma and the Oklahoma County area. At one time, torches were used to thaw frozen switches. (See storm on page 4)

Influenza Confirmed in Oklahoma

It took its time getting here this year, but influenza has now been confirmed in Oklahoma.

Preliminary laboratory results indicate the circulating strain to be type A influenza virus. This year's flu vaccine protects against two different strains of type A and one strain of type B influenza virus. Other nearby states reporting confirmed cases of influenza include Texas, of influenza vaccine, Oklahoma has now received almost all the vaccine it originally ordered.

If you are a member of the following groups, it's not too late to get your flu shot this year:

- Adults age 50 and older.
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities.
- Persons who work in critical service professions such as police, firefighters, teachers, and health care workers not yet vaccinated.
- All women who will be pregnant during the influenza season.
- Health care workers involved in direct patient care.

For more information visit:
(<http://www.health.state.ok.us>)

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NIMS: It's Not Just A Good Idea. It's The Law!

By Daniel J. Biby

Pardon me whilst I step onto my soapbox and pontificate about my latest passion. Actually, my opinion of the National Incident Management System, or NIMS, aligns with those of President Bush and DHS Secretary Tom Ridge: [Adopt NIMS lest ye suffer the consequences!](#)

Okay, let's back up a bit. As communities and citizens stricken by natural disasters are learning, FEMA no longer stands for "Free, Easy Money Always." We saw that trend begin in recent years with the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) whereby FEMA required communities nationwide to assess their own vulnerabilities and prepare plans to minimize losses in the event of a natural disaster. Jurisdictions who didn't comply with that program's stipulations stand to lose recovery funding from FEMA. In other words, *no more easy money!*

Today's hot topic is, you guessed it, NIMS. On February 28, 2003, President Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5), which directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System. Further, HSPD-5 requires that State and local organizations adopt NIMS by [FY 2005](#) as a condition for Federal preparedness assistance.

So, what exactly is NIMS? Well, that's a lengthy discussion better left to another article (or book). But, in a nutshell, NIMS is a nationwide standard that agencies follow for responding to an incident using a flexible, yet structured, approach.

One of the core components of NIMS is the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS has been proven time and time again as an effective mechanism for single or multiple-agency response to disasters of any size or complexity. ICS was born in the early '70s as an organized way to fight California wildfires. More recently, ICS was used to respond to the September 11 attacks. Here's the kicker: Adopting NIMS requires training, *lots of training!* Specifically, *all* first responders are required to attend and successfully complete formal training. That number includes peace officers, firefighters, paramedics and emergency man-

agement directors. Further, in order to maximize the response efficiencies, others need to understand NIMS as well, such as city and county officials, public health, public works, utilities, and more.

On the plus side, the benefits far outweigh the costs. As I mentioned, NIMS provides for a flexible, structured approach to incident response. That methodology includes pre-identified organization charts and specific job descriptions for every possible position in the responder community. It establishes the chain of command and explains in simple terms what each position and task is designed to accomplish.

The complete list of benefits from adopting NIMS is much too long to include in the limited space here, but those related to the actual incident response – where the rubber meets the road – include the following:

- More organized and effective response, which leads to a shorter response phase.
- More effective use of manpower and resources.
- Better documentation use of resources, aiding FEMA reimbursement.
- Improved communication and coordination among multiple agencies.

Improved communication between the responder community and the affected public, I can't overemphasize the benefits derived from the inherent flexibility in the NIMS' ICS component. A response effort can be expanded or contracted to meet the needs of any incident, regardless of its size, type, or complexity. That means ICS can be applied to an incident ranging from a meth lab bust to a facility power outage to a wide-area terrorist event.

Hopefully, I've stirred your interest to learn more about NIMS. Become NIMS certified in order to increase your value to your employer and to your community.

Learn more by going to the Emergency Management Institute's Web site: www.training.fema.gov/emweb/.

EMI is FEMA's training arm and, as you'll see, provides [FREE](#) training opportunities in every disaster-related topic you can imagine.

Local Happenings.....

From Johnston County

Johnston County just took up headquarters in a brand new EMS building. Betty Roan, EM Director will now have an office for her EOC. One may think that this isn't really a big deal, but in the past Betty has been conducting most if not all EM events...from her home.

From the Choctaw Nation

Emergency Manager Timothy L Breshears is looking forward to the arrival of almost \$14,000.00 worth of Rope Rescue equipment that is being funded through OKDHS

From the City of Durant

Durant's Emergency Manager, Tim Cooke, has done very well with the Homeland Security Grant. According to Cooke, "In the next month we will be set up with our Homeland Security Grant for:

1. Multi-Site Two-Way Radio Transmitter Steering System, \$105,872.00, which will enable us to communicate all across our county by hand-held radio.

2. Reverse 911 System, valued close to \$34,000.

Cooke went on to say, "we want to wait until everything was set up before any bragging goes on. We have also used this grant to purchase cameras and video for our Waster Water Plant and the water treatment plant.

The Community of Wann

Emergency Management Director, Buddy W. Atkins, recently announced that a community storm shelter and also will have a communication room is now in service in that community. The shelter will hold over 200 people. Wann also has in service a tornado siren that will cover 5 square miles. This is the town's first tornado siren. It was purchased this through a community development block grant.

Storm... (from page 1)

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission reported that nine crews had been dispatched to the Woodward area that lost about 100 poles, and one crew to the Cherokee area for the Alfalfa Electric Cooperative (Cherokee). Cimarron Electric (Kingfisher) had one pole down with 4 outages. (In the January 2002 ice storm, the cooperative lost more than 15,000 poles.) The Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives reported that Alfalfa Electric sustained damage with approximately 60 poles down. About 40 percent of their customers (roughly 3,200) were without power. Northwestern Electric (Woodward) reported more than 100 poles downed by the ice storm. They estimated 1,300 outages. AEP/PSO reported 22 outages in their western region. Alva lost Water well service for a short time.

However, a few pole losses or damage was due to vehicle accidents. All in all it wasn't as bad as it could have been. The same system caused 90,000 outages in Indiana and 60,000 outages in Ohio.

Injuries

One electric crewmember was injured in Blaine County. He was treated at a hospital, according to Blaine County Emergency Management. An Oklahoma Highway Patrol Trooper was injured in a collision on the Belle Isle Bridge in Oklahoma City. Many more injury and non-injury crashes were reported throughout the affected areas.

Communications

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission also reports that Pioneer Telephone offices in Drummond, Helena, Mooreland and Waynoka ran on generator power but telephone service stayed up. The exchanges of Fort Supply, Harmon, Mutual, Sharon and Shattuck were isolated for toll calling due to a commercial power outage in Sharon.

Shelters

American Red Cross opened a shelter in Woodward due to power outages.

Closings

Numerous schools and businesses across the state were closed due to the inclement weather conditions.

More...

Local Happenings

The Ponca City EM now has its APRS packet radio system in operation. This is an Automatic Position Reporting System. Selected storm spotters have a GPS unit and 2 meter ham radio installed in their vehicle, which reports their exact location back to the EOC periodically via Amateur radio. Each spotter is a licensed amateur. At the EOC the net control can watch the spotter's locations appear on the map and guide them into optimum spotter locations while keeping each spotter out of harm's way.

Ponca City is also completing their ATV (Amateur Television) system. This should be operational before this year's storm season. This will broadcast live radar screens from the EOC to our spotters in the area. All they need is an inexpensive 12VDC cable ready TV in their vehicle to watch the radar or a non-cable ready TV and a down converter device which will allow them to receive the transmissions.

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CDC Chief:

Bird Flu Could Become "Epidemic"

By PAUL RECER, AP Science Writer

"The Earth may be on the brink of a worldwide epidemic from a bird flu virus that may mutate to become as deadly and infectious as viruses that killed millions during three influenza pandemics of the 20th century," according to a federal health official said Monday.

Dr. Julie L. Gerberding, head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said scientists expect that a flu virus that has swept through chickens and other poultry in Asia will genetically change into a flu that can be transmitted from person to person.

The genes of the avian flu change rapidly, she said, and experts believe it is highly likely that the virus will evolve into a pathogen deadly for humans.

She made the remarks in a plenary lecture at the national meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

"In Asia, there have already been a number of deaths among people who caught the flu from chickens or ducks. The mortality rate is very high — about 72 percent of identified patients," said Gerberding. "There also have been documented cases of this strain of flu being transferred from person-to-person, but the outbreak was not sustained," she said.

"We are expecting more human cases over the next few weeks because this is high season for avian influenza in that part of the world," said Gerberding. "Although cases of human-to-human transmission have been rare, our assessment is that this is a very high threat."

This assessment, she said, is based on the known history of the flu virus. The avian flu now spreading in Asia is part of what is called the H1 family of flu viruses. It is a pathogen that is notorious in human history. "Each time we see a new H1 antigen emerge, we experience a pandemic of influenza," said Gerberding. In 1918, H1 appeared and millions died worldwide. In 1957, the Asian flu was an H2, and the Hong Kong flu in 1968 was a H3.

There had been small appearances of the H1-type of avian viruses in other years, but nothing like the H5 now rampaging through the birds of Asia. "We are seeing a highly pathogenic strain of influenza virus emerge to an extraordinary proportion across the entire western component of Asia," she said. "The reason this is so ominous is because of the evolution of flu.... You may see the emergence of a new strain to which the human population has no immunity."

"The science here is all alerting us that we have a great deal to be concerned about," she said.

The CDC chief said her agency is getting ready for a possible pandemic next year. A special flu team, organized last year, continues to monitor the spread of the avian flu and to analyze the strains as they appear.

The government has ordered 2 million doses of vaccine that would protect against the known strains of avian flu. Gerberding said this would give manufacturers a head start on making the shots that would be needed to combat a full-blown epidemic of an H1-type of flu in this country.

CDC is also plugged into an international communication and monitoring system that, it is hoped, will give an early warning of the emergence of a deadly new flu.

But at the same time, the agency is helping to produce the 180 million or so doses of regular flu that are needed annually. Gerberding said the timeline for producing the regular vaccine yearly is very tight, with little room for problems.

To produce a new vaccine in response to the sudden emergence of an H1-flu bug would require an extraordinary new effort, she said. "We don't now have the capacity to do both," said Gerberding.

More Automated External Defibrillators (AED) Available for Rural Oklahoma

For the third straight year, the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division of the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) has received federal funds to purchase automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) for placement in rural areas of Oklahoma.

An AED can be a lifesaver for someone suffering a sudden cardiac arrest. The AED will automatically analyze heart rhythms and deliver an electric current to the heart of a cardiac arrest victim, restarting the heart.

The federal Health Resources Services Administration has provided \$197,031, which will be used by the OSDH to purchase as many AED units as possible. In 2004, the EMS Division distributed 207 defibrillators to rural areas and more than 120 in 2003. Sudden cardiac arrest is one of the leading causes of death in North America, killing one adult every one to two minutes.

The key to survival is prompt defibrillation. Public safety agencies should aim to reduce the critical interval from collapse to defibrillation by focusing on minimizing the time from the emergency 911 call to the first defibrillator shock. Communities that reduce this "call-to-shock" time to five minutes or less can expect to resuscitate as many as one-third to one-half of sudden cardiac arrest victims. It really doesn't matter who brings the defibrillator to the victim's side. The important thing is to make sure the unit is working and readily available," said Shawn Rogers, director of the OSDH EMS Division.

"Everyone who has a duty to respond to victims of sudden cardiac arrest should be trained and equipped to defibrillate. Responders with rapid response times such as firefighters and police, as well as the EMTs whose job is to save lives, are natural choices to receive the training and equipment," Rogers said.

For information about how to obtain an application for an AED, contact a local Council of Government (COG) or contact Shawn Rogers, director of the OSDH EMS Division.

From the President...



We really have a lot to cover so I will get right to it. First, conference dates and location have been set so mark your calendars for August 23-26, 2005 and we will be returning to the Tulsa Southern Hills Marriott again this year. The folks at the Tulsa Marriott have always been really great to work with and I look forward to working with them again on our conference.

This will be my last conference as your president as we will be holding elections this year. The nominating committee, which is the area Vice Presidents, will be taking nominations for all officer positions in the very near future. I have really enjoyed my terms as your president and think we have made a lot of progress.

A perfect example is the recent legislative issue concerning HB1663. With very short notice we were able to muster good attendance at a committee hearing as well as provide a massive email campaign into the house committee members urging them to not support this bill. We have succeeded for now, and I hope by the time you read this we will have been completely successful,, time will tell. However, the fact that we have been able to communicate and move quickly and effectively as an association is really impressive I think. And, we will need to do this again, the attempt to invade Title 63 will not go away and we will need to be on top of this issue again.

Also, many other things are going on, the Central Area headed by David Van Nostrand has been working very hard over the past year to develop a mutual aid agreement that can be used state wide. This mutual aid needs to become a part of state legislation to really be successful and by working with the staff at the state office, David and his working group have been able to come up with a document that everyone seems to be satisfied with, and has been introduced as SB242. Again, hopefully by the time you read this we will be a lot closer to success on this project too.

Paula Cain has put together another working group to address some concerns we have about the response teams and trailers through Homeland Security. They are working on a policy for dispatching those resources when needed.

Gayland Kitch has begun to outline a new project for the communications committee that I think everyone will be excited about. Finally, we have a communications proposal that could affect everyone from Guymon to Hugo,, yes, we still remember that Guymon IS in the State of Oklahoma.

I guess the point I am trying to make here is, your executive board, and the association as a whole, is working and it is working for you and every other EM program in this state. Issues are being addressed, projects are being evaluated, and members are banding together to put hundreds of hours, as well as a lot of blood and sweat into promoting emergency management in the State of Oklahoma, to benefit the citizens of Oklahoma.

As I have said before, every emergency manager I have talked to says they are completely overwhelmed and it just doesn't seem to be getting any better. But, it does seem some of this hard work and long hours is really beginning to pay off. Just stay in there and continue to promote what we do in EM and hope to see all of you at conference in August if not before.

Kary D. Cox,
President
O.E.M.A.

“Mitigation Best Practice Portfolio” Is Live!

The Best Practices and Case Studies Portfolio is a collection of illustrated stories about mitigation ideas, activities, or projects, including mitigation funding sources. You are invited to browse through the portfolio. When you read what others have been doing, you will see what is possible and get ideas applicable to your own situation. Here's the link: <http://www.fema.gov/fima/bp.shtm>

Executive Order in Stonewall!

The town of Stonewall has, as of November 11th, signed an Executive Order implementing NIMS as the system of incident management that this jurisdiction will use.

The Stonewall Office of Emergency Management is currently involved in training local responders as well as the Union Valley F.D. in preparation for NIMS implementation.

Chad Letellier, Director of Stonewall OEM, is currently instructing ICS classes in the FEMA format including: IS-100 intro to ICS, IS-200 Basic ICS, and then will follow on with the IS-700 NIMS class. Upon completion of this training, there will be a follow up class IS-241 Problem Solving and Decision Making in Emergency Situations. The Pontotoc Co. Red Cross is also involved in attending the classes.

The Stonewall Office of Emergency Management is also actively involved with the Pontotoc Co. OEM and are currently developing a CERT training schedule as well as developing a new spotter group for the county.

Congratulations!

Harry Trotter completing ALL of the FEMA Independent Study Courses. As many are aware, this is certainly not an easy task! Now that Harry has all this knowledge Many EM's should tap into his intellect in this area too! Way to go Harry!

“FOSTERING EFFECTIVE SEVERE WEATHER PARTNERSHIPS”

The 5th annual National Severe Weather Workshop will be held March 3-5 at the Reed Center in Midwest City, Okla.

Registration is underway for the three-day workshop, which is designed to enhance partnerships between severe weather forecasters and researchers, emergency managers, broadcast meteorologists, businesses, storm spotters and other weather enthusiasts. In addition, free storm spotter and radar training will be offered.

NOAA's National Weather Service, NWS Southern and Central Regions, NWS National Centers for Environmental Prediction, NWS Norman Forecast Office, NOAA's National Severe Storms Laboratory, Oklahoma Emergency Managers Association and the Central Oklahoma Chapters of the American Meteorological Society and National Weather Association, sponsor the event.

“The National Severe Weather Workshop has become one of the premier venues for sharing hazardous weather information,” said Brig. Gen. David L. Johnson, U.S. Air Force (Ret.), director of NOAA's National Weather Service. “It is a terrific event that brings together emergency managers and media with the forecasters who issue valuable watches and warnings.

The theme for this year's workshop is “Fostering Effective Severe Weather Partnerships.” Robert Hager, national science reporter with NBC News, will be the featured speaker during a banquet on Friday night of March 4.

On Saturday, March 5, Joseph Schaefer, director of NOAA's Storm Prediction Center, and one of the workshop organizers, will present an overview of the record-breaking tornadoes in 2004. Also that day, radar interpretation will be presented by Jim LaDue, meteorologist with the NOAA Warning Decision Training Branch and Kevin Kloesel, director of outreach for the Oklahoma Climatological Survey, and an advanced storm spotting session will be provided by Ed Calianese, warning coordination meteorologist with the NOAA National Weather Service Forecast Office in Tulsa, Okla.

Workshop registration is online at: <http://www.norman.noaa.gov/nsww2005>. Registration of \$100 will be accepted online until February 25 or at the door. One-day packages are available for \$50. Payments may be made online via credit card. Registrations paid by check or purchase order should be paid at the door.

Radar interpretation and advanced storm spotting sessions from 1 to 5 p.m. on Saturday are free. Sponsor and vendor opportunities are still available for businesses to promote their products or services during the event. More information about the workshop is available online or by calling (405) 579-0771.

NWS Plans to Implement Cellular Skywarn Network

The Cellular Skywarn Network will be just one of many topics at this year's **Severe Weather Workshop** on Saturday, March 12, 2005 in the Amarillo, Texas area.

The workshop will be held at the Civic Center in downtown Amarillo and is open to the public, free of charge. The workshop is currently scheduled to run from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, with registration to begin at 9:00 AM.

The general sessions will feature severe weather experts speaking on the latest in severe weather safety, and lessons learned from recent severe weather events, including the June 21st historic Amarillo hail storm.

The concurrent sessions will be more specialized. One session will be geared towards emergency managers, media, chasers and other weather enthusiasts. Topics for this group will include information on radar interpretation, the StormReady program, and specific NWS products and services. The other session will be geared to the public.

There will be an organizational meeting of those interested in being part of the “**Cellular Skywarn Network**”. The goal is to organize a mobile group of NWS spotters, that when activated, will voluntarily set out to track storms and use cell phones to notify the NWS of severe weather. For information, please email steve.drillette@noaa.gov or call 806-335-1121.

Disaster Dictionary: EM's Should Get Theirs Soon!

The long-awaited *Disaster Dictionary* written by Dan Biby is available for mailing to emergency managers statewide.

Dan commented, “I'm pleased that nearly 100 folks came by the booth following my announcement at OEMA's Fall Conference, it gives me great satisfaction to be able to contribute something back to the men and women helping to protect our Oklahoma communities. They work hard, but are often under appreciated for what they do.”

Disaster Dictionary defines over 1,200 terms and acronyms useful to emergency managers and other responders, including law enforcement, emergency medical, fire service, and HazMat units. To ensure accuracy and completeness, it has been peer-reviewed by experts from public health, law enforcement, and emergency management.

In addition to defining terms related to a disaster event, *Disaster Dictionary* includes special sections covering Incident Command System (ICS) and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The ICS section describes the basics of ICS and how it improves the safety and efficiency of on-scene incident response. The WMD section familiarizes responders with weapon types, their characteristics, and the measures they must take to protect themselves and fellow responders. Over 110 resources, grouped within 16 categories, are provided for further study.

Dan Biby is uniquely qualified to author this valuable reference book, Dan he has over 16 years of experience in emergency preparedness and response planning and training. Dan is certified by the Department of Homeland Security as a trainer in Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), Emergency Response to Terrorism, and WMD Threat Assessment.

To all Local Emergency Managers, First Responders and State Liaison Officers

ALBERT ASHWOOD, Director

Subject: National Requirement to use the National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Homeland Security (HLS) Secretary Tom Ridge provided guidance in his September 8, 2004 letter to all states, tribes and local governments on how to adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) per the Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5.

The Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management (OEM) met with State officials from the Department of Public Safety (DPS), Department of Health (DOH), Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security (OKOHS) and Oklahoma State University Fire Service Training Center (OSU-FST) to determine how best to accomplish the Presidential requirements.

DOH, thru its Terrorism Preparedness and Response program, has trained numerous first responders throughout the state in the Incident Command System (ICS) and NIMS. DPS is working to provide both ICS and NIMS in the CLEET program and localized law enforcement training. OSU-FST is introducing NIMS training as part of the existing ICS curriculum and plans to offer expanded web based training along with existing localized training. OKOHS is working on issues to better inform the public of the NIMS requirement.

OEM will provide assistance in several ways:

1. We encourage all emergency managers and first responders to take the FEMA web based Independent Study Courses listed below. All full time employees at OEM are required to take the training.
 - IS-700 National Incident Management System (NIMS)
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700.asp>
 - IS-100 Introduction to the Incident Command System
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is100.asp>
 - IS-195 Basic Incident Command System
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is195.asp>
 - IS-200 Basic Incident Command System
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is200.asp>
2. Second, we encourage each local emergency manager to work with his/her city and/or county officials to develop an ordinance or resolution adopting NIMS as the jurisdiction's system of incident management. HLS has provided a sample executive order.
3. Third, OEM will provide NIMS and ICS training during the five OEM Regional Workshops in the Spring of 2005 and the Fall 2005 Oklahoma Emergency Management Conference in Tulsa. These are in addition to the recommended FEMA independent study courses.
4. Fourth, we encourage each jurisdiction to incorporate NIMS and ICS into it's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). This can be done by attaching a cover letter to the plan and/or adding the changes directly to this year's (FFY 05) update.

We recommend that the following be inserted in the basic plan and put to practice in the jurisdiction:

- "In accordance with the Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5, all agencies, departments and organizations having responsibilities delineated in this EOP will use the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This system will allow proper coordination between local, state and federal organizations.
- The Incident Command System (ICS), as a part of NIMS, will enable effective and efficient incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating with a common organizational structure.
- All on-scene management of an emergency or disaster will be conducted using the Incident Command System."

As emergency managers, our job is to "facilitate and coordinate" resources to provide our citizens with an effective and efficient response. We must insure that our law enforcement departments, fire departments, public works departments, emergency medical services, public health professionals and all other responders and volunteers understand and use NIMS and ICS. This will insure that our response to disaster, whether in Oklahoma or assisting our neighbor states, will allow our citizens to quickly recover from disaster and return to their normal lives.

Your assistance and participation in making NIMS work is appreciated. We will provide updates and more information as it is received or developed.

For More information contact:

DALE MAGNIN Chief:

Planning, Training and Exercise Division;
Oklahoma Dept. of Emergency Management (OEM);
(405) 521-2481 fax (405) 521-4053

* * * *

Very Interesting Reading.....

Next time that you have a few minutes to browse, you may want to check out some very interesting reading from the different forecast office in your area.

- **For Amarillo, Texas**
<http://www.srh.weather.gov/ama/dryline/>
- **For Tulsa, Oklahoma**
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tulsa/tribune/>
- **For Norman**
<http://www.srh.weather.gov/oun/newsletter/>
- **For Shreveport, Louisiana**
http://www.srh.noaa.gov/shv/Newsletter_Spring_2005.htm

It's That Time of Year Again

The week of March 6-12, 2005 is being designated as Severe Weather Awareness Week in the state of Oklahoma.

The National Weather Service, in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management has proclaimed the week of March 6th through March 12th as Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week in Oklahoma.

Did You Know...

- In an average year, Oklahoma experiences 54 tornadoes
- In 1999, 145 tornadoes raked the state.
- Oklahoma experiences more significant tornadoes than any other state in the country.
- Lightning can strike as far away as 10 miles from the rain area of a thunderstorm
- Floods and flash floods are the most frequent killers from thunderstorms.

* * * *

From the City of *Blackwell*

Blackwell Emergency Manager, Terry Bonewell announced that the local Ham club, OIAR (Oklahoma Independent Amateur Radio, is the newest Special Service Club in Oklahoma. This is a very active club in emergency communication and they work closely with the City of Blackwell Emergency Management.

Because of OIAR, Blackwell Emergency Management has a tower equipped communication trailer with generator and equipment to operate all needed frequencies. In addition, OIAR assisted in the electrical and communications planning and installation of the Blackwell EM Communications Trailer. This trailer, along with mobile antenna and emergency power trailer can go to any location and provide or assist in the establishment of emergency communications.

Central Oklahoma Emergency Management Conference

The Conference will be March 17-19, 2005 at the Moore Norman Vo-Tech 4701 12th Ave NW, in Norman Oklahoma and is hosted by the Cleveland County LEPC.

There are a variety of subjects that will be covered: NIMS & ICS, ODEM Communications, CERT, and Breakout sessions will also be conducted.

Oklahoma Emergency Management has agreed to pay the motel rooms for 2 nights (3/17 and 3/18) for up to 25 representatives (1 per jurisdiction) that travel over 60 miles one way in accordance with OK mileage tabulations.

There are many lodging accommodations in Norman, however, the local Holiday Inn (405) 364-2882 has agreed to set aside a block of rooms and accept the State rate. Reservations must be made by March 3, 2005 in order to secure the room at this rate.

Anyone receiving OEM room payment must coordinate with Norman EMC, David Grizzle when making reservations.

For more info contact David Grizzle: 405-292-9780 Work, 405-245-9522 Cell or 405-292-9785 Fax

Lessons learned & Practiced

(AP News)

Lessons learned in a deadly October 2003 high-rise fire in Chicago, IL, may have saved lives when a fire broke out on the 29th floor of a downtown skyscraper. The year previous, six people died in a fire at a county government building, prompting authorities to overhaul many rescue techniques. Their reforms were put to the test Early December, 2004 as flames began shooting from windows at LaSalle Bank's corporate headquarters December 6, 2004,

As workers huddled inside, hundreds of firefighters went to work against the fire, but a much smaller team of rescuers rushed into the building with just one job: finding workers trapped by smoke and flames.

Chicago authorities credited the new rescue tactics for saving lives, but said they were also fortunate that stairwell doors in the 43-story building stayed unlocked and that many workers listened to firefighters' directions and remained in place.

"The lights were out and it was pitch black, and the smoke was so thick you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. But at every landing there was a fireman keeping us moving," said Jim Rubens,

Workers reported some confusion, complaining they sometimes could not get through to fire officials on the telephone and could not always make out instructions being broadcast in hallways.

This time, members of a "rapid ascent team" arrived knowing beforehand, their only mission would be to search for trapped occupants.

The new rapid ascent team, according to fire official, Larry Langford, "They start going up and down stairwells and floor by floor, searching from top to bottom," Fire Commissioner Cortez Trotter said "Of the 450 fire department personnel on the scene, as many as 75 did nothing but search for people inside,"

Another key difference lay in how the fire department coordinated its efforts. "Now, the first person stays in charge and consults" with command personnel who arrive at the scene later,

The fire occurred in one of the 170 high-rises in the city where the department has conducted fire drills since the 2003 fire, meaning its occupants were trained to react to an emergency. The building also featured windows that could be opened, unlike the county building in 2003.



OEMA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

ORGANIZATION/JURISDICTION _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

BUSINESS PHONE () _____ HOME PHONE () _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS – BUSINESS _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS – HOME/PERSONAL _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Mail application and membership dues of \$35.00 to:

Jennifer Powell
 OEMA Secretary
 PO Box 1448
 Shawnee, OK 74802

Dues are billed every July and are due by the end of the 1st day of Fall Conference.

ABOUT OEMA

Because emergencies transcend jurisdiction boundaries, intergovernmental coordination and cooperation are essential. The objective of OEMA is to assist local, state and Federal agencies in the establishment and maintenance of effective emergency management organizations.

We strive to advance the professional standards of persons engaged in emergency management through professional certification programs, legislative review, information exchange and educational programs.

SERVICES

The OKEM is a newsletter published by the OEMA that focuses on activities of the Association, emergency response news, legislative issues, jurisdictional activities and professional resources. OEMA conference, workshops and committees provide direct access to current issues and trends in emergency management, helping participants enhance their roles in emergency management. Coordination and communication are maintained with a network of allied associations and organizations that deal with all aspects of comprehensive emergency management.

MEMBERSHIP

Delegate membership is available to all persons who are professionally engaged in an emergency management agency of The State of Oklahoma or its political subdivisions.

Affiliate membership is available to all persons interested in fostering emergency management programs with Oklahoma.

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OKEM

February, 2005

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Useful web sites:

Oklahoma Emergency Management
Association:
www.okem.us

Oklahoma Dept. of Emergency
Management:
www.odcem.state.ok.us/

National Weather Service Office,
Norman:
www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/

Oklahoma Floodplain Managers
Association:
www.okflood.org

Association of State Floodplain
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www.floods.org

FEMA:
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