



READY RACINE

FALL 2021

Volume 16, Issue 2

Racine County
Office
of
Emergency Management

Inside this issue:

CHDS seminar	2
EM team recognized	2
Retirement cont.	3
Editorial	3
Youth training	4
Kerner honored	4

Mission

To assist
the community
in mitigating
known hazards and
in preparing for,
responding to,
surviving and
recovering from
both natural and
man-made
disasters.

AFTER 31 YEARS, TIME TO RETIRE

In October, I will be retiring from a 33-year career in emergency management. I never set out to be an emergency manager. I didn't even know what emergency management was until I was offered a position with Wisconsin Emergency Management. It was my first job out of college.

For the next year and a half, I would learn about emergency management while helping implement the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know act in Wisconsin.

When the coordinator position opened in Racine County, I applied and was hired. Instead of working with one aspect of the program, I was now working with all aspects of a very diverse program. Each county is required, by state statute, to have an emergency management program and state and federal funding is tied to a "Plan of Work" which is negotiated with the state each year.

The main components of that plan of work are:

- ◆ Preparing and maintaining plans for the response and recovery from natural, technological, and man-made disasters.
- ◆ Providing emergency management related training to community partners as well as the community. This may involve sponsoring state or national training courses or conducting the training ourselves.
- ◆ Public outreach is a large part of emergency management. We are required to conduct public aware-

ness campaigns throughout the year. In addition, we speak to community groups, distribute brochures, and utilize social media to promote a culture of preparedness.



- ◆ We often participate in or facilitate disaster exercises and drills. Disasters are not a common occurrence, so drills and exercises are utilized to test plans, equipment, and personnel. Over the years, we have gone into businesses and facilitated tabletop discussions with their personnel as well as planned and executed large full scale disaster exercises complete with victims who were transported to area hospitals.
- ◆ Finally, we respond to emergency situations as requested. Since 1990, I have overseen 13 declared disasters and responded to even more situations that didn't rise to the level of a major declaration.

Over the last 33 years, I have seen many changes in emergency management. First and foremost, it has become a profession. The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) offers a certification in emergency management,

RCOEM Hosts CHDS EXECUTIVE SEMINAR

Racine County officials recently took part in a scenario based Executive Education Seminar.

In partnership with RCOEM, the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) developed this executive level seminar to explore homeland security and emergency management challenges confronting Racine County.

Emergency Management staff worked with CHDS officials to put customize a program which met local needs.

The scenario centered on a complex coordinated attack in Racine County and participants were asked to identify the challenges that they would face responding to back to back, major incidents occurring in several different locations as well as identify-

ing “cascading consequences.”

This educational seminar was facilitated by a CHDS panel comprised of nationally recognized subject matter experts including Chief Clark Kimerer (ret.), Seattle Police Department, James Featherstone, Executive Direc-

tor, Los Angeles Homeland Security Advisory Council, Jody Ferguson, Pierce County Department of Emergency Management Director and Col. Bob Stephan (USAF, Ret.), former Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Infrastructure Protection.



EOC TEAM RECOGNIZED FOR COVID RESPONSE

Sheriff Christopher Schmaling recognized the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Team with a Unit Citation at the Racine County Sheriff’s Office Award’s Ceremony.

The citation read, “The Racine County Emergency Operations Center Team came together in collaboration

to prepare, protect, and provide for the citizens of Racine County during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their quick response to an unprecedented situation placed Racine County in a favored position whether it was obtaining personal protective equipment for distribution, establishing

testing sites, setting up and maintaining isolation centers, monitoring hospital bed usage, or reaching out to local and state resources.”

Team members recognized were Captains Weidner, Adams, and Madrigal, Lieutenants Barker and Evans, Sergeant Goetzke, Deputies Fisher, Kroll, and Storm; EM Director David Maack, EM Deputy Director Jay Kerner, Racine County Communications and Media Relations Director Mark Schaaf, RAPD Lieutenant Esch, South Shore Fire Department Chief Stedman, Central Racine County Health Department Environmental Health Director Keith Hendricks, City of Racine Health Department Environmental Health Director Marcia Fernholz.



RETIREMENT CONT.

as does many state emergency management offices, colleges and universities are offering emergency management degrees and many companies are now hiring emergency managers.

As for program changes, it ebbs and flows depending on what happens and gaps that are exposed. This may result in an infusion of grant dollars, but it usually involves new program requirements.

It is also interesting to see how emergency management came full circle, returning in some ways to the old civil defense days.

In 1994, the civil defense days officially came to an end, and I

stood before the County Board and stated such. During the Q & A, a county board supervisor suggested

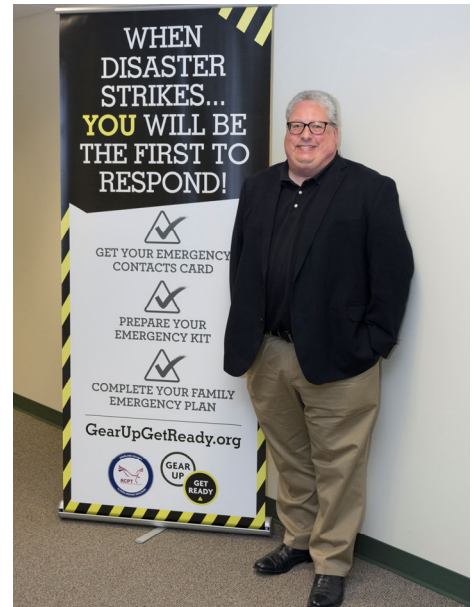


now that the Cold War was over, they could eliminate the office. I quickly responded that we had more to do than just civil defense planning and nothing more was said.

After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) rolled out Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training and were providing helmets, gloves, and vests to those training. The CERT concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985 in response to earthquakes. If you could train the community to help themselves and their neighbors, professional first responders could address areas that are more critical.

In Racine County we have trained hundreds, including middle and high school students, over the past twenty years.

As my career comes to a close, I can truthfully say that I have had the best job in Racine County. No day was ever the same and I was never tied to a desk. I was able to get out in the public and talk to groups, train



community members, and meet with public officials. When disaster did strike, I was out in the field, working side by side with others to help restore order out of chaos. I have met some interesting people, spoken at a few national conferences and even had the opportunity to be on a White House panel.

Thank you for letting me serve you all these years.

(David L. Maack has served as the Racine County Emergency Management Coordinator since 1990)

PREPAREDNESS SHOULD BE YEAR ROUND

Each September we observe National Preparedness month and this year's theme was "Prepare to Protect. Preparing for disasters is protecting everyone you love."

Preparedness can save lives and having a plan, making an emergency supplies kit and knowing what to do can be a real game changer for you and your family. Therefore take the time, not only now but throughout the year, to be prepared.

President Joe Biden said, "We must each do our part — we must all Prepare to Protect. I call on everyone to get vaccinated, turn on emergency alerts on your smartphone, pack an emergency go-bag, and encourage others in your community to do the same."

Help us build a culture of preparedness-prepare now-so we can ensure a future!

PREPARE TO PROTECT

#BeReady

SIGN UP for local weather and emergency alerts.

PREPARE an emergency kit.

MAKE a family communications plan.

RCOEM PARTICIPATES IN YOUTH DISASTER TRAINING

The Volunteer Center of Racine/ Youth Volunteer Corps facilitated Disaster Preparedness Training in conjunction with the 20th Anniversary of 9/11. The training took place on Saturday, September 11th at the Moose Lodge in Caledonia.

25 youth participated, ranging in age from 11-18. All were students from Racine County. In addition, approximately 20 adult volunteers helped to



facilitate the training including members of the South Shore Fire Department, Caledonia Fire Department, Racine County Emergency Management and the Racine Fire Bells.

The training was similar to the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training that the VCRC used to facilitate and included an overview of the 9/11 attacks, search and rescue, and First Aid/CPR. For the training, adult volunteers were moulaged or made up to resemble actual "victims" and the youth treated their injuries.

Jay Kerner, Chief Deputy EM Coordinator, commented, "It was great seeing young people taking time on a

Saturday to learn about emergency preparedness. It was a terrific way to honor those who responded on 9/11."



Participants had positive comments about the training and were requesting additional first aid and search and rescue training. RCOEM plans to offer CERT courses in the near future.

JAY KERNER RECOGNIZED FOR COVID RESPONSE

Jay Kerner, Chief Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator, was honored by the Department of Corrections (DOC) during a ceremony at the State Capitol on Friday, September 24th.

Jay was employed by DOC for 22 years, where he last worked in the Preparedness & Emergency Response Section out of Madison.

Jay received a SALUTE Award for Outstanding Performance in the cat-

egory of service for leading a multi-disciplinary team responsible for developing, coordinating and imple-



menting the WI DOC's statewide response to the COVID-19 pandemic for 37 adult correctional facilities, 3 juvenile facilities and approximately 180 probation and parole offices

DOC Secretary Kevin Carr proudly told those in attendance he would put the WI DOC's response to the pandemic up against the response of any other Department of Corrections of similar size in the country and he is confident the WI DOC transcends all others.

STAY INFORMED

There are a number of ways in which you can stay informed and involved with Racine County Emergency Management. In addition to our quarterly Ready Racine newsletters, you can learn more about RCOEM by:

- Visiting our website: <http://readyracineco.com>
- Visiting our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/readyracineco
- Submitting your questions and concerns to rcemergencymanagement@racinecounty.com
- Volunteering with Racine County Emergency Management