



# SECURE & PREPARED

April 18, 2006

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <i>Administrator's Column</i>     | 2 |
| <i>Tri-State Project Complete</i> | 3 |
| <i>Legislative Update</i>         | 4 |
| <i>HLSEM is Moving</i>            | 5 |
| <i>Weather Radio Winners</i>      | 5 |
| <i>NIMS Update</i>                | 5 |

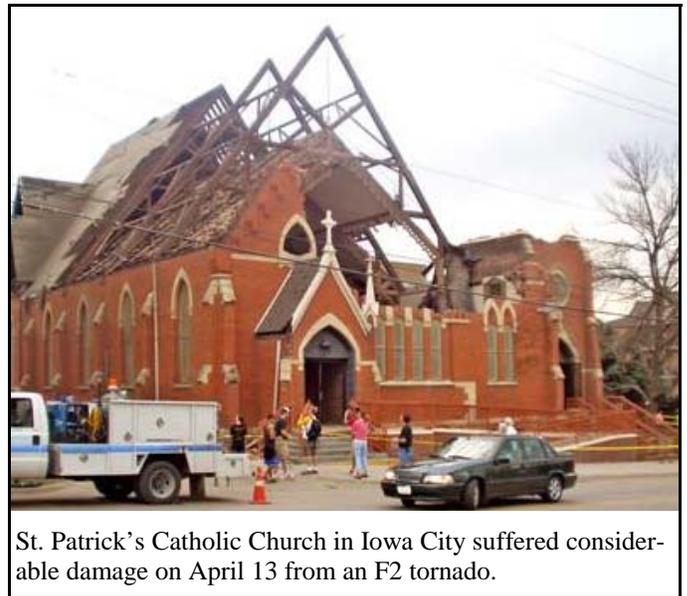
## Special points of interest:

- On April 12, Woodbury County announced the completion of the tri-state communications interoperability project. See article on page 3.
- HLSEM has been following several bills this legislative session. See article on page 4.
- Beginning on April 24, HLSEM will begin moving to our new offices at Camp Dodge in Johnston. For more details, see article on page 5.
- Who needs to take the NIMS IS-800 course? See article on page 5.

## Tornadoes Strike Eastern Iowa

On April 13, a total of 12 tornadoes touched down across seven counties in eastern Iowa and west central Illinois. Damage was reported in Benton, Johnson, Jones, and Muscatine Counties, with Iowa City suffering the most damage.

According to the National Weather Service, most of the damage in Iowa City was caused by one tornado with winds that reached 150 mph. Unfortunately, there was also one fatality near the town of Nichols in Muscatine County, when a tornado struck a mobile home.



St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Iowa City suffered considerable damage on April 13 from an F2 tornado.

On April 14, Governor Tom Vilsack signed an emergency disaster declaration for Johnson, Jones and Muscatine Counties. The declaration enabled state resources to be used to assist local responders and citizens. Iowa's Emergency Operations Center was activated to coordinate the deployment of state personnel and equipment.

The Iowa National Guard, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Natural Resources deployed resources to aid in response and recovery efforts. The agencies assisted with law enforcement, debris removal, and radio and communication equipment. Preliminary disaster assessment teams comprised of personnel from Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the Iowa Department of Transportation surveyed damages in the three declared counties.

On April 15, Lt. Governor Sally Pederson and Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Administrator David L. Miller surveyed the damage and met with local officials in Iowa City. Meanwhile, HLSEM and FEMA officials began working on joint damage assessments.

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Tornadoes Strike Eastern Iowa

*(Continued from page 1)*

Preliminary damage estimates show the storms caused about \$4 million in damages to public buildings. That figure is expected to rise. In the Iowa City area assessments indicated that there were 15 business with major damages and 17 with minor damage. Also there were 26 residences destroyed (both single and multi-family), 81 with major damages, 179 with minor damages, and 19 that were "affected."

Governor Vilsack is expected to send a formal request to President George W. Bush for a presidential disaster declaration.



Tornado damage is shown above from a subdivision near Anamosa. Photo provided by the Iowa Civil Air Patrol.

## The Rumbling of Spring

*By HLSEM Administrator, David L. Miller*



The rumbling thunderstorms of spring signal the return of severe weather to Iowa and a chance for all of us to refocus on our key mission. While terrorism preparedness and response will continue to serve as a priority, it is important that we also strive to improve our overall multi-hazard emergency management functions. We all recognize that a terrorism attack falls in the low probability, high consequences area. But severe storms and spring floods fall in the high probability and potentially high consequence area.

The recent wave of tornadoes that struck Eastern Iowa, Missouri and Tennessee are stark reminders of the power of Mother Nature.

Now is the time to review plans, update severe weather notifications and make sure that all of the responders in your community know their roles and responsibilities. On a personal basis, make sure you have a family emergency plan. Like the shoemaker's family that had no shoes, too often those of us in this business fail to prepare our own. Do you have a family emergency communication plan? Can your family sustain itself for 72 hours? Chances are they are going to be on their own because you will be involved in the response and recovery. Ensuring they are prepared will help you focus on your job.

For tips on family preparedness visit [www.BeReadyIowa.org](http://www.BeReadyIowa.org). It is a great Web site with a lot of useful information.

Thanks for all of your hard work.

# Tri-State Communications Project Completed

On April 12, Woodbury County announced the completion of the tri-state communications interoperability project during a ribbon cutting ceremony. The project encompassed purchasing a new communication system with new equipment, which enhances coverage areas and institutes new technologies.

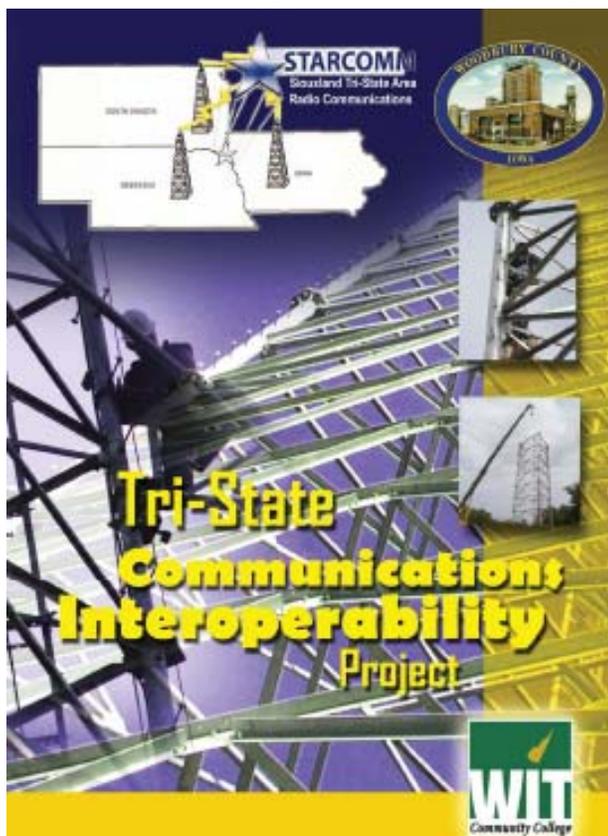
“The most important aspect is not the technology, but the way the technology was managed through a strong partnership in the tri-state area, which brought about a mutual benefit,” said HLSEM Administrator David L. Miller.

Woodbury County Emergency Management Coordinator Gary Brown said, “I want to thank everyone who helped and supported this project. Lessons learned during this demonstration project can be applied in other jurisdictions across the country to improve public safety communications for the emergency responders saving lives and property.”

The project began in June 2003 when Governor Vilsack nominated Woodbury County to compete for \$6 million in federal funding. Once the Woodbury County Supervisors received word that their project (one of 17 across the nation) had been chosen, they began to:



HLSEM Administrator David Miller speaks during the ribbon cutting ceremony at the tower site located at Western Iowa Tech Community College.



- Construct a five-site, six-channel radio system, which would connect current legacy radio systems and the new 800 MHz system together using voice over and Internet protocol;
- Connect both systems to the State of Iowa fiber optic network;
- Equip Woodbury, Dakota, and Union County dispatch centers to operate on this system; and
- Create a mobile communications vehicle with similar capability to serve as back-up communications during disasters and emergencies.

This system was designed to respond to the individual needs of each county, while giving them the ability to communicate with each other in “real time” and “on demand” on a single system. The system provides coverage throughout Woodbury County, Iowa; Dakota County, Nebraska; and Union County, South Dakota.

The five sites used for tower locations in Iowa include Western Iowa Tech Community College, Sioux City West High School, Anthon, and East Woodbury County. Another site is located in Homer, Nebraska.

# Legislative Update

The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division has been following several bills this legislative session. Following are three bills of interest that have passed both the House and Senate.

## **HF 2571 – INTELLIGENCE BILL**

This bill passed both the House and Senate and was sent to Governor Vilsack for signature. The language in the existing law makes a distinction between "intelligence data" and "intelligence assessments," but essentially treats the handling of them both the same. The language in this bill amends existing law so that the Department of Public Safety can disseminate an "intelligence assessment" more freely than they can "intelligence data", while keeping both of them confidential. The amended law will also permit dissemination of a "public health and safety threat advisory or alert by press release or other method of public communication."

"Intelligence data" can still only be given to a "peace officer, criminal or juvenile justice agency, or state or federal regulatory agency." But, confidential "intelligence assessments" can be disseminated to others that need the information.

## **HF 2590 SECRET EMERGENCY PROCEDURES BILL**

This bill, which Governor Vilsack signed into law April 12, 2006, amends Code section 22.7 by establishing a confidentiality exception to the open records law for information concerning security procedures or emergency preparedness information developed and maintained by a government body for the protection of employees, visitors, persons, or property in the care, custody, or under the control of the government body, if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to jeopardize such employees, visitors, persons, or property.

The bill specifies that such information includes, but is not limited to, information directly related to vulnerability assessments, security measures, and information contained in records that if disclosed would significantly increase the vulnerability of critical physical systems or infrastructures of a government body to attack. The bill only applies to information held by a government body that has adopted a rule or policy identifying the specific records or class of records to which the bill applies and which are contained in such a record.

To clarify the term "government body", Iowa Code Chapter 22.1 – DEFINITIONS, provides that:

1. The term "government body" means this state, or any county, city, township, school corporation, political subdivision, tax-supported district, nonprofit corporation other than a fair conducting a fair event as provided in chapter 174, whose facilities or indebtedness are supported in whole or in part with property tax revenue and which is licensed to conduct pari-mutuel wagering pursuant to chapter 99D, or other entity of this state, or any branch, department, board, bureau, commission, council, committee, official, or officer of any of the foregoing or any employee delegated the responsibility for implementing the requirements of this chapter.

## **SF 2322 INFECTIOUS DISEASES BILL**

This bill has passed both the House and the Senate and now goes to the Governor for signature. It allows for the sharing of information on non-reportable diseases. It allows the Department of Public Health or a local board of health to impose an area quarantine. The bill defines an "area quarantine" to mean prohibiting access to a building to prevent or contain the spread of a quarantinable disease or to prevent exposure to a hazardous, radioactive, or toxic agent.

It requires that health care providers and hospital clinical laboratories give the Department of Public Health or local board of health the information needed to conduct an investigation on communicable and infectious diseases. It makes a person who reasonably releases information, immune from any civil or criminal liability. The bill requires health care providers or clinical laboratories to give the Department of Public Health or a local board of health all information reasonably necessary to conduct an investigation, on the request of the department. It also allows the Department of Public Health to subpoena records.

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A Division of the Department of Public Defense

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**HLSEM Mission**

To support, coordinate, and maintain state and local homeland security and emergency management activities in order to establish sustainable communities and assure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

**We're on the Web!**

[www.iowahomelandsecurity.org](http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org)

# HLSEM Is Moving!

Beginning on April 24, we'll begin moving to our new offices at Camp Dodge in Johnston.

Our new address will be:

Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division  
7105 N.W. 70<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Camp Dodge, Bldg. W-4  
Johnston, IA 50131

We will be keeping our main office phone number, 515-281-3231 for 24-hour contact. However, the staff's personal desk phone numbers will be changing. We will be posting those numbers on our web site under the "Staff Phone Directory" link ([http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/asp/about\\_HS/contact\\_us.asp](http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/asp/about_HS/contact_us.asp)) once we're all settled. Our e-mail addresses will not be effected by the move either.

As always, if you need to contact our office for an emergency, our duty officer is available and can be reached by calling our main phone number, 515-281-3231.

We thank you in advance for your patience during our transition!

## NOAA weather radio Winners Announced

Thank you to everyone who entered or helped promote HLSEM's NOAA Weather Radio Giveaway! The radio giveaway was held during Severe Weather Awareness Week to help promote the completion of the NOAA Weather Radio Expansion project in Iowa.

For a list of the winners, please visit [www.bereadyiowa.org](http://www.bereadyiowa.org). Congratulations!

## Who needs to take the IS-800 course?

A recent NIMS alert stated the following about who needs to take the course.

Officials in tribal and local jurisdictions with overall emergency management responsibilities as dictated by law or ordinance, officials with overall emergency management responsibilities through delegation, and officials primarily involved in emergency planning.

Please keep in mind that this statement was guidance for the entire nation. Only county coordinators, their immediate staff and HLSEM staff need to take this course for NIMS compliancy.

This course may be good for others to take but it is not a requirement.