



# SECURE & PREPARED

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### Special points of interest:

- The work associated with the '06 Grants has continued to roll forward. See article on page 3.
- On August 25, Governor Tom Vilsack sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns requesting a disaster designation for 22 counties. See article on page 4.
- NIMS compliancy is right around the corner and Iowa is in good shape. HLSEM has received over 374 compliancy letters. For more information, see article on page 5.
- Thank you to our partners who helped make Family Preparedness Week a success! See photos on page 6.

**Please note that HLSEM's main office/24-hour contact phone number has changed to 515-725-3231.**

## HLSEM and Partners Urge Iowans to Create Family Disaster Plans

The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division in partnership with the American Red Cross, and the Animal Rescue League of Iowa, encouraged Iowans to take time during Family Preparedness Week, August 28-September 1, to become more prepared for emergencies.



HLSEM Administrator kicks off Family Preparedness Week at a Des Moines news conference and Grant Woods Chapter American Red Cross Emergency Services Director Shelly Hendrix shows how to make an emergency supply kit at a news conference in Cedar Rapids.

### News conferences promoting Family Preparedness Week were held in Des

Moines, Cedar Rapids, and Sioux City with support from emergency management agencies and other local officials. The main message was that preparing now, by creating a family disaster plan and an emergency supply kit, could make a huge difference in a time of crisis. "When people prepare for emergencies in advance it reduces the level of fear, anxiety, and losses that accompany disasters," said HLSEM Administrator David Miller. "Hurricane Katrina showed us that government cannot do it all. Citizens need to be prepared to take care of themselves during a disaster."

More information and planning resources can be found at [www.BeReadyIowa.org](http://www.BeReadyIowa.org). Those visiting this Web site will have a chance to enter a drawing for an emergency supply kit courtesy of the American Red Cross and a pet supply kit courtesy of the Animal Rescue League of Iowa. Anyone can enter the free, random drawings by sending an entry to the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division at 7105 N.W. 70th Avenue, Camp Dodge, Building W-4, Johnston, IA 50131. One entry per person, deadline is September 15, 2006. Winners will be posted to the [www.BeReadyIowa.org](http://www.BeReadyIowa.org) Web site and announced in the next newsletter. (More photos on page 5.)

# Is Iowa Better Prepared Since 9-11?

By HLSEM Administrator, David L. Miller



As the fifth anniversary of the 9-11 attacks approaches, it is only natural to ask, “Is Iowa prepared?” The short answer is we are better prepared today than we were yesterday, but less prepared than we need to be tomorrow. Although there will always be more to accomplish, I believe we are better prepared to respond to disasters, whether they are caused by terrorists or nature. Here are a few important reasons why.

*Our communities have become better prepared since 9-11.*

Because all disasters start locally, Iowa has placed an emphasis on improving the equipment and training for local responders and emergency management coordinators. Since 9-11, Iowa has received more than \$100 million in homeland security grants, 80% of which has been distributed to local governments.

Local first responders are more prepared to respond to any emergency or disaster by having better and more equipment to help them protect the public and themselves, through training resulting in an increased base of knowledge about terrorism and other hazards, and by testing this knowledge and equipment through a state-wide exercise program. County emergency management coordinators are the backbone of the state’s emergency management system. Since 9-11, county coordinators have taken on expanded duties and increased workload to ensure their counties, cities, responders, and citizens are prepared for all disasters and emergencies.

*Our state has become better prepared since 9-11.*

As a leader in agriculture, Iowa recognized the need to ensure the safety of our food supply. Following 9-11, Iowa took the lead in forming a 12-state partnership that focuses on response to agriculture emergencies that may cross state borders. First responders, veterinarians, and agricultural producers throughout the state have been trained to prevent and respond to agriculture emergencies and protect our food supply.

Since 9-11, sharing of intelligence information has become a priority at the national, state, and local levels of government. In Iowa, we have created a fusion system to process and analyze intelligence information in order to create an actual threat assessment for Iowa.

9-11 tragically illustrated the need for responders to be able to communicate with each other during a disaster. Iowa is addressing this huge and complex issue in a variety of ways, including using the Iowa Communications Network to link responders’ communication systems, and investing in the equipment and technology that will ensure communication among local and state agencies at a disaster scene.

*Citizens have a role in Iowa’s preparedness.*

An important component of emergency preparedness is making certain citizens are ready to take care of themselves, especially during the first few hours of an emergency when first responder resources are stretched. HLSEM’s *Be Ready Iowa!* Initiative urges citizens to create a family disaster plan and an emergency supply kit. Taking a few proactive steps now could make a huge difference in a time of crisis. For more on family preparedness, visit [www.bereadyiowa.org](http://www.bereadyiowa.org).

These are only a few ways in which Iowa is better prepared. To find out more about Iowa’s homeland security and emergency management initiatives, talk to your county emergency management coordinator or visit [www.iowahomelandsecurity.org](http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org).

# '06 Grant Update

The work associated with the '06 Grants has continued to roll forward. Budgets and scopes of work were submitted to the federal Office of Grants and Training by the August 30 deadline. Letters of agreement have been mailed to each of the 15 state team leads and when they are returned, the '06 dollars can start to be used.

"This has been a long, and at times, laborious process," said HLSEM Administrator David Miller. "The teams and their captains have performed under very tight deadlines and it's important to remember that the goal of securing Iowa has been advanced through this hard work. We thank all who have helped." Miller added.

The '06 dollars will be used to advance Iowa's regional homeland security efforts, improve the state's intelligence and information gathering system, and build specialized capabilities.

Here's a snapshot of some of the major projects funded with '06 dollars:

## **Regional Collaboration: \$3,296,241**

Almost \$3.3 million was allocated to Iowa's six homeland security regions to improve efforts in key preparedness areas of planning, training, and exercises. Funds were also allocated for ongoing NIMS compliance, EOC activities and improvements for National Infrastructure Protection and Critical Asset Protection. Each region was allocated \$200,000 that could be used to improve local planning, training, and exercise efforts.

## **Fusion System: \$2,338,383**

Funds from the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program will be used to continue building a system to gather and, more importantly, analyze intelligence information. These dollars will be used to create one state and six regional intelligence centers. A direct state appropriation will help support personnel at the state level.

## **NIMS/NRP Implementation: \$1,933,240**

These dollars will be used to ensure the state remains compliant under the announced National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements and is aligned with the National Response Plan (NRP). Additional NIMS requirements are also expected over the next two years and these funds will support those requirements.

## **WMD/HazMat Response: \$1,600,000**

Iowa's hazardous materials teams will use these dollars to improve their response capabilities for WMD and terrorism incidents. Iowa's hazardous materials task force is leading this effort to build the capabilities of local teams to enable them to respond to a WMD/terrorism event around the state.

## **Law Enforcement Investigations and Operations: \$1,000,000**

These funds will be used to improve capabilities of Iowa's local and state tactical response or SWAT teams.

## **Animal Health and Emergency Support: \$951,197**

Increasing Iowa's ability to prepare and respond to foreign animal diseases through a Veterinary Rapid Response team will be the focus of these funds.

## **US&R: \$650,000**

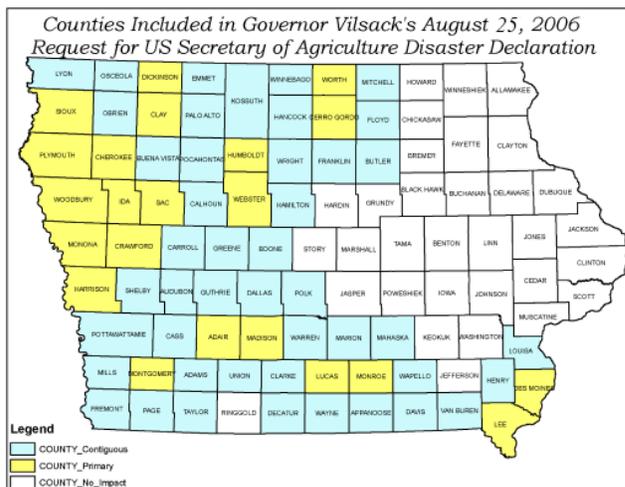
These funds will be used to sustain Iowa's heavy search and rescue team through the Sioux City and Cedar Rapids fire departments.

Believe it or not, the '07 federal program is just around the corner and is expected in October. Iowa will follow very much the same system used in '06 with an open approach of using responders to craft initiative packages.

## Ag Disaster Designation Requested for 22 Counties

On August 25, Governor Tom Vilsack sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns requesting a disaster designation for the counties of: Adair, Cerro Gordo, Cherokee, Clay, Crawford, Des Moines, Dickinson, Harrison, Humboldt, Ida, Lee, Lucas, Madison, Monona, Monroe, Montgomery, Plymouth, Sac, Sioux, Webster, Woodbury, and Worth.

These counties have experienced reduced yields for alfalfa hay, corn, soybeans, and oats as a result of drought conditions and severe weather occurring throughout the growing season. In July, Vilsack asked the State Farm Service Agency (FSA) to conduct drought and storm damage assessments to crops. On August 23, the State Emergency Board reported that these 22 counties met the necessary criteria and recommended inclusion in the Governor's request for a U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Disaster Designation.



If the request is approved by Secretary Johanns, Iowa residents in the above-mentioned and contiguous counties who have experienced agricultural damages related to the drought and storm conditions starting January 1, 2006, and continuing, may be eligible for assistance. This declaration would open USDA Emergency Loan Programs to farmers that qualify based on crop loss and additional eligibility requirements.

The Governor's Office will continue to monitor crop yields across the state to determine further requests for drought assistance.

## Avian Influenza Tests Complete on Michigan Swans

As a follow-up to last month's article concerning the mute swans infected with influenza in Michigan: The USDA's confirmatory tests have shown that the swans were NOT infected with the high pathogenic strain of Avian Influenza that is currently circulating overseas. Rather, the swans were infected with a low pathogenic strain of Avian Influenza that has been found in the US in the past. For more information, visit: <http://www.usda.gov/2006/08/0324.xml>

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns and Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne also recently announced that their departments and the State of Alaska have tested more than 13,000 wild migratory birds for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 in Alaska. No HPAI H5N1 was detected in any of the Alaska samples.

## Palo Alto County Coordinator Opening

The Palo Alto County Homeland Security/Emergency Management Commission is currently accepting applications for a 911/Homeland Security/Emergency Management Coordinator. This is a full-time, salaried position. Salary is based on qualifications and experience.

To apply, mail a cover letter and resume to Deb Weisbrod, Chairperson, 405 Jefferson St., P.O. Box 2, Cylinder, IA, 50526 post marked no later than September 15, 2006. The Emergency Management Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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## NIMS Compliancy Date is Rapidly Approaching

NIMS compliancy is right around the corner and Iowa is in good shape. Everyone has done a fantastic job, which will benefit the entire state. So far, HLSEM has received over 374 compliancy letters. To view the status of your county go to <http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/nims/>. This Web site has a listing of the compliancy letters sent to HLSEM. If a jurisdiction will not be able to meet the September 30th deadline, please contact HLSEM's David Hempen at david.hempen@hlsem.state.ia.us or 515-725-3281 and he will assist you with compliancy.

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## Pandemic Influenza Exercise Update

On September 27, eleven county emergency operations centers (EOCs) and the state EOC will exercise Iowa's initial response to pandemic influenza. To prepare for the exercise, 40 HLSEM staff members participated in a short rehearsal on August 30th.

The August rehearsal was part of a series of smaller exercises that were designed to culminate in the September 27th exercise. Previous exercises include the February 2006 state agency tabletop, March-April Operation Viper virtual functional, five regional tabletop influenza exercises in July and August, and a joint state HLSEM-Public Health Joint Information System exercise in July.

The rehearsal walked through the most likely scenario of pandemic influenza entering the state through travel and the initial state response. The rehearsal focused on the roles of the State EOC's sections, which were reorganized in 2005 to better interface with the National Incident Management System.

A key discussion point was the best way to use the Incident Action Plan in the State EOC. The state EOC began using the Incident Action Plan format during the Katrina reception operations in September 2005 and has used it in other significant operations (the Iowa City tornado in April) and in exercises. This exercise will be the first opportunity to develop an incident action plan in response to a bio-emergency scenario.

The goal of all these exercises is to prepare the entire Iowa's response agencies for a possible pandemic.

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## CEPIN Offers DHS Certified Course

The Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network (CEPIN) is offering a course called *Emergency Responders and the Deaf and hard of Hearing Community: Taking the First Steps to Disaster Preparedness*. The curriculum is approved by the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Grants and Training. The training is designed to encourage networking, preparation and communication between emergency responders and the deaf and hard of hearing prior to disaster situations. Train the trainer courses are also being offered.

Visit <http://www.cepintdi.org/> for more information. Register now, as these classes will be held over the next few weeks.

# Thank You to Our Partners Who Helped Make Family Preparedness Week a Success!



Gary Brown, Woodbury County Emergency Management; Rita Donnelly, Sioux City Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD); Carolyn Zellmer, Siouxland American Red Cross; David Miller, HSLEM; and Jim Clark, Assistant Fire Chief.



Roger Dahl, Central Iowa Chapter of the American Red Cross speaks during the Des Moines news conference.



David Miller, HLSEM; Tom Ulrich, Linn County Emergency Management; and Shelly Hendrix, Grant Woods Chapter of the American Red Cross.



Josh Colvin of the Animal Rescue League in Des Moines talks about the importance of including pets in family disaster preparedness plans.



AJ Mumm, Polk County Emergency Management, speaks during the Des Moines news conference.

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A Division of the Department of Public Defense

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Secure & Prepared is published by the Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division for those involved in the homeland security system in the state of Iowa. For more information, contact Kara Berg at 515-725-3271 or at

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**HLSEM Mission**

Lead, coordinate, and support homeland security and emergency management functions in order to establish sustainable communities and ensure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

**We're on the Web!**

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

## HLSEM Spotlight: Vicki Morris

Vicki Morris, HLSEM assistant homeland security coordinator, has been with the Division since May of 2003. She has been involved in many projects, including serving as the lead for the state's implementation of regionalization, and the Division's work with private-sector partners as part of the effort to increase overall security of critical assets and sectors.

She has also assisted in the development and implementation of new programs such as the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, and participates in a Target Capabilities List workgroup, DOT Multistate Highway Security Workshop, and Multistate Infrastructure Protection Workshop. In addition, Vicki plays a leading role in grant workshops and with the Division's contacts within state agencies.



Prior to coming to HLSEM, Vicki worked for the Department of General Services (now called the Department of Administrative Services) from 1985 to 1997 in space planning for the Capitol Complex and field offices, as well as leasing coordinator for state agency offices throughout the state. In 1997, she transferred to the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) where she worked as the service development engineer for southwest Iowa as well as all of the Department of Human Services offices throughout the state. While at the ICN, Vicki also served as their special projects manager for the Capitol Complex, including during the remodeling of the Capitol, Old Historical Building, and Lucas Building.

Vicki and husband Merlin have been married 36 years and have three children: Brett, Ryan, and Amy. They also have four grandchildren: Andrew, Zach, Kaitlyn, and Brant. When she's not involved in her many projects at work, Vicki loves to participate in and watch sports, including those in which her grandchildren participate. She taught aerobics for the State Employee Health and Recreation Committee (SEHARC) for 10 years and currently participates in SEHARC softball and volleyball. She has distinguished herself in several events at the Iowa State Fair and has won blue and red ribbons in the rubber chicken throw, cow chip throwing, and took first place 14 times in the last 17 years in the nail driving contest. Vicki loves to camp, work in her yard, ride four wheelers, and spoil her grandchildren.

## Personnel Highlight

James Whitney has joined HLSEM as a temporary employee. He will be assisting with NIMS, COOP/COG, and exercise initiatives.