



MEMO



A joint publication between N.C. Emergency Management and the N.C. Emergency Management Association

Emergency Management Forum Scheduled for January 18

The North Carolina Emergency Management forum will be held Wednesday, Jan. 18, at the new State Emergency Operations Center in Raleigh. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 3:30 p.m.

Department of Public Safety Secretary Reuben Young and Chief Deputy Secretary Rudy Rudisill will discuss the functions and structure of the new department and provide an update on the progress and challenges of merging three state agencies into one entity. Forum participants also will hear about DPS and state emergency management plans for 2012, as well as updates on the Helo-Aquatic Rescue Team program, winter storm potential, progress in recovering from numerous 2011 disasters, and plans for career development and training.

For those unable to travel, the forum will be held via ConnectPro, a web conferencing and seminar software that allows conference attendees to view and participate from their personal computer.

The forum is held twice annually as a way for local and state emergency management officials to discuss potential threats, legislative changes or other issues that impact the emergency management community. For more information, contact Brenda Fox at 919-825-2266 or bfox@ncem.org.



NCEM Deputy Director Mike Sprayberry addresses county emergency management directors at the August 2011 forum

NCEM Now Part of Department of Public Safety

As of Jan. 1, N.C. Emergency Management became part of the new North Carolina Department of Public Safety.

The newest state agency combined the former departments of Corrections, Crime Control and Public Safety and Juvenile Justice and is now the largest state government agency with more than 25,000 employees.

A new logo has been selected for the department and a new website is in the works to provide important information and updates about DPS, its programs, contact information and more. In the meantime, a temporary home page www.ncdps.gov will direct you to existing information.

“Public safety is one of the most important and critical functions that government provides,” Secretary Young said. “From keeping our highways and communities safe to counseling at-risk youth, overseeing inmates and preparing for hurricanes, we will remain steadfast in our commitment to the citizens and the state of North Carolina.”

Central Branch Emergency Management Staff Brighten Kids' Christmas

By Doug Logan, Granville EM Coordinator

North Carolina Emergency Management's central branch counties donated toys to the Central Children's Home of Oxford on Dec. 9, 2011.

Every year at its December meeting, each local emergency management coordinator in Central Branch brings new, unwrapped toys to donate to a charity. The county representatives submit a charity of their choice and the winning charity is chosen randomly by a drawing. This year, the winner was the Central Children's Home in Oxford.

"We are pleased that this year we could present these toys to the Central Children's Home. But the true winners each year are those of us that are able to donate and know that we helped a child somewhere have a better Christmas!" said Granville County Emergency Management Coordinator Doug Logan.

Headquartered in Raleigh, N.C. Emergency Management is divided into three branches: western, central and eastern. The NCEM Central Branch is composed of 33 counties in the central part of the state with its branch office located in Butner. The 33 local government offices are responsible for planning, response, recovery and mitigation of emergencies and disasters within their jurisdictions.



Emergency management staff from central North Carolina pose with gifts that were donated to needy children.

Gov. Perdue Secures Aid to Help Farmers Recover From Storms

Gov. Bev Perdue on Jan. 10 received from U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Thomas Vilsack a disaster declaration for 35 counties to help farmers recover from the devastating tornadoes and hurricanes of 2011.

The secretarial disaster designation enables farmers in primary and contiguous counties to apply for federal financial assistance through low-interest Farm Service Assistance loans and Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) disaster assistance program.

"We have never stopped working aggressively to secure as much aid as possible for our fellow North Carolinians who suffered damage during these storms," Perdue said. "We owe it to them to do everything we can to help them recover from these devastating losses and be ready for this year's growing season."

Farmers in designated counties have until Sept. 10 to apply for disaster assistance to cover crop losses.

Counties under the agricultural disaster declaration include:

Beaufort	Currituck	Hyde	Northampton	Tyrrell
Bertie	Dare	Johnston	Onslow	Vance
Camden	Duplin	Jones	Pamlico	Wake
Carteret	Edgecombe	Lenoir	Pasquotank	Warren
Columbus	Franklin	Martin	Pender	Washington
Craven	Greene	Nash	Pitt	Wayne
Cumberland	Halifax	New Hanover	Sampson	Wilson

Agricultural entities in Bladen, Brunswick, Chatham, Durham, Gates, Granville, Harnett, Hertford, Hoke, Perquimans, Robeson, Sampson, Wake and Wilson counties may be eligible for Farm Service Assistance loans. Farmers can apply for assistance through the USDA-Farm Service Agency office for North Carolina. The phone number for the USDA-FSA office is 919-875-4800.

2012 Spring Conference Planning Under Way

By Gary Jones

The North Carolina Emergency Management Association Program Committee has begun planning the agenda for the 2012 Spring Conference. The annual gathering will be held March 11 - 14 in Sunset Beach.

While speakers and topics have not yet been confirmed, a few of the larger meetings already have been scheduled. The three-day conference will begin with a reception and registration Sunday evening. NCEMA committees will meet Monday afternoon and a general association meeting will be held Tuesday afternoon. The division will conduct branch meetings Wednesday afternoon.

More conference details will be published in the February mEMO and posted to the NCEMA website <https://ncema.renci.org/default.aspx>. Questions or suggestions for the conference should be directed to Gary Jones at 919- 369-4181 or gjones007@nc.rr.com.

Spotlight on Jo Ann Smith, Carteret County Emergency Services Director

By Gary Jones

Emergency Services Director Jo Ann Smith has been with Carteret County Emergency Services for more than 21 years. There was a break in that period many years ago, when she left the agency to pursue other interests. But after three months away, she admitted she was “bored to death and begged for her old job back.”

Surprisingly, Jo Ann was not always interested in a career in the emergency response community. After graduating from Carteret Community College with a degree in Business Administration, she worked as a bank teller for six years. In 1990, she had the opportunity to move to county government as the office assistant supporting emergency management, Emergency Medical Services and Fire Marshal’s office. The rest is history.

As Emergency Services Director she manages a 42-person staff that includes Emergency Management, EMS, the Fire Marshal’s office, the 911 Communications Center and the GIS database organization. Her duties require regular interaction with 15 EMS agencies, 23 fire departments and 10 law enforcement agencies across the county. In addition to her assigned responsibilities, Jo Ann readily admits that she often gets “sucked into other issues” since her agency tends to be the one that resolves problems that fall outside anyone else’s purview.

Atlantic Beach Police Chief Allen Smith (no relation) likes the director’s approach.

“Jo Ann works to improve processes and always seeks and considers input from the towns and departments she helps represent,” the chief said. He also commented that Jo Ann was instrumental in developing the county’s consolidated E-911 center that came on line a year ago effectively combining resources and cutting costs for local municipalities.

Carteret County has often been in the bull’s eye of hurricanes, most recently with Hurricane Irene last August. Smith spoke at the N.C. Emergency Management Agency Fall Conference about her agency’s experiences during Irene including the pre-landfall preparations, numerous evacuations, the move to a new emergency operations center as the storm approached, and the follow-up recovery efforts.

“I know a direct hit on the county by a hurricane was the situation Jo Ann had been dreading since becoming the emergency services director,” said Dianne Curtis, NCEM eastern branch manager. “But she did a phenomenal job during Hurricane Irene. Jo Ann was very calm, cool and collected in both her coordination of the response effort



within the county and in her effectiveness in dealing with state agencies during the emergency and the recovery efforts.”

But, hurricanes are just one of the many threats that Jo Ann has managed as director. She has led response efforts to ship fires, chemical spills at the Morehead City Port and frequently dealt with various types of material washing up onto the local beaches. Included in this last category is one situation she jokingly calls “Operation Styrofoam” that left ceiling fans and their packing materials strewn up-and-down some 50 miles of the Carteret County coastline.

“Jo Ann has a deep sense of dedication for the people she serves,” Chief Smith observed. “Her 20 plus years of experience gives her a total understanding of the different needs and vulnerabilities along our nearly 100-mile-long county.”

Away from work, the lifelong Carteret County resident enjoys boating whenever she can. Her grown children share her love for the water. Son Richard is in the U.S. Navy, stationed in Charleston, S.C.. Daughter Kimberly is currently attending “C School” with the Navy in Dam Neck, Va. and will be assigned to Japan this spring.

Jo Ann also enjoys spending time with her fiancée and former colleague, Tony Spencer, in northern Virginia and at their beach house in Ocracoke.

She is deeply involved in the NCEMA, serving as the Second Vice President, as well as on both the executive and certification committees. In addition, she is one of three association representatives on the NCEM Training and Standards Advisory Board.

Former NCEMA Director Warren Lee describes Jo Ann as “a tremendous asset in all NCEMA activities who is always ready to involve herself with special projects. She is well respected by her peers and her community for both her experience and depth of knowledge.”

In reflecting upon her experience with emergency management, Jo Ann said she appreciates the emphasis on professionalism across the career field, widespread implementation of the incident command system and the addition of tools such as WebEOC that make the job easier. But she particularly values the extensive mutual aid network that the counties and state have developed, noting that it makes her “proud to be part of emergency management in North Carolina when I see how everyone comes to each other’s assistance.”

Jo Ann plans to continue serving Carteret County residents and visitors as the Emergency Services Director. However, that does not mean she is growing complacent in her position. In fact, she is currently pursuing certification with the International Association of Emergency Managers and is preparing for her final testing.

Staffing Changes

Tim Johnson – who served in NCEM’s Human Services section has taken a new position at NCA&T.

Donna Lattimer – has worked in the recovery section for nearly six years. She is leaving NCEM to continue her schooling.

Deborah Miller – has worked in the recovery section for more than eight years. She is leaving to pursue other interests. “It has been most fulfilling to be a part of working with volunteers in recovery,” Miller noted.

New Contact Information for NC Emergency Management

1636 Gold Star Drive

Raleigh, NC 27607-3371

Receptionist **919-825-2500**

24-Hour Center **919-733-3300**

or **800-858-0368**

***NOTE: The 24 Hour Center was published
incorrectly in the Dec. issue.***