

TENNESSEE

Highlights of State Council Activities

The Tennessee Citizen Corps Council is managed by the Tennessee Office of Homeland Security. During 2005, Tennessee Citizen Corps partnered with the National Weather Service to incorporate weather modules into Tennessee's CERT training program. The State Citizen Corps Office also created an enhanced Neighborhood Watch brochure to include Be On the LookOut (BOLO) information and anti-terrorism measures. These brochures were distributed to law enforcement agencies with active Neighborhood Watch programs. The state Citizen Corps office also partnered with the National Sheriffs' Association to be one of the first two states to host and pilot a Neighborhood Watch Train-The-Trainer, the first-ever training associated with the program.

Through a partnership with the Tennessee Homeland Security District 11 - Memphis Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) area, composed of Fayette, Lauderdale, Shelby and Tipton Counties, DeSoto County, Arkansas, and Crittenden County, Mississippi, Tennessee Citizen Corps hosted its first area-wide Citizen Corps Conference. Some 500 participants attended the conference to learn how to start Citizen Corps Councils and programs as well as strengthen existing initiatives.

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Public Education and Outreach

In coordination with National Preparedness Month, the Tennessee Office of Homeland Security designed an insert to be included with the payroll stubs of the state's 46,986 employees. The insert contained BOLO information instructing employees how to recognize and report any and all suspicious activity to local law enforcement. Additionally, BOLO sheets listing crime indicators and law enforcement contacts were also translated into four additional languages: Spanish, Arabic, Kurdish, and Somali.

Training and Exercises

Tennessee Homeland Security and Tennessee Citizen Corps hosted five CERT Train-The-Trainer sessions, three regional workshops and two local training sessions in 2005. Tennessee Homeland Security and Tennessee Citizen Corps also strongly endorse and support the Highway Watch program in Tennessee, administered by the Tennessee Trucking Association in coordination with the American Trucking Association and the U.S. Transportation Security Administration. Tennessee Homeland Security, Tennessee Trucking Association and Tennessee Citizen Corps partnered to launch a series of Highway Watch Train-The-Trainer sessions, where approximately 247 additional instructors were trained in each of the state's 11 homeland security districts. Transportation professionals, law enforcement, emergency responders, and interested citizens are trained to Be On the LookOut when traveling Tennessee highways. In 2005, approximately 5,280 Tennessee residents were trained in the program.

Volunteer Programs and Support

Tennessee was one of the first two states to partner with the National Sheriffs' Association and pilot the first-ever training associated with the Neighborhood Watch program. Approximately 30 law enforcement agencies statewide participated. Tennessee also developed and distributed an enhanced Neighborhood Watch brochure to including methods for detecting and reporting suspicious activity.

Support for Hurricane Katrina Response

With support from American Red Cross, Tennessee National Guard, Tennessee Office of Homeland Security, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), Tennessee Department of Health, Tennessee Highway Patrol, Tennessee Department of General Services, and others, Tennessee assisted and sheltered Hurricane Katrina evacuees throughout the state. In Executive Order #27, the Governor determined the temporary suspension of several state laws to cope with the emergency situation. For example, provisions of the Tennessee Code were suspended to allow the Commissioner of Personnel to grant paid leave of up to 45 days to state employees who are certified disaster service volunteers of the American Red Cross to participate in relief services related to Hurricane Katrina.

In central Tennessee, members of the Governor's Citizen Corps Advisory Committee, including former Governor Bryant Winfield Culberson Dunn, assisted in the volunteer and donations call center by welcoming and processing New Orleans evacuees as they arrived.

In Memphis County, more than 100 Neighborhood Watch volunteers worked with the local Red Cross chapters and churches to provide food, clothing, and medical needs for evacuees in shelters. Nearly 50 Memphis Medical Reserve Corps volunteers collected donated goods at various sites and distributed medical information to victims at the local food stamp office. Crittenden County in Mississippi, in support of interstate collaboration, assembled over 50 volunteers from the Neighborhood Watch program, fire services, and police services to staff shelters, prepare meals, and provide security for evacuees. Citizen Corps volunteers provided assistance with the management of over 3,000 volunteers who called to assist in the response efforts and encouraged volunteers to get additional training through Citizen Corps and the Red Cross Shelter Operations training.

National Preparedness Month

In September 2005, in recognition of National Preparedness Month, the Tennessee Office of Homeland Security coordinated a series of preparedness initiatives throughout the state. Governor Phil Bredesen proclaimed September as Preparedness Month in Tennessee. The Tennessee Office of Homeland Security partnered with the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) and the Civil Air Patrol, Tennessee Wing, to distribute Airport Watch materials to 74 general aviation airports throughout the state. These initiatives also included the distribution of an enhanced Neighborhood Watch brochure with BOLO information and anti-terrorism measures to law enforcement across the state.