

KANSAS

Highlights of State Council Activities

The Kansas State Citizen Corps Council, which is managed by the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, lost many members to new job assignments and retirement in 2005. Consequently, Kansas aims to revitalize the Council and to incorporate a better mechanism for finding replacements when a member leaves. Another goal is to increase the profile of Citizen Corps programs within the state.

For most of 2005, the Kansas State Citizen Corps grant allocation was retained at the state level for use in public education and outreach, state coordinator support, training and travel stipends to Citizen Corps-related conferences and meetings. The remainder of funds was distributed to 24 county applicants using an all-hazards/population-based formula, also used to distribute other Homeland Security Grant Program funding.

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Public Education and Outreach

The autumn issue of *Family Matters*, a bilingual Spanish/English magazine, featured a two-page Citizen Corps preparedness message. The magazine was distributed to schools and households across the state of Kansas in September. Kansas Citizen Corps contracted for production of a television public service announcement on preparedness, including state agencies and program partners, and featuring Kansas Adjutant General Todd Bunting as spokesperson.

Neighborhood Watch in Goodland (Sherman County), in cooperation with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, organized a very aggressive public education campaign to combat the proliferation of methamphetamine labs in their community. All kindergarten through 12th grade school personnel in the county and instructors at the local community college attended in-service training to help them identify methamphetamine users and to recognize evidence of meth labs in neighborhoods. The information was also presented to the general public.

Local Citizen Corps Councils produced brochures and participated in public education and outreach through community fairs, festivals, parades, block parties and community assistance activities.

Training and Exercises

A state Citizen Corps Conference was held in September. Training was given and information presented from the five Citizen Corps programs. Attendees also participated in the kick-off event for National Preparedness Month on the Capitol grounds in Topeka. Unfortunately, preparations to receive evacuees from Gulf Coast hurricanes prevented some Citizen Corps volunteers from attending.

In August, members of the Atchison County Citizen Corps Council and CERT helped plan and participated in a countywide disaster simulation with members of a Boy Scout troop acting as victims. The drill was videotaped by a CERT volunteer for later use as a training tool. The city of Merriam (Johnson County) CERT conducted a simulated wide-area disaster drill in a housing development. Some 53 CERT volunteers from Merriam, Overland Park and Olathe participated. The exercise demonstrated the value of amateur radio operators in disaster circumstances. In May, Cowley County Citizen Corps and CERT volunteers participated in a full-scale WMD exercise to test hospital decontamination procedures, on-scene coordination and Emergency Operations Center operations. Members of Medical Reserve Corps units attended quarterly training sessions hosted by the Region VII Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator. Training also provided an opportunity to network with counterparts in Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas.

Volunteer Programs and Support

On June 14, Sedgwick County CERT trained in mass pharmaceutical distribution to become part of the county Metropolitan Medical Response System plan. CERT volunteers had the opportunity to prepare a distribution site, work the pharmaceutical preparation area and provide staffing for a mock distribution of antibiotics.

With a grant from Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Reno County Medical Reserve Corps performed 516 diabetes screenings from April 1 to December 31, 2005. Among those screened, 321 scored a 10 or above, indicating a high-risk for diabetes; 473 clients had their blood sugar checked; of those, 241 clients were referred to their physician. Medical Reserve Corps volunteers donated a total of 350 hours to the effort. That represents a donation roughly equivalent in cash terms of over \$6,000.

Support for Hurricane Katrina Response

Kansas Citizen Corps volunteers, along with the state of Kansas, local government agencies and volunteer organizations, prepared for as many as 4,500 evacuees in Salina, Topeka and Wichita. Local Citizen Corps Councils participated in joint planning and service delivery. Volunteers set up and stocked shelters, catalogued contributions, and received training to staff reception centers. Shawnee County Medical Reserve Corps participated in a training exercise for the county's evacuee health screening process.

National Preparedness Month

A launch event for National Preparedness Month was held on the state Capitol grounds in Topeka on September 7, 2005. After remarks by Governor Sebelius and other dignitaries, attendees visited preparedness displays presented by state agencies and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster members. Citizen Corps arranged for a state radio network of 39 stations to do a two-hour live remote from the event. Radio announcers gave away Citizen Corps "Kansas Care So We Prepare" T-shirts and other prizes from cooperating agencies to callers who answered preparedness questions during the event and throughout the month.