

NAEM TIDBITS

Petersen recognized as 2010 EM of the Year

Jill Martin, Reporter

Gary Petersen, Seward/York County Emergency Manager, was named the 2010 Emergency Manager of the Year.



Pat Gerdes, director of Region 15 with the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management, presented Petersen with the award April 23.

Gerdes said Petersen was well-deserving of the award.

This award is given to managers who have been active members in the association.

Gerdes said both Seward and York counties nominated Petersen for the award.

At the award presentation, Petersen said he was shocked upon hearing that he had won. He added that he felt very honored.

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Hall County Corps To Sponsor CERT Training

The Hall County Corps Council is sponsoring a CERT Basic Training Session, June 10-12 in Grand Island. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a team of trained and equipped neighborhood response volunteers coordinated through a local Citizen Corps Council to deliver aid and assistance to their own areas in the event of a disaster. CERT volunteers are also trained to work closely with professional first responders and perform the "small and simple" work that allows trained first responders to focus their greater skill and training in the more complicated tasks.

CERT basic training graduates are eligible for membership in the Hall County CERT team. The team, managed by the local emergency management department, receives regular updates to training and skills through monthly team meetings and exercises. CERT volunteers in Hall County also participate in volunteer initiatives such as After the Fire, providing "clean up" and "board up" services to property owners following a structure fire. CERT volunteers have also contributed time and energy in supporting the Grand Island City Fire Department's smoke alarm project by conducting door-to-door surveys and preparing to deliver and install smoke detectors upon delivery.

"Self-Sufficiency is Emergency Preparedness"

Peterson Continued . . .

On a day to day basis, Peterson does a lot of planning and exercise and training with any of the response agencies that may be involved in both Seward and York counties. Some of these agencies include fire departments, law enforcement, the American Red Cross and health departments.

"My big focus is on planning," Petersen said.

It is his job to get plans in place for disasters and emergencies whether it's involving hazardous materials or weather-related emergencies.

Some of the plans he works on with organizations include a mass casualty plan, a mass fatality plan and a cognitive operations plan.

"I try and offer a variety of different planning and training opportunities for not only response agencies but also businesses," Petersen said. "Basically, anybody who may be affected by a disaster."

Since 9/11, Petersen said the scope has increased with homeland security grants so this is another part of his position.

Petersen has been the Seward County Emergency Manager since 2004 and two years ago he took on the title for York County as well.

When asked what he enjoys most about his job, Peterson had this to say:

"I think it's the variety of responsibilities as well as the variety of people that I get to work with. There is so many different organizations and agencies. Working with other emergency managers within the region and the state, I rely on a lot of them for their experience."

Article originally published in the Seward Independent Paper

**From the Desk of Michelle Woitalewicz,
Howard County Emergency Manager**

I had the chance to work with Deanna at the booth at fire school. What a blast we had passing out comfortable fit, flexible, latex free items. At least that is what the band-aid wrapper states. If you don't know Deanna get to know her she is just like a band-aid. She is comfortable in the job of emergency manager and that comes with the knowledge that she has for the job. She is flexible in the ability to remain calm in the event of a disaster. I don't know about latex free, but she is free to contact for information, materials, and to answer any questions because like a band-aid she wants us to be secure and safe in the job of emergency manager and disaster preparedness.

"Self-Sufficiency is Emergency Preparedness"**Welcome From the President**

Welcome to the first NAEM Tidbits. By way of introduction, I'm Deanna Beckman, 2010 president of the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management and Deputy Director for South Sioux City/Dakota County.

I have been involved with Emergency Management for 4 years. I love working with the public, communities, and the highlight of the job is the great networking and camaraderie with other emergency managers. The purpose of the NAEM Tidbits is getting our disaster experiences, trainings, and knowledge and fun times to all emergency managers across the state. In future months I will be contacting emergency managers across the state asking for a picture and brief bio for our NAEM Tidbits as a way of getting to know emergency managers across the state. I welcome any news, trainings and fun items to publish in the monthly NAEM Tidbits. NAEM is your association and NAEM Tidbits is your newsletter.

Deanna Beckman



Front row left to right; Roseann Dobesh-DeGraff, Jan Zurcher, Deanna Beckman, Laura Hintz, Alma Beland. Back row left to right; Tim Hofbauer, Jerry Bretthauer, Brian Woldt, Doug Fox. Not pictured Lynn Marshall



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