



# **BUFFALO COUNTY / CITY OF KEARNEY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE 2023 SUMMARY**



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# **BUFFALO COUNTY / CITY OF KEARNEY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

## **Mission Statement**

To provide Buffalo County residents, businesses, industries, non-profit organizations, emergency responders, volunteers, and local governments the education and support necessary to reduce the loss of life and human suffering; to minimize property damage and to protect the community from all types of disasters through a comprehensive, risk-based, all-hazard emergency management program.

## **Values Statement**

Emergency Management is by function and by law a cooperative effort on all levels of government and the private sector. At the local level, Emergency Management is concerned with the protection and education of the public from the hazards and risks that affect them. The credibility of the program resides in the credibility of the program advocate. The Emergency Manager should exemplify the utility of the emergency management program.

The job of the Emergency Manager is defined by law. It does, however, have a moral basis. The emergency manager must balance the duties authorized and required by law with the moral obligation of the public employee to do everything possible to protect and preserve the safety of citizens in the city and county.

Emergency Management expresses a strong commitment to provide interagency cooperation and coordination of activities relating to mitigation of, prevention of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from disasters and emergencies.

## **Vision Statement**

The goal of the Buffalo County Emergency Management Department is to educate the Citizens of Buffalo County about their ongoing role in preparing for emergencies through education, community outreach, and training. By creating an increased emphasis on disaster preparedness, the Buffalo County Emergency Management Department looks forward to reinforcing interdepartmental communications and cooperation throughout our county by means of creating a community culture of preparedness and fostering partnerships with local public and private groups and businesses. It is our goal that Buffalo County will work as a community, with neighbor helping neighbor, when a disaster strikes.

## ORGANIZATION

The Buffalo County Emergency Manager is an appointed position and is subject to the direction and control of the Buffalo County Board of Commissioners but is managed (supervised day-to-day) by the Buffalo County Sheriff and Kearney Chief of Police.

The position of the Buffalo County Emergency Manager is defined by law but nevertheless encompasses a moral obligation to balance his/her duties authorized and required by law with the moral obligation of the public employee to do everything possible to protect and preserve the safety of citizens within his/her community.

The incumbent is granted broad and extensive authority in determining program priorities and is responsible in determining the best way to support all local, state and national programs and objectives. The broad duties of this position include but are not limited to the following:

- Articulate a strong commitment of interagency cooperation and work with all elected and appointed officials of all local, State and Federal governments.
- Maintain and manage the Emergency Operation Center and/or the Mobile Response Unit.
- Provide coordination of all activities relating to the mitigation, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery from disasters and/or emergencies.
- Serve as the principal advisor to the Buffalo County Board of Commissioners in emergency incidents.
- Manage, maintain, document, and appropriately utilize public and private resources.

### Emergency Management Concept

This section describes the Emergency Management concept but it is not inclusive of the every day meetings and activities of the Emergency Management Office for Buffalo County.

**Comprehensive Emergency Management:** The four phases of comprehensive Emergency Management are mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Each phase results from the previous one and establishes the requirements of the next.

The Four Phases of a comprehensive Emergency Management program is certainly simplified in the above paragraph. In addition, the Emergency Management department is responsible for:

- Reporting to a number of departments and agencies at the local, state and federal levels
- Meeting State and Federal mandates and requirements
- Maintaining outreach programs
- Grant management

- Maintaining emergency operations and equipment; for example, the Emergency Operation Center, Emergency Mobile Response Unit, generators etc.
- Volunteer management and coordination
- Attendance of continuing education, training, exercises and conferences
- Conducting training, drills, exercises and misc. planning activities
- Maintaining and operating a county wide ID credentialing system for county employees, emergency volunteers, EOC staff, county wide first responder agencies, appointed and elected officials, jail service providers (volunteers and the Justice Center)
- Manage and maintain the county wide notification systems
- Provide annual budgets to the Sheriff, Kearney Police Chief and the county board
- Complete claims and payroll
- Work with Emergency Management partners to develop and negotiate agreements such as contracts, MOA's, MOU's, and LOA's for the emergency program.

**Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** Emergency Operation Centers are built and designed for in person operations managing all types of disasters through response, mitigation and recovery. The EOC operations varied from full-scale operations lasting more than one operational period to the lowest levels lasting just a few hours. The Emergency Operation Center was opened 15 different times for weather type events, winter storms and blizzards to thunderstorm warnings and tornado watches and warnings throughout the year.

## TRAINING



As required by the Nebraska Emergency Management Act, Section 81-829.46 (6), which requires the “*Director to devote full time to the duties of emergency management, and that he/she shall be qualified and certified in accord with criteria established for the state by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.*” The Director has completed the following:

- NEMA Basic Certification before being hired and again in (2012)
- NEMA's Advanced Certification for Emergency Management (2005)
- NIMS compliances I.S. 100, 200, 700, and 800 (2005)
- FEMA Professional Certification was obtained (2006)

- The NIMS 300 and 400 certifications were accomplished (2007)
- NIMS 701, 702, 703 and 704 certifications were completed (2010)

On a continual basis the Director discovers training opportunities such as continuing education, new technologies, online classes, regional training and conferences, etc. In 2023, the Director sent 21 assorted local or regional training opportunities to First Responder agencies.

Additional training and exercises planned, conducted and participated in this year are as follows.

### **TRAINING/EXERCISE 2023**

- State wide tornado drill-exercise
- Pipeline Safety Tabletop
- South Central Elected and Appointed officials Emergency Management 101 roles and responsibilities during a disaster workshop
- Schools Emergency Reunification drill
- Evacuation and Re-Entry
- Public Health Tabletop
- Regional ERC Tabletop
- Disaster Situational Awareness Functional exercise
- Web EOC tool training x2
- Warning and Coordination training
- Weather Service Integrated Warning workshop
- TRIMRS Medical Radiation Tabletop
- Schools Emergency Operation Plan workshop
- Mitigation for Emergency Management
- Mass Fatality Management Functional exercise (3 day)
- Disaster Behavioral Health Tabletop
- Web EOC exercise
- Salamander Solutions Events Pro training
- MRC Stop the Bleed training Faith Christian Schools
- Five Rivers Rapid Assessment Full Scale
- Rapid Needs Assessment Training
- Nexgen Siren activation Training
- NPPD Central District EAP Tabletop/plans review workshop
- Severe Weather Spotter Training
- National Weather Service Weather (Slack app) training
- Hazard Mitigation planning workshop
- Kearney Public School Tabletop exercise

## STATE / FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Conduct or participate in a minimum of one exercise annually (per Emergency Management Performance Grant requirements) this requirement was changed in 2022 from a minimum of three exercises to just one.
2. Meet, track and maintain a database of all State and Federal NIMS requirements for Emergency Management, first responder agencies, and chief appointed and elected officials of IS courses 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, and 800
3. Annually review and update a regional three-year exercise calendar
4. Update Local Emergency Operations Plan on an annual basis and upload into the State BOLD planning software
5. Complete online grant documents (BISR, and GMS)
6. Complete performance quarterly reports
7. Annually update online NIMS-Cast documents

## LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)



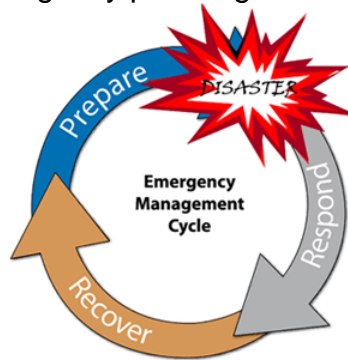
## REPORTS

All copies of Tier II reports filed by facilities in Buffalo County, that are required by the Community Right-To-Know Act to report hazardous substances, are placed on file in the Emergency Management Director's office. The facilities are required to update the reports on an annual basis and are reviewed by the Director for the HAZMAT Annex of the LEOP. A compiled TIER II report by the Buffalo County Emergency Manager is sent to the SERC and the Buffalo County Board Members for their review. This report is also sent to the all Buffalo County Fire Departments the Buffalo County Hazmat Team and the City of Kearney point of contact, Police Chief Bryan Waugh.

Most if not all of the work of the LEPC is conducted through the Emergency Management office, such as spill reporting, distribution and filing of Tier II reports to appropriate agencies and departments that would be members of the LEPC as well as distribution of emergency plans for response and recovery for review and changes. The Emergency Management office makes the changes and updates plans after reviews are conducted by the appropriate agencies and departments.

## CONTINGENCY PLANS

The Director maintains all contingency plans filed by facilities in Buffalo County that are required to file the plans, or do so because they understand the importance of providing the information for emergency planning and response.



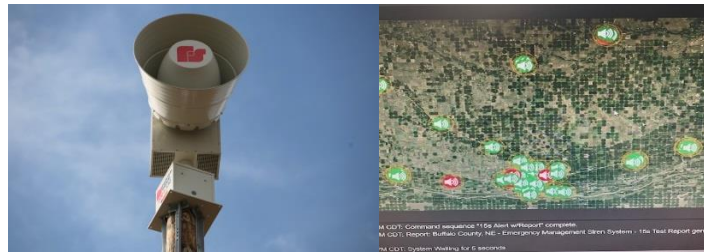
## RMP (RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS)

Ten facilities in Buffalo County were required by law to file Risk Management Plans. This is a requirement by the EPA. The Risk Management Plans are on file in the Director's office and are also available on the secure portion of the EPA website. The following is a list of the RMP facilities.

- Darling Ingredients Inc. (Ravenna)
- Agricultural Services Inc. (Shelton)
- Aurora Coop (Buda)
- Aurora Coop (Gibbon)
- Aurora Coop (Sodtown)
- Bowie Fertilizer, Inc. (Miller)
- Bowie Fertilizer, Inc. (Riverdale)
- Gibbon Packing (Gibbon)
- The Andersons (Gibbon)
- Trotter Fertilizer (Pleasanton)



The Director has not received notification involving radioactive transports of spent fuel and low specific activity materials prior to the shipments entering Buffalo County for a number of years. When notified, information is sent to the appropriate agencies that would respond in a Hazardous Material or Radiological incident. Due to the radiation accident in 2015 at Carlsbad, New Mexico, there have been no radioactive transports through Nebraska reported to the emergency management office from 2015 to 2023.



## EMERGENCY WARNING SYSTEM

The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) and the Backup Dispatch Center are primary locations for weather operations supporting all of Buffalo County. The EOC opened 15 times during 2023 for weather events to include both winter and spring type weather. The Backup Dispatch Center was operational six times during 2023 for weather type events.

Sirens were sounded once in Elm Creek, Miller, Pleasanton and twice in Ravenna for weather events in 2023 for a possible tornado, straight-line winds and large hail events.

Monthly tests of the alarm radios, pagers and outdoor warning systems were conducted throughout the year. Preventative maintenance services on the sirens were conducted during the month of March before the spring severe weather season within the Kearney area. The monthly tests of the outdoor warning sirens were conducted out of the EOC, Fire Station II and the Primary Dispatch at the Law Enforcement Center.

March 2022 Buffalo County Emergency Management started the process of upgrading the outdoor warning siren activation system to a new two-way secure activation and management system. This process continued through the year in 2023. While this system was not fully completed in 2023, it was in full operation and functional the last half of the year. American Signal is still working through some radio communications issues that are expected to be fixed in 2024 closing out the project.



## 2023 Emergency Management Overview

This is an overview of the 2023 annual report and its purpose is to highlight the major activities of the Buffalo County / City of Kearney Emergency Management Office.

<b>Test of Emergency Warning Systems (Alarm radios, pagers and outdoor sirens)</b>	
01-05-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted on January 5 <sup>th</sup> . There were no issues reported during the test of the sirens for the month.
02-02-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted on February 2 <sup>nd</sup> . There were no issues reported during the test of the sirens for the month.
03-02-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted. The siren at Northeast school in Kearney was reported as not working during the test of the sirens for the month. The issue was a blown fuse, Platte Valley communications fixed the issue.
03-29-2023	The statewide tornado drill was conducted in all the communities in Buffalo county. The sirens in Ravenna and Pleasanton did not go off as scheduled. I had Platte Valley check into this issue and it was found that the new "North Repeater" for the siren activation was locked up. The repeater was power cycled and it seemed to correct the issue. We will keep an eye on this repeater to ensure this problem does not persist. During the drill there was a report that the 46 <sup>th</sup> and G siren north of the cemetery in Kearney did not go off. Platte Valley was also asked to look at this siren as well.
04-06-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted on April 6 <sup>th</sup> . There were concerns of three sirens not working as they should in Kearney, all were checked by Platte Valley Communications, one was found to have a circuit board issues (west of Courthouse) and was fixed, the other two were found to be working as they should.

05-04-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted. There was report the one of the sirens in Shelton did not sound during the test. Information was forwarded to the Shelton Chairperson to have it looked at and fixed.
06-01-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted on June 1 <sup>st</sup> . There were no reports of any siren issues during the test.
07-06-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted. There were no reports of any siren issues during the test.
08-03-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted. There were no reports of any siren issues during the test.
09-07-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted. There were no reports of any siren issues during the test.
10-05-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted on October 5 <sup>th</sup> . There were two reports of siren issues during the test. The North sirens in Pleasanton and Elm Creek did not sound, both communities were going to look into the issue.
11-02-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted. There were no reports of any siren issues during the test.
12-07-2023	The regularly scheduled tests of the alarm radios and pagers in the City of Kearney and Buffalo County was conducted on December 7 <sup>th</sup> . The new system was used for the monthly siren test, the system worked as it should and identified some already known issues that need to be fixed.

<b>2023 Kearney Area Precipitation</b>				
	<b>Monthly Rain</b>	<b>*Monthly Snow</b>	<b>2023 Rain Total</b>	<b>2023 Snow Total</b>
January	.58"	18"	.58"	18"
February	.69"	7"	1.27"	25"
March	.48"	13"	1.75"	38.0"
April	.20"	0"	1.95"	38.0"
May	2.54"	0"	4.49"	38.0"
June	5.11"	0"	9.6"	38.0"
July	1.25"	0"	10.85"	38.0"
August	2.77"	0"	13.62"	38.0"
September	4.42"	0"	18.02"	38.0"
October	1.13"	2"	19.15"	40.0"
November	0.38"	2"	19.53"	42.0"
December	0.45"	6"	19.98"	48.0"

\*Snow totals are approximate amounts.  
 \*\*Rain and snow totals are reported separately because snow is not recorded as precipitation at the Kearney Airport recording site.

<b>2023 High and Low Temperatures</b>					
<b>Month</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>High Average</b>	<b>Low Average</b>	<b>Overall Average</b>
January	50	-03	34	19	26
February	56	-04	40	18	28
March	73	13	47	25	35
April	89	19	65	36	51
May	76	30	85	51	64
June	91	50	81	60	71
July	100	53	84	63	71
August	102	55	86	63	74
September	99	46	82	56	69
October	89	17	65	41	52
November	71	17	56	30	42
December	65	14	44	24	33

## Weather Activity 2023

January	<p>There was a Winter Storm warning issued on January 1<sup>st</sup> at 14:17 ending at 20:17, Winter Storm watch was issued January 2<sup>nd</sup> from 0001 AM to noon on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. An Ice Storm Warning was issued on the 2<sup>nd</sup> at 15:43 until the 3<sup>rd</sup> at noon. And Winter Storm warning was issued on the 3<sup>rd</sup> from 05:23 am until noon and again on the 17<sup>th</sup> at 04:55 through the 19<sup>th</sup>. The storm on the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> produced a high of 26 inches of snow in Custer county to 17 inches in the Ravenna area and 11 inches in Kearney with 40 mph wind gusts. This was a wide spread storm that closed Interstate 80, Highway 30 and many other roads from the Wyoming border to Grand Island. The 23<sup>rd</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup> saw several days of below normal temperatures, the 29<sup>th</sup> it saw a low of -3 degrees with -25-degree wind chills. January saw 29 days below freezing and 7 days in the single digits.</p>
February	<p>There was a winter weather advisory on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> and a windchill advisory from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>. The 22<sup>nd</sup> through the 24<sup>th</sup> saw days of below normal temperatures, with a low of -4 degrees with -27-degree wind chills.</p>
March	<p>There was a Winter Weather advisory on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup>, a Red Flag Warning on the 19<sup>th</sup> a Dense Fog advisory on the 28<sup>th</sup> and a Thunderstorm Warning on the 30<sup>th</sup>. The Snow advisory on the 25<sup>th</sup> produced 10 inches of snow in the Kearney area and shut down the interstate from Kearney to Cheyenne.</p>
April	<p>There was a Red Flag warning on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and a Fire Weather Watch on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, a Freeze Warning on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and a Freeze Watch on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.</p>
May	<p>There was a Freeze Warning issued on May 1<sup>st</sup>, and May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Thunderstorm Watch on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 16:49 and May 7<sup>th</sup> at 18:44, Thunderstorm Warnings on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 21:40, 22:13, 23:41, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 00:14, May 28<sup>th</sup> at 19:32, and May 31<sup>st</sup> at 00:21. There were several special weather statements throughout Buffalo County throughout the month. One air quality alert issued for smoke due to the Canadian forest fires on May 18<sup>th</sup>.</p>
June	<p>There was a Thunderstorm Watch issued on June 23 at 22:37 and June 29<sup>th</sup> at 01:24, Thunderstorm Warnings on June 16<sup>th</sup> at 16:31. June was an active weather month, while most of the storms stayed below severe levels there were several special weather statements throughout Buffalo County throughout the month.</p>

July	There was a Thunderstorm Watch issued on July 4 <sup>th</sup> at 15:29, July 10 <sup>th</sup> at 15:09, July 14 <sup>th</sup> at 08:39, July 22 <sup>nd</sup> at 15:31 and July 29 <sup>th</sup> at 04:00 Thunderstorm Warnings on July 10 <sup>th</sup> at 19:03, 19:15 and 20:31, July 11 <sup>th</sup> at 23:17 and 23:46, July 12 <sup>th</sup> at 00:05 and 00:38 July 22 <sup>nd</sup> at 16:07 and 16:29 and July 29 <sup>th</sup> at 05:00 and 05:30. Special weather statements July 10 <sup>th</sup> at 18:44, 19:51 and 20:01 July 12 <sup>th</sup> at 00:56, July 14 <sup>th</sup> at 11:04, July 16 <sup>th</sup> at 08:31 and July 18 <sup>th</sup> at 01:06. A heat advisory was issued on July 24 <sup>th</sup> through the 27 <sup>th</sup> .
August	There was a Thunderstorm Watch issued on August 1 <sup>st</sup> at 22:22, August 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 21:33 and August 4 <sup>th</sup> at 19:34 Thunderstorm Warnings on August 8 <sup>th</sup> at 22:53, and 23:31 and August 10 <sup>th</sup> at 17:26. Special weather statements August 2 <sup>nd</sup> at 02:30 and 03:06, August, 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 07:05, August 4 <sup>th</sup> at 21:30 and 22:07 and August 8 <sup>th</sup> at 22:35. A heat advisory was issued on August 19 <sup>th</sup> through August 24 <sup>th</sup> .
September	There was a Thunderstorm Watch issued on September 9 <sup>th</sup> at 14:54, Thunderstorm Warnings on September 21 <sup>st</sup> at 16:28, and 17:03. Special weather statements September 21 <sup>st</sup> at 20:48 and 22:23 a Tornado Watch September 21 <sup>st</sup> at 16:51 and a Flash Flood Warning September 21 <sup>st</sup> at 22:47.
October	There was a Thunderstorm Watch issued on October 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 13:30, Thunderstorm Warnings on October 3 <sup>rd</sup> 16:00, 16:55, 17:20, 17:45 October 12 <sup>th</sup> at 00:45 and 15:40. Special weather statements October 12 <sup>th</sup> at 15:35, a Tornado Watch October 12 <sup>th</sup> at 13:20 High wind watch on the 12 <sup>th</sup> and the 13 <sup>th</sup> , High wind warning on the 13 <sup>th</sup> , Freeze warning on October 6 <sup>th</sup> at 04:15 and October 15 <sup>th</sup> at 03:23. Tornado warnings on October 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 16:30, 16:45, 17:20 and October 12 <sup>th</sup> at 14:20. Kearney received 1 to 2 inches of snow on the 28 <sup>th</sup> and 29 <sup>th</sup> .
November	There was one winter weather advisory on November 25 <sup>th</sup> Kearney received about 2 inches of snow during the month.
December	There was a winter weather watch issued from 12 am on the 25 <sup>th</sup> to 6 am on the 27 <sup>th</sup> . A blizzard warning was issued from 12 am on the 25 <sup>th</sup> to 6 am on the 27 <sup>th</sup> . The Blizzard Warning was reduced to a Winter Weather Advisory on the 26 <sup>th</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup> . Dense fog advisories were issued on the 21, and 22 <sup>nd</sup> .

## Emergency Activities 2023

January	Ice Jam concerns had been reported to this office during the month. Issues were reported on the North Channel of the Platte River East and West of the Lowell Road bridge along Kilgore Road. Emergency Management inspected the river for Ice Jams during the month as it was warranted. A call was put out to those living along the river in that area using the Buffalo Watch system to be aware of the issues and to be prepared to evacuate in needed.
February	No other possible emergency incidents were reported to the Emergency Management office during the month.
March	No other possible emergency incidents were reported to the Emergency Management office during the month.
April	No other possible emergency incidents were reported to the Emergency Management office during the month.
May	No other possible emergency incidents were reported to the Emergency Management office during the month.
June	June 2 <sup>nd</sup> Aircraft crash mile marker 284 interstate 80 east end of Bass Way Strip. Emergency Management was notified of a possible downed aircraft around 09:10. Emergency Management was ready to deploy and assist if needed, due to the nature of the incident this office was not needed.
July	No other emergencies were reported to the Emergency Management office during the month.
August	Statewide 911 outage August 31 <sup>st</sup> 2023. Buffalo County experienced a 911 outage along with many other areas of the state on the evening of August 31 <sup>st</sup> through the early morning hours of September 1, 2023. This office worked with the 911 supervisor, Buffalo County Sheriff and the City of Kearney Police Chief, to put out a mass notification to the residents of Buffalo county, through Buffalo Watch and the WEA system. It was the first event use of WEA in Buffalo County.
September	No other emergencies were reported to the Emergency Management office during the month.
October	No other possible emergency incidents were reported to the Emergency Management office during the month.
November	Train on fire in Gibbon on the 29 <sup>th</sup> , the incident was handled locally.
December	Interstate 80 and Highway 30 were both closed due to winter weather from Kearney to Colorado and Wyoming borders from December 26 <sup>th</sup> to the morning of the 27 <sup>th</sup> .

<b>Training Opportunities Sent Out 2023</b>	
January	2
February	1
March	2
April	1
May	2
June	2
July	1
August	3
September	2
October	3
November	2
December	0

<b>2023 Meetings and Events Attended by the Buffalo County Emergency Management Director</b>	
January 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> , and 30 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Ice Jam webinars hosted by the National Weather Service Hastings office.
January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management participated in a winter weather discussion for closing the county government offices due to winter storm warnings. Emergency Management participated in a KPS reunification planning meeting.
January 4 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the South-Central PET regional meeting and the region Emergency Management CONFAB meeting.
January 5 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the South-Central Law Enforcement Meeting to discuss and review the investment justifications for the 2023 Homeland Security projects.
January 6 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management and the South-Central PET regional Just in Time video development planning team met to discuss additional information for the 5 videos we are working on.
January 12 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management met with the KPS schools safety and security director Dan Endorf to further the discussion on school

	reunification and other emergency planning efforts.
January 16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in two more winter weather webinar discussions hosted by the National Weather Service.
January 18 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management chaired the Central Nebraska MRC meeting via zoom due to the winter storm. (the 18 <sup>th</sup> and the 19 <sup>th</sup> the county offices were closed due to the winter storm)
January 20 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in a second reunification planning meeting, this meeting was for Faith Christian to plan for a reunification full scale exercise.
January 21 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur radio meeting at the Buffalo County / City of Kearney EOC.
January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management participated in an IJ review and revision meeting via zoom with the IJ planning team.
January 26 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted a zoom meeting with the TRIMRS coordinator and the TRIMRS regional Emergency Managers to discuss projects for additional grant funds found by NDHHS. (\$160,00.00) to be distributed to the Regional Medical Response Systems.
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Nebraska Emergency Management Association board meeting at the EOC.
February 6 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the NWS Ice Jam webinars. The 27 <sup>th</sup> was the last Ice Jam webinar for the season.
February 9 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Safety and Security meeting for KPS.
February 17 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur radio club meeting at the EOC.
February 18 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur radio club meeting at the EOC.
February 21 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management met with Idea Bank to go over Be Ready Nebraska website updates.
February 24 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the NRIN meeting at the EOC.
March 1 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management attended the CONFAB and SCPET regional meeting in Lawrence, Nuckolls County.



March 15 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in a winter weather webinar with the National Weather Service Hastings office.
March 16 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Buffalo County Officials Zoom meeting
March 18 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur radio club meeting at the EOC.
March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management met with Brett Cutler with the Traffic incident management system. Emergency Management in Buffalo County does not get involved much in traffic management not being a first responder agency and does not tell our responder agencies how to respond. I have encouraged Brett to contact those agencies that do. To include street and highway departments direct.
April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Ravenna City council meeting to discuss the Two-Way secure activation and management siren project.
April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the monthly Emergency Management regional CONFAB meeting.
April 6 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Ravenna Fire department meeting to discuss the Two-Way secure activation and management siren project and the siren activation/spotter protocol for Buffalo County.
April 10 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Riverdale and Amherst board meetings to discuss the Two-Way secure activation and management siren project.
April 11 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management provided the County Board commissioners an update on the Two-Way secure activation and management siren project. Emergency Management attended the Pleasanton Village board meeting to discuss the Two-Way secure activation and management siren project.
April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Buffalo County Task Force meeting in Gibbon.
April 13 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Shelton village board meeting to discuss the Two-Way secure activation and management siren project.

April 15 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Buffalo County Amateur radio club meeting at the EOC.
April 20 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Kearney Schools Safety and Security meeting.
April 21 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Buffalo County officials Safety and Security meeting. Emergency Management hosted the NRIN board meeting at the EOC. I participated in the TRIMRS meeting.
May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Emergency Management participated and National Weather Service webinar, and attended a Sub Area Exercise Planning meeting in Grand Island.
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Emergency Management Regional CONFAB meeting and the SCPET Regional meeting in North Platte.
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Central NE Medical Reserve Corp. Executive Board meeting held that the EOC.
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the County Officials Safety and Security meeting via Zoom.
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur Radio meeting at the EOC.
May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the NE Association of Emergency Managers executive board meeting at the EOC. and attended the county budget hearing meeting where I presented the Emergency Management budget for the upcoming year.
May 25 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Elm Creek board meetings to update the board on the siren activation project.
June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management met with the Everbridge (Buffalo Watch) representatives to discuss new updates and any issues that the system might have. Emergency Management hosted the NAEM board meeting at the EOC from 13:00 to 15:00.
June 16 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management met with Idea Bank the Be Ready NE webpage and Just in Time video developer.
June 21 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management met with the Everbridge reps again to discuss a new system they have in place such as WEA and IPAWS.

	Seems to be a good idea and can reach 70% more people however, there is an additional fee for this service. IPAWS and WEA can have the same affect with zero cost.
June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Buffalo county officials zoom meeting.
June 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the NRIN meeting at the EOC from 10:00 to 12:00.
July 5 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Regional Emergency Management CONFAB meeting and the South-Central PET regional meeting held at the Buffalo County City of Kearney EOC.
July 14 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management had a phone meeting with the representative from Idea Bank that is working on our regional Just in Time training videos.
July 15 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted and participated in the Amateur radio club meeting at the EOC.
July 18 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted and participated in the NAEM board meeting at the EOC.
July 19 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted and participated as the Chairperson for the Central NE MRC board meeting at the EOC.
August 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the monthly Regional Emergency Management CONFAB meeting in Grand Island.
August 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management met with the new director for the Kearney United Way. We discussed Emergency Management, COAD and the roles the United Way might have during and after a disaster incident in our area.
August 18 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the TRIMRS meeting via zoom.
August 19 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur Radio meeting at the EOC.
August 21 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management met with FEMA representatives via webinar to close out DR-4521 (COVID Disaster) for Buffalo County. I also met with the COAD group where we discussed the importance of COAD and held elections of officers for the group, as well as discussion on the virtual tabletop exercise I had sent out to the group and the

	upcoming full-scale exercise scheduled for October.
August 24 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Buffalo counties officials meeting via zoom, and participated in a quarterly NEMA webinar for emergency management in the state of Nebraska.
August 25 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the NRIN meeting at the EOC.
August 30 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted and participated in the executive board NAEM meeting at the EOC.
September 6 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Regional CONFAB and South-Central PET meeting, held in Lexington this month.
September 7 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the County IT new employee introduction and the county audit meeting for appointed and elected officials in the county board room.
September 8 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in a SCPET regional fiscal agent meeting with Lynn Martin and Sheriff Miller. This meeting was to discuss Buffalo County taking on the role of fiscal agent for the PET region. It was determined that we could take on this role if Grand Island was not willing. (shortly after our meeting I got word the Grand Island would take on the role for 3 years).
September 11 <sup>th</sup>	Buffalo county is looking at a new TV service provider. County IT, Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management met to discuss provider options.
September 14 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the KPS security and safety meeting.
September 16 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur radio meeting at the EOC.
September 18 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the 5 Rivers Rapid Assessment Exercise planning meeting.
September 19 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management had a meeting with the new chairperson of the Kearney COAD.
September 20 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Central Nebraska MRC executive board meeting. I also assisted in a Stop the Bleed training for Faith Christian Schools here in Kearney.

September 28 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Officials safety and security meeting for Buffalo County.
October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Paradigm Pipeline meeting in Kearney that provided training on pipeline identification and safety as well as a table top exercise.
October 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management participated in a “5 Rivers damage assessment full scale exercise” planning meeting,
October 4 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Regional CONFAB meeting in Grand Island.
October 19 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management met with the Operations Managers for Tall Grass natural gas corporation.
October 21 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the Amateur radio meeting at the EOC.
October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the COAD meeting held at the Kearney Library. I attended the Buffalo County Mutual Aid meeting held at Kearney fire station 1.
October 26 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the Buffalo County Officials Zoom Meeting. Emergency Management hosted the NAEM executive board meeting at the EOC.
October 27 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management hosted the NRIN executive board meeting at the EOC.
November 1 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management attended the SCPET Regional and CONFAB meetings held in Holdrege this month.
November 6 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the end of year CNMRC executive board meeting held in Grand Island. Emergency Management participated in a Dams Emergency Plans review and update in North Platte for the Kingsley and Johnson dams.
November 9 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Kearney Public Schools Safety and Security meeting where I also participated in a quick table top exercise. Emergency Management participated in a video call with Idea Bank to

	work on some just in time videos.
November 16 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management participated in the County officials ZOOM safety and security meeting. Emergency Management participated in a video call with American Signal to discuss final actions on finishing up the siren activation project.
December 6 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management attended the monthly regional emergency management CONFAB meeting.
December 12 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management met with NRIN representatives to pick up supplies for the NACO conference.
December 19 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management met with American Signal Corp. for additional discussion on system programming and redesign analysis. No firm date has been set for techs to return to Buffalo County to fix and finish the project at this time.
December 20 <sup>th</sup>	Follow up meeting on American Signal Systems design.
December 21 <sup>st</sup>	Emergency Management attended the Buffalo County Security and Safety meeting via zoom.
December 27 <sup>th</sup>	Emergency Management met with NEMA reps and Lynn's office for Grants Management Systems (GMS) training through virtual platform.

<b>January 2023 Monthly Activities</b>
<p>✓ Testing was conducted on the MRU twice this month. In addition, the DVR local 800 radio system in the MRU was tested. While the in-town testing seemed to be limited to about ¾ of a mile to a mile, outside of town seemed to have a good four- or five-mile radius. Two antennas were changed out for two of the new 800 radios. The two new 800 radios replaced one VHF and one UHF radio.</p>

<p>✓ Meetings with a responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month, weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair, fire departments, I spoke with Kearney Fire Administrator Jason Whalen in person. I also spoke with a number of other community leaders and officials throughout the month at the meetings at the EOC for winter weather. IE, KPS supervisors, City of Gibbon Administrator, higher education officials, Kearney public works director, and several more.</p>
<p>✓ ID cards; With the start of the new year and it being an election year, I have made and renewed ID cards for several offices in Buffalo county approximately 150 cards were made during the month. Several other ID cards were made for other departments outside county government as well as many cards expire at the end of each year.</p>
<p>✓ I worked on the Investment Justification worksheets for the regional law enforcement group for the Homeland Security grants. They were then reviewed in a working meeting by the regional IJ committee in which I am part of.</p>
<p>✓ I participated in the county officials swearing in. I was sworn in as an appointed official for the first time in 20 years.</p>
<p>✓ The D-Star radio went down it is believed that the server had a bad NIC I requested to have a new card on order. County IT had trouble finding a new NIC for the existing computer. IT decided to provide a more up to date computer with a new NIC to replace the current system. Once provided we needed to reload the Linux operating system on the new computer. I'm was skeptical but hopeful this would fix the issue with the D-Star system.</p>
<p>✓ After the National Weather Service winter weather webinar on the 17<sup>th</sup> Community leaders and responder agencies met to discuss planning mitigation actions and operations; IE snow removal, road closings, government offices, schools and business closing and an overall effect on how the storm will impact each entity.</p>
<p>✓ The Evacuation and Re-entry training was held at the EOC at the end of the month. This was a 1-and-a-half-day training.</p>
<p>✓ I hosted the Amateur radio winter field day event at the EOC. The event lasted 6 hours on the last Saturday of the month.</p>

**February 2023  
Monthly Activities**

- ✓ Testing was conducted on the MRU once this month.
- ✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month, weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair, fire departments. I spoke with KPS supervisors, City of Gibbon Administrator and the Ravenna police chief during the month.
- ✓ ID cards; New cards were made during the month for the city of Gibbon personnel. Several other ID cards were made for other departments outside county government as well.
- ✓ The Annual report was started this month, work continued on this report.
- ✓ I conducted an Emergency management / EOC presentation to UNK students.
- ✓ The D-Star radio is now back in operation, one of the Amateur radio members NIOP provided a new/used NIC that fixed the issue. In addition, IT has provided a more up to date computer with a new NIC to replace the current system. The current server is about 10 years old. NIOP amateur radio operator loaded the latest Linux operating system and software in the newer computer so it's ready to swap out if we have additional issues with the existing server.
- ✓ The grounding project for the amateur radio room was completed during month.
- ✓ The Evacuation and Re-entry training was held that the EOC January 31<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**March 2023  
Monthly Activities**

- ✓ No testing was conducted on the MRU this month.
- ✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month, weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair, fire departments. I spoke with City of Gibbon Administrator and the Gibbon Fire Chief Rick Brown and a number of other fire personnel through Buffalo county during the month.
- ✓ ID cards; I continue to make and renew ID cards for several offices in Buffalo county. New cards were made during the month for the city of Gibbon personnel and delivered. Several other ID cards were made for other



departments outside county government as well.
✓ A new AREDN network switch was added to the Amateur radio room this month. The newer up to date computer has been programmed with the Linux operating system, its ready to swap out if we have additional issues with the existing server.
✓ I participated in a day long Public Health meeting and table top exercise on the 8 <sup>th</sup> .
✓ I conducted a second Emergency Management / EOC presentation to UNK students during the month.
✓ I hosted and participated in the National Weather Service Severe Weather Awareness training at the Buffalo County extension building on the 16 <sup>th</sup> .
✓ I participated in an interview with Talk of the Town. Topics were all things emergency management and severe weather preparedness.
✓ New siren repeaters were installed this month by Platte Valley communications.
✓ Statewide tornado drill was conducted on the 27 <sup>th</sup> .

<b>April 2023 Monthly Activities</b>
✓ Testing was conducted on the MRU one time this month.
✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month, weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair, fire departments. I spoke with, board and council members from Amherst, Gibbon, Pleasanton, Ravenna, Riverdale and Shelton. I spoke KPS supervisors, fire chiefs from Gibbon, Shelton, Elm Creek, Ravenna, Amherst, and Kearney in person as well as all the fire chief via phone conversation and texting for weather, and fire task force call outs.
✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County, as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers and Justice Center cardholders during the month.
✓ The Annual report was completed during the month. It was sent to print, distributed and posted on the County webpage under Emergency Management Annual reports.
✓ I participated in WEB EOC training hosted at the Buffalo County / City of Kearney EOC.
✓ Took the EM vehicle in for an oil change and a new tire as I picked up a nail in the sidewall that could not be repaired.

✓ The EMPG/ARPA quarterly report and reimbursement requests were completed this month and sent into NEMA.
✓ I hosted and participated in the Two-Day Warning and Coordination training at the Buffalo county / City of Kearney EOC.
✓ I attended the funeral of Loren Uden a long time Emergency Manager for Adams and Clay counties. This was a sad day for the Emergency Management Community.
✓ I went to the Park and Glenwood schools to fix their NOAA weather alert radios.
✓ I conducted an Emergency Management / EOC presentation for a Kearney community group at a luncheon at Valentino's.

<b>May 2023 Monthly Activities</b>
✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month, weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair, fire departments. I spoke with board and council members from Elm Creek. I spoke with Fire Chiefs from Gibbon, Shelton, Elm Creek, Ravenna, Miller and Amherst via phone conversation and texting for weather events.
✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County, as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers, and Justice Center cardholders during the month. I made new cards for the Buffalo County Highway department and Ravenna Fire. More than 100 ID cards were made this month.
✓ Dropped off EM vehicle for an inspection and estimate for hail damage at the fleet maintenance building.
✓ Testing was conducted on the MRU three times this month. The MRU was used for the Game and Parks Expo at Fort Kearney Recreation area on May 11 <sup>th</sup> through the 13 <sup>th</sup> . The MRU worked well at the event, however not without having to overcome some issues, two of the new 800 radios had weak signal at the event. Two mag mount antennas were used in place of the antennas mounted on the roof. The antenna cables in the bus were mislabeled and did not correspond with the antenna labeling on the antenna rail on the MRU, Platte Valley tracked down the correct cables and mounts and fixed this issue. While out at the event on the second day the main computer would shut down

after 5 or 10 minutes. However, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day the computer worked fine. City IT looked into this issue but could not recreate the problem. Upon start-up of the internal systems it was found that several of the power cords were disconnected to many of the devices in the radio rack. After tracking down the correct power cords and reconnecting everything in the rack everything worked as it should.

✓ I hosted and participated in the Integrated Warning team workshop at the Buffalo county Extension building.

✓ I assisted the Nebraska Game and Parks with their Game and Parks Expo at the Fort Kearney Recreational area May 10<sup>th</sup> (set up day) (11<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> event days). I provided communications support and weather support throughout the event with the Mobile Response Unit.

✓ The Amateur radio repeater 146.625 that is located at Kearney tower locked up and seemed to get stuck in transmit mode after keying the repeater and would only unkey after the system ID. I and Lt. Tubbs went to Kearney tower to trouble shoot this issue on this repeater. Everything seemed to be OK after power cycling the repeater. I tested the repeater on site with my portable and everything worked as it should.

✓ Work started on a couple siren projects with the City of Kearney and at Buffalo County recreation area East of Ravenna. City of Kearney wanted to relocate the siren at the Kearney Airport. I had gotten quotes from two siren companies and worked with a number of companies for additional quotes for installation and pole costs. As well as worked with the airport supervisor for airspace requirements and VA home for a new location that will cover the Airport, the VA Home and Patriot Park as well as provide for future expansion. The recreation area East of Ravenna would place a siren at the park where there has not been notification coverage before. I also provided a coverage map to the city of Ravenna for coverage, future growth and or replacement of older sirens.

## **June 2023 Monthly Activities**

✓ Testing was conducted on the MRU one time this month. While out at the Game and Parks event, the main computer developed shutdown issues after 5 or 10 minutes of uses. City IT worked on the computer over the last month and believes the issue has been resolved. A triband radio for the driver's cockpit

<p>had been taken over to the MRU to replace the old UHF radio. This radio has not been installed at this time.</p>
<p>✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month, weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair and fire departments. I communicated with all Fire Chiefs via phone conversation and texting for weather events during the month.</p>
<p>✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County, as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers, and Justice Center cardholders during the month.</p>
<p>✓ I participated in the Amateur radio field day and the Buffalo County recreation area June 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<p>✓ Work continues on the siren projects with the City of Kearney and at Buffalo County recreation area east of Ravenna. Estimates and quotes have been obtained for both locations. Work is ongoing to find a suitable location for the replacement siren for the airport. Two locations have been identified and this office continued to work with landowners for a suitable location and agreement. Once a suitable location is found this office will request assistance from the city attorney to write up an agreement. This office will work with the Kearney Police Chief for assistance.</p>
<p>✓ Mitigation for Emergency Management training was held at the EOC this was a two-and-a-half-day training.</p>

<p><b>July 2023 Monthly Activities</b></p>
<p>✓ Testing was conducted on the MRU two time this month. City IT worked on the desktop computer but could not get it to recreate the issue of shutting itself down, it was placed back in the MRU for use. The triband radio for the driver's cockpit had been taken over to the MRU to replace the old UHF radio. This radio still has not been installed at this time. The MRU was used for the Kearney Cruse Night. Everything seemed to work as it should.</p>
<p>✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month, weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair and fire departments. I communicated with all Fire Chiefs via phone conversation and texting for weather events during the</p>

month.
✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County, as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers, and Justice Center cardholders during the month.
✓ Work continued on the siren projects with the City of Kearney and at Buffalo County recreation area East of Ravenna. A couple suitable locations for the placement of both sirens for the airport and the Buffalo County Lake have been found. There are several entities involved in the new siren locations that need to provide approval for the siren projects. Work continued with these agencies, and departments as the projects moved forward.
✓ I participated in a two-and-a-half-day Regional Functional Exercise put on by the Blue Cell Company. The first day was held in North Platte, the second day held in Grand Island and the last day wrapped up in Kearney.
✓ I participated in the National Weather Service Weather (Slack app) training held in Grand Island.
✓ I took the MRU out to support Kearney Cruse Night and set it up for City of Kearney PD Operations and Command Center.
✓ I met the Airport Manager and a representative from NPPD at the lift station Northwest of the Kearney airport to look for a good siren location. With approval I believe we have found a good location for the siren to support the Vets Home, Kearney Airport and Patriot Park providing adequate overlap and additional growth to the Northwest of 56 <sup>th</sup> street.
✓ I participated in a half day Hazard Mitigation planning workshop at Kearney CCC, put on by the NE Emergency Management Agency.
✓ I participated in a virtual Mental Health in Disasters table top exercise hosted by NDHHS and the Public Policy Center.
<p>✓ The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter EMPG report was completed and submitted to NEMA. The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter EMPG / EMPG ARPA grant reimbursement request was also completed and submitted.</p> <p>A letter had been written to the “Civil Defense Director” 50 years ago and placed in a time capsule. I was asked to come to the Trails and Rails Museum to open and read the letter. While I was hoping to read a letter for the acting EM director at that time, it was actually information and memorabilia from the Amateur radio club 50 years ago. Not a letter from the EM but still pretty cool.</p>
✓ I took the Emergency Management vehicle to Dent Poppers in Kearney to have the hail damage fixed.

## August 2023 Monthly Activities

- ✓ Testing was conducted on the MRU one time this month. The cell phone Straight Talk device was not working and was discovered that the service had been deactivated for this device. With today's devices and the First Net network it's been decided not to renew service on this system. Still leaving the Sat phone and the VIOP phone for use in the unit. A single band radio for the driver's cockpit had been taken over to the MRU to replace the old UHF radio. This radio still has not been installed at this time. No other issues were discovered during testing and operation.
- ✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair and fire departments. I communicated with all Fire Chiefs via phone conversation and texting for weather events during the month.
- ✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers and Justice Center cardholders during the month. Several cards were made for new members of Ravenna fire.
- ✓ Work continues on the siren projects with the City of Kearney and at Buffalo County recreation area East of Ravenna. The siren at Highway 30 and 30<sup>th</sup> Ave in Kearney has been moved from the Northwest corner of the intersection to the Northeast corner of the intersection. This was done due to power line trespass over private property that had been sold for development. Two new sirens have arrived in Kearney. One siren is for current city growth and the other is to be used for the replacement of the airport siren. The paperwork and ordering of the pole from NPPD have been completed. It may take a month to have the pole delivered to the new siren location. An electrician has been lined up for the installation of the siren and equipment to be placed on the pole.
- ✓ The county wide secure siren activation project continued, all of the equipment had been installed at each of the siren locations. American Signal is scheduled to come out to install the servers in the primary 911 center and the EOC the week of September 11<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup>. Testing will be conducted and training provided completing this project.

✓ I participated in a Web EOC full scale exercise with other regional emergency management and the State Emergency Management Agency.
✓ I attended the two-day Statewide LEDRS conference held in Kearney.
✓ I assisted and participated in the South-Central PET regional 402 training, Emergency Management for Elected and Appointed officials.

<b>September 2023 Monthly Activities</b>
✓ No testing was conducted on the MRU this month. A single band radio for the driver's cockpit had been taken over to the MRU to replace the old UHF radio. This radio still has not been installed at this time.
✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair and fire departments. I communicated with all Fire Chiefs via phone conversation and texting for weather events during the month and spoke with the Kearney Fire chief in person.
✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers, and Justice Center cardholders during the month. Several cards were made for new members of Ravenna fire.
✓ Work continued on the siren projects with the City of Kearney and at Buffalo County recreation area East of Ravenna. The paperwork and ordering of the pole from NPPD has been completed. Still waiting on the pole to be delivered.
✓ The county wide secure siren activation project completion was postponed this month until the week of October 9th. All of the equipment had been installed at each of the siren locations. American Signal is now scheduled to come out to install the servers in the primary 911 center and the EOC in October.
✓ Buffalo County has had the WEA / IPAWS alerting system in place for more than 10 years, and for the first time it was used twice in less than a week apart during the month of September once for a state wide 911 outage and once for a fugitive on the run. In both cases I was able to initiate the WEA alerts from a remote location outside the office.
✓ Buffalo County EMA was able to negotiate the purchase of a side by side utility vehicle for the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corp (CNMRC) from Kearney Power sports. This vehicle replaced an off road style golf cart and will be stored in Hastings for the MRC use.

**October 2023  
Monthly Activities**

- ✓ Testing was conducted one time on the MRU this month. The single band radio for the driver's cockpit that had been taken over to the MRU to replace the old UHF radio still had not been installed at this time. No other issues were discovered during testing and operation.
- ✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair and fire departments. I communicated with all Fire Chiefs via phone conversation and texting for weather events/spotter activations during the month as well as for the Siren activation project.
- ✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers, and Justice Center cardholders during the month. Several cards were made for new members of Ravenna Fire, CASA and Region 3. The ID System that makes the Justice Center cards went down this month. I worked with County IT to try and get this system back operational.
- ✓ The work on the siren project with the City of Kearney still awaits NPPD to deliver a pole to the new siren location. NPPD will have to replace an additional pole in the location to support the electrical needs and transformer for the new siren North of the National Guard site. The siren for the Buffalo County recreation area has been put on hold at this time and other options are being investigated through siren replacement and coverage areas within the City of Ravenna to cover both the city and the recreation area.
- ✓ During the month American Signal was out during the week of October 9th through the 13<sup>th</sup> to work on activating and test each siren location in each of the communities in Buffalo County. Both the old and new systems are running side by side at this time. There are several reporting and operational issues with the new system that need to be worked out before the old system is deactivated. I remained in communication with the vendor to make sure these issues are addressed as quickly as possible. Training on the new system for admin and users was scheduled for November 7<sup>th</sup>.
- ✓ I conducted a Buffalo Watch notification overview to the supervisory staff for KPD on the 19<sup>th</sup>. This was to give them a better idea of how the system works, why some people may get notification when others do not, why and how this



<p>may occur.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ During the month I sent out a request for local electricians to work on future siren projects. I have been in contact with 4 different electricians and have requested bid's for new siren projects, hourly rates on fixing siren issues as well as response times when a siren is identified as having an issue. One of the vendors has provided a quote at this time, I would expect more to come in later in November.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Training and a full-scale exercise was conducted on Friday and Saturday the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with 3 other regional counties, EPA and FEMA Region 7. The exercise was the 5 Rivers Rapid Assessment exercise using the Survey 123 app that gives damage assessment teams the ability to gather damage information in real time and provide this information back to the EOC through mapping and logs to better assess and track the damage in communities after a disaster.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The MRU was used for the drug take back program on the 28<sup>th</sup> I took the unit to the location, set it up and returned it to the fleet maintenance build when the event was completed.</li> </ul>

<p><b>November 2023 Monthly Activities</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Testing was conducted one time on the MRU this month. No issues were discovered during testing and operation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair and fire departments. I communicated with the Gibbon Fire Chief via phone conversation for the siren activation project. I spoke with the City Administrators for Elm Creek and Gibbon in person on the siren project during the month.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County, as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers, and Justice Center cardholders during the month. The ID System that makes the Justice Center cards was still down. County IT started working on it to get it back in operation during the month.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The work on the siren project with the City of Kearney still awaits NPPD to deliver a pole to the new siren location. The siren for the Buffalo County</li> </ul>

<p>recreation area had been put on hold and there has been no additional movement on the Ravenna project.</p>
<p>✓ A meeting was held with American Signal this month to discuss repeater issues and finalizing the project several options were discussed and American signal has put together a couple options for the repeaters and servers that have been installed to insure proper operation and coverage. There are still seven sirens that are having reported issues that need to be addressed, both the old and new systems are running side by side which could actually be much of the issues we are seeing with some of the sirens not reporting correctly. When American Signal comes back out the plan will be to disconnect the radios of the old system and allow the new system to go into full operation. The new system has been in operation for about a month and a half and has been stable.</p>
<p>✓ I conducted an Emergency Management and Emergency Operations presentation to the Leadership Kearney group at the EOC. There were approximately 30 individuals present for the presentation.</p>
<p>✓ Updates were completed on several Amateur radio programs and software during the month.</p>
<p>✓ Application was made for the Emergency Management Performance Grant to NEMA during the month. Approval was awarded by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, however at a much less level than in past years. This is due to less grant funds being handed down by Congress to the State of Nebraska for this program and more applications throughout the state for funding.</p>
<p>✓ Nexgen (siren activation) software training was conducted for dispatchers and administrators during the month.</p>
<p>✓ I participated in a Kearney Public School table top exercise along with Public Health, Kearney PD and Kearney schools representatives.</p>

<p><b>December 2023 Monthly Activities</b></p>
<p>✓ No testing was conducted on the MRU this month.</p>
<p>✓ Meetings with a Responder agency Chief or Command Staff; throughout the month weekly emails continue to go out to community leaders, Mayors, community board chair and fire departments. I communicated with all fire</p>

<p>chiefs via text for the recent snow event. I spoke with the City Administrators for Elm Creek and Gibbon in person on the local and county wide siren projects during the month.</p>
<p>✓ ID cards; I made ID cards on several different days for offices and departments for Buffalo County, as well as other cards for jail staff and volunteers, service providers, and Justice Center cardholders during the month. The ID System that makes the Justice Center cards is still down. County IT has started working on it to get it back in operation seems they are looking for some drivers for the software.</p>
<p>✓ The work on the siren project with the City of Kearney still awaits NPPD to deliver a pole to the new siren location. NPPD sent two agreement documents that needed to be approved, one was for the pole and setting of the pole in the amount of \$2106.77. The other was for contribution-in-aid-of-construction (CIAOC) in the amount of \$6,317.51. We the City have never had to pay the secondary cost for Public service / Public safety before. Work continues on this cost issue.</p>
<p>✓ December 13<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> I attended the NACO conference in Kearney.</p>
<p>✓ Two additional meetings were held with American Signal this month to discuss repeater issues, system redesign and completion of the project. Additional options were provided by American Signal for the repeaters, servers and additional equipment at their expense if needed. After discussion on all options American Signal left it up to us to decide what we felt was the best option moving forward. At this time, we have chosen to leave the system as it is as long as radio propagation and reliable communication from servers to siren sites can be fixed and proven. If not, option two will be to add the additional equipment at each of the communication locations. There are still several sirens that are having reporting issues that need to be addressed. Both the old and new systems continue to run side by side which is actually causing interference in several of these sirens. When ASC comes back out the plan is to shut down the old system. The new system has been in operation for two months and continues to be stable.</p>
<p>✓ Quarterly report and 1<sup>st</sup> quarter EMPG reimbursement funding was submitted to NEMA this month.</p>

# Notable Items

## Plane Crash

June 2<sup>nd</sup> aircraft crash at mile marker 284 interstate 80 at the east end of Bass Way Strip. Emergency Management was notified of a possible downed aircraft around 09:10. Dispatch was initially notified by a citizen that thought they observed a small aircraft go down in a rain storm. It was initially thought to have gone down several miles into Northern Kearney County, however with multiple agencies searching for the aircraft both in Kearney County and Buffalo County the aircraft was located on the South side of the interstate, about a mile into Southern Buffalo county. Gibbon and Kearney Fire Departments reported to the scene along with Kearney Police Department, Buffalo County Sheriffs Office and the Nebraska State Patrol.

One person was killed in the single engine plane coming out of Colorado. Buffalo county supplied a deputy to guard the scene until the incident could be investigated and cleaned up by the FAA. The Sheriffs office was on scene for about a week. It was believed that the thunderstorm was a contributing factor in the crash.

## Secure two-way siren activation project

There was about an eight month delay due to supply change issues with the two-way radio order. After the radios arrived and the RTU boxes were manufactured and all the equipment shipped to Kearney. Mostek Electric installed the new equipment on all the siren poles and hooked it up. After Mostek Electric completed the installation American Signal sent out a technician in October to activate and adjust the activation system as well as install the two servers and CSC-960 switches in the primary dispatch center and the Emergency Operation Center. Testing and trouble shooting was conducted for about a week during the activation process. There seemed to be quite a bit of radio/reporting issues during the testing. It was determined that an additional visit for testing and troubleshooting would be needed, the old system was left on line and operational. Both systems would run side by side for the next several months before American Signal could be back out for continued trouble shooting and adjustments. While there was continued radio communications issues from the sirens to the dispatch centers the communications to the dispatch seemed to be working. While the system was operational over the next several months it seemed to not be working as it should, the sirens being able to report back to the dispatch continued to be the main issue. While this system has not fully been completed in 2023, a final punch list has been created to replace some of the trouble radios and antennas to fix some of the last communications issues the system is having. With the exception of the sporadic communications problems with identified sirens the system has been if full operation and functioning as it should. Throughout the years Emergency Management went to each community council and board meetings to inform them of the new system and the system operations and how it will improve security and siren functionality.

## **Time Capsule**

A letter had been written to the “Civil Defense Director” 50 years ago by the Amateur Radio group members and placed in a time capsule. I was asked to come to the Trails and Rails Museum to open and read the letter. While I was hoping to read a letter from the acting EM director at that time, it was actually information and memorabilia from the Amateur radio club 50 years ago. Not a letter from the EM but still pretty cool. This information was copied and shared with the current members of the Amateur radio club which had at least one member that was a member of the club at the time the letter was written and placed in the time capsule 50 years ago.

## **Weather Events**

Significant weather events in 2023; there was approximately 48 inches of snow recorded throughout the year. Most of which fell in January, February, March and December. January and February, saw 3 days below 0 temperatures and 14 days of single digits with a low in January of -3 degrees with a windchill of -25, in February -4 degrees with a windchill of -27 degrees.

January; The storm on the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> produced a high of 26 inches of snow in Custer County to 17 inches in the Ravenna area and 11 inches in Kearney with 40 mph wind gusts. This was a wide spread storm that closed interstate 80, Highway 30 and many other roads from the Wyoming border to Grand Island. The 23<sup>rd</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup> saw several days of below normal temperatures, the 29<sup>th</sup> saw a low of -3 degrees with -25-degree wind chills. January saw 29 days below freezing and 7 days in the single digits.

February; The 22<sup>nd</sup> through the 24<sup>th</sup> saw days of below normal temperatures with a low of -4 degrees with -27-degree wind chills.

March; a snow advisory on the 25<sup>th</sup> produced 10 inches of snow in the Kearney area and shut down the interstate from Kearney to Cheyenne.

December; a blizzard warning was issued from 12 am on the 25<sup>th</sup> to 6 am on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Interstate 80 and Highway 30 were both closed due to winter weather from Kearney to Colorado and Wyoming borders from December 26<sup>th</sup> to the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Emergency Communications

There was quite a bit of work and maintenance completed in the Amateur Radio room throughout the year. Several new pieces of software were downloaded on the computers in the Amateur Radio room to support emergency operations out of the EOC for day to day and disaster operation.

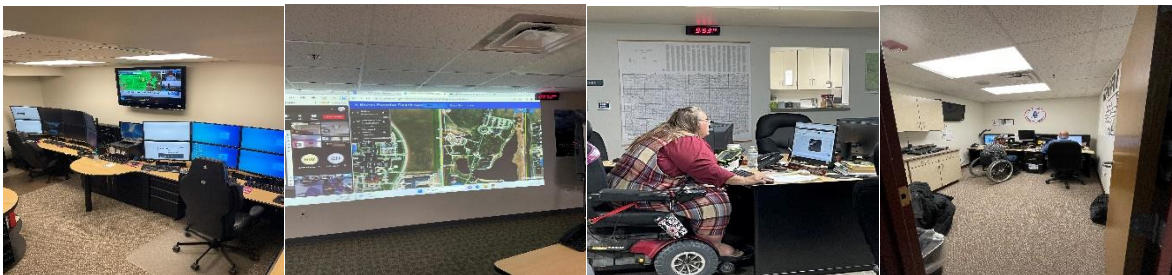
A new AREDN network switch was added to the Amateur Radio room this month. This is an amateur radio wireless network used as a back up to the existing network and for use for the amateur radio projects.

The D-Star radio went down during the year, it was found that the server had a bad NIC. I requested to have a new card on order however county IT had trouble finding a new NIC for the existing computer. IT decided to provide a more up to date computer with a new NIC to replace the current system. While waiting on the new computer I was able to find a used NIC and fixed the old system. The newer up to date D- Star computer was programmed with the latest Linux operating system, ready to be swap out if we have additional issues with the existing server.

Two new VHF siren repeaters were installed at the tower sites in preparation for the new siren activation system.

A new DVR local 800 radio system was installed and tested in the MRU (Mobile Response Unit). While the in-town testing seemed to be limited to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile to a mile, outside of town seemed to have a good four or five-mile radius. Two antennas were changed out for two of the new 800 radios. The two new 800 radios replaced one VHF and one UHF radio in the MRU.

There was a Statewide 911 outage August 31<sup>st</sup> 2023. Buffalo County experienced a 911 outage along with many other areas of the state on the evening of August 31<sup>st</sup> through the early morning hours of September 1, 2023. This office worked with the 911 Supervisor, Buffalo County Sheriff and the City of Kearney Police Chief to put out a mass notification to the residents of Buffalo county through Buffalo Watch and the WEA system. It was the first event use of WEA in Buffalo County.



## RESPONSE UNIT ACTIVITIES (MRU)



- On July 15<sup>th</sup> the unit was used during the Kearney Cruise Night.
- A new DVR local 800 radio system was installed in the MRU and tested. The in-town testing seemed to be limited to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile to a mile, outside of town seemed to have a good four- or five-mile radius. Two new antennas were changed out for two of the new 800 radios. The two new 800 radios replaced one VHF and one UHF radio.
- The MRU was used for the Game and Parks Expo at Fort Kearney Recreation area on May 11<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup>. The MRU worked well at the event, however, two of the new 800 radios had weak signal at the event. Two mag mount antennas had to be used in place of the antennas mounted on the roof. Platte Valley tracked down the correct cables and mounts and fixed this issue.
- The MRU was used by Law Enforcement one time during the year for the Drug Take Back program.
- Testing and updates were conducted throughout the year. The MRU was ready at a moment's notice for response to any additional calls if it had been needed.

## NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS



This is the eighth year using Buffalo Watch on the Everbridge platform.

The Everbridge system provides notifications through cell phone, text, e-mail and SMS messages for weather notifications, voice and landline phones for GEO notifications and pre-developed group notifications and is IPAWS, WEA capable. Monthly test of the IPAWS system continued through the year.

There were 8,073 total notifications sent out by the system to subscribers of Buffalo Watch in 2023. Of those sent 7,996 were various weather notifications, most of which were lightning and hail alerts, 77 emergency alerts were sent out by the 911 dispatch center and other community administrators to a variety of different groups such as law enforcement, fire, communications, volunteer organizations, City/County employee groups and community wide public emergency announcements. As administrators and users of the system we are continually finding more creative ways to use the system to communicate with the people we serve.

Public notification groups such as; Medical Community Alert, Fraud Alert, Buffalo County Inmate Escape, Emergency Alerts, Endangered Missing Advisory, YRTC Escape and Amber Alerts are available for sign-up by the general public.

Buffalo County Emergency Management continues to use and improve social media notifications and information through Facebook and Twitter/X. The Emergency Management Facebook page now has 4,758 followers and when emergencies and incidents happen thousands of people within Buffalo County are reached. The page is used for weather notification, educational, planning, preparedness and recovery information. The Twitter/X account is mainly used for weather type notification and has 291 individuals and/or groups following at this time.

The social media and the Buffalo Watch system were integral vital parts in notifying and providing information to Buffalo County residents throughout the year for weather notifications, emergency events and other community information.



The Emergency Management budget for the fiscal 2022-23 year stayed under budget. The new fiscal 2023-24 budget was approved by the Board of Supervisors Budget Committee. The Buffalo County Emergency Management Department budget for 2022-23 was \$159,257.00. The 2023-24 approved budget was \$167,379.10 This was an increase of approximately \$8,122.00 from the prior year. The line item for vehicles was increased to \$40,000.00 this budget year. It is to increase by \$5,000.00 each year in an escrow/roll over account for future replacement vehicles.

The EMPG (Emergency Management Performance Grant) for the fiscal year 2022 closed out and the 2023 grant started in June of 2023. This program is designed to



reimburse the Emergency Management budget up to 50%. In recent years, the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency only provided 50% reimbursement on Emergency Management salary and benefits for the year, leaving no office or EOC support or equipment. The total EMPG amount funded for the 2022-23 budget year is \$32,283.56. This was about 19% of the budget for the year and about \$6,440,00 less than the year prior.

There was no State audit in 2023 on Homeland Security Grants, NIMS compliance and the EM budget for the 2022 year. Mainly because of turn over and short staffed at the Nebraska Emergency Management office. Grant Audits are expected to resume in 2024.

Darrin Lewis,  
Buffalo County Emergency Management

