

A helicopter is shown in flight, dropping a bucket of water onto a fire in a field. The water is falling in a thick, white column. In the foreground, several firefighters in yellow and red gear are standing in a field of dry grass, watching the helicopter. There are also several fire trucks parked nearby. The background shows a dark, charred landscape under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

NEBRASKA

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Good Life. Great Strength.

**A Shared Responsibility: Building a Resilient Nebraska**

# **Annual Report 2022**

# Contents

## Page

- 3 Vision, Mission, Values, Guiding Principles
- 4 Annual Letter
- 5 Agency Context
- 6 Staff and Agency Financials
- 7 Public Information
- 8 Grants
- 10 Interoperability, Communications  
Information Technology
- 11 Technical Hazards
- 14 Watch Center

## Page

- 16 A Year of Fire
- 20 Planning, Exercise and Training
- 22 Public Assistance
- 26 Hazard Mitigation
- 28 Citizen Corps
- 29 State Emergency Response Commission,  
Local Emergency Planning Committees
- 31 Organizational Chart
- 32 Contact Information

**Cover: A Nebraska National Guard helicopter drops water on the Road 739 Fire that burned 35,000 acres in Gosper and Furnas counties in April.**

**This page: Firefighters mop up smoldering areas of the 702 fire which burned 45,000 acres in Red Willow, Furnas and Frontier counties.**

**Our Vision** A resilient Nebraska built upon inclusive collaboration and communication.

**Our Mission** Provide and foster leadership through guidance and support to Nebraskans before, during, and after disasters.

## Our Values and Goals

**Equity** – Emphasizing an inclusive, whole community approach to emergency management in all disaster phases.

Strategic Goal: Reduce Nebraska’s vulnerability by maintaining an emergency management system focused on the whole community.

**Timeliness** – Being responsive, communicative, and adaptable in all activities.

Strategic Goal: Increase NEMA’s responsiveness through continuous process improvement in a competent emergency management system.

**Professionalism** – Cultivating and sustaining meaningful, productive partnerships with Nebraska’s communities and emergency managers statewide.

Strategic Goal: Continue to develop and improve the professionalism of emergency management personnel.

**Efficiency** – Maximizing a cost-effective, focused, prepared, and productive approach to the Mission.

Strategic Goal: Strengthen a resourceful emergency management system.

## Our Guiding Principles

We believe an emergency management system is a dynamic, mutually beneficial and inclusive network of partners, stakeholders and organizations, encompassing all Nebraskans, throughout all phases of disasters.

All NEMA teammates are accountable for ensuring the success of the agency’s vision, mission and values. It is a shared responsibility.

*NEMA's Josh Yox distributes material about the agency at the Disability Pride Event, July 29 at Bethany Park in Lincoln. The event was sponsored by the City of Lincoln, Lincoln Parks and Recreation, Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities, United Healthcare, Nebraska Total Care, People First of Nebraska and Mobility Motoring.*



# Annual Letter



**Director**  
**Major General Daryl Bohac**



**Assistant Director**  
**Ervin L. Portis**

## Agency Partners and Stakeholders:

Drought and fire continued to impact Nebraskans in 2022, leading to a longer and more intense wildfire season than in previous years. Wildfires were not limited to western and north central Nebraska this year. NEMA recorded 60 significant wildfires in virtually every corner of the state and during every month of the year.

Due to the ongoing high fire danger, NEMA and other state partners took added measures to safeguard communities. While we normally contract a single engine air tanker to be on duty in the state from July

to September, in 2022, we brought on board two aerial suppression planes and extended the season from April to October instead of the usual July to September time frame.

Members of Nebraska's Incident Management Team (IMT) were requested and deployed to a greater number of fires in 2022. NEMA accessed a vast array of resources from other state agencies and partners, including but not limited to the Wildland Incident Response and Assistance Team (WIRAT) for wildfire technical assistance and guidance, the Nebraska National Guard—both air and ground units, Nebraska State Patrol (NSP) drone teams for the purposes of mapping fire perimeters and hot spots within fire boundaries, Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) radio caches for interoperable communications, the Civil Air Patrol for wildfire detection flights, and the National Weather Service for spot weather forecasts and satellite wildfire detection. NSP's drones have been a game changer.

Additionally, assistance from local organizations and cooperating nonprofits, partners such as Nebraska Cattlemen, Nebraska Farm Bureau and Nebraska Preparedness Partnership, and a legion of other stakeholders and private donors were essential assets to responders and local communities during the response and recovery phases of these wildfires.

Beyond that, the impacts to agricultural infrastructure, pasture and crop land, forest lands, and other types of land were devastating. More than 300 homes, outbuildings, and other structures were destroyed by wildfires in Nebraska in 2022. Countless crop-ready fields, fencing, and ag facilities were negatively affected.

While there are still needs to be addressed and lessons to be learned from these incidents, and mitigation actions to take for the future, in the end, our communities succeeded in containing these wildfires.

It is through this shared responsibility that we continue to build a resilient Nebraska.

Major General  
Daryl Bohac  
Director

Ervin L. Portis,  
Assistant  
Director



Top left, the Carter Canyon fire south of Gering sparked evacuations in July; top right, an operations briefing is held, Aug. 3 at the Carter Canyon Fire; bottom, blackened ground is part of the landscape after the French Table Fire passes by in January.

## Agency Context

NEMA is part of the Nebraska Military Department, alongside the Nebraska Air and Army National Guard. In his role as adjutant general, **Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac** is the director of NEMA. **Assistant Director Erv Portis** manages day-to-day operations at NEMA. The agency also supports Nebraska's lieutenant governor, who serves as the State Homeland Security Director.

NEMA serves as the primary administrative agency and point of contact for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in integrating emergency management related programs into Nebraska communities. This often manifests as applying for, managing and expediting federal emergency management funds, and collaborating with various partners and other state agencies to carry out the State Homeland Security Program.

NEMA is responsible for ensuring local emergency management programs, agencies and functions

are established and sustained. To those ends, NEMA's strategic plan is updated regularly and was rewritten in 2022 with ample guidance and feedback from local emergency managers and community partners, and which – along with the Nebraska Homeland Security Strategy – is in place to guide the agency's efficacy.

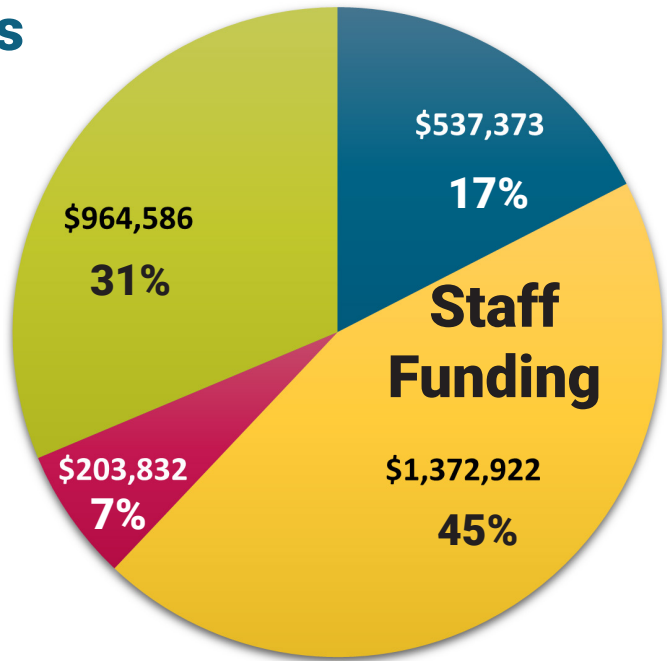
Nationally, NEMA engages with the National Emergency Management Association to work on issues, opportunities, and concerns that affect all states. Locally, NEMA actively supports the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management (NAEM) and its membership of emergency managers, community members, and related stakeholders. NAEM is an organization predicated upon partnerships, collectively working toward community resilience and preserving life, safety, and property. It is just one way in which Nebraskans are serving Nebraskans, and NEMA continually strives to serve those who are serving others.

# Staff and Agency Financials

The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) provides state, local, tribal and territorial emergency management agencies with the resources required for implementation of the National Preparedness System and works toward the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation.

The Governor’s Emergency Fund (GEF) was established by Nebraska RRS 81-829.42 to provide appropriations for the governor to expend for any state of emergency.

The governor may provide assistance to political subdivisions that have suffered from a disaster or emergency to such an extent as to impose a severe financial burden exceeding the ordinary capacity of the subdivision. Such assistance is designed to help political subdivisions of the state maintain or promptly restore essential public facilities or services when threatened by or damaged as the result of a natural or man-made disaster.



Staffing Budget	
State Funding	\$537,373
Federal Funding	\$1,372,922
*Cash Funding	\$203,832
Disaster Funding	\$964,586
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$3,078,714</b>

Full-Time Equivalencies (FTEs)	
State Funded FTEs	9.3
Federal Funded FTEs	26.25
*Cash Funded FTEs	3.75
Disaster Funded FTEs	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>58.3</b>

\* Radiological Emergency Preparedness Funds from Nebraska Public Power District for Cooper Nuclear Station.



## NEMA Recognizes Three Long-time Employees on Their Retirements in December 2022.

Left: Recovery Section Administrator **Donny Christensen** presents **Sue Krogman**, with a flag that flew over the Joint Force Headquarters where NEMA is housed. Krogman served as Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) at the time of her retirement. She was with the agency for 37 years.

Center: **Earl Imler** is recognized by NEMA Director, Maj. Gen. **Daryl Bohac** for his work as Preparedness and Operations Section Manager. Imler was with the agency for nearly 16 years and led the State Emergency Operations Center for many disasters.

Right: Grants Unit Supervisor **Julie Mayers** retired after 22 years. She began her service with NEMA in March 2012 as a Federal Aid Administrator.

## Public Information

Delivering the right message to the right people at the right time is a vital function in disaster operations, and is the responsibility of the Public Information Officer (PIO). The Nebraska Joint Information Center is activated in response to disasters or large events and is staffed by PIOs from state agencies and representatives from local and federal entities involved in the response.

The PIO coordinates and disseminates state-level news releases related to public safety and preparedness.

NEMA's PIO works with local emergency managers to promote preparedness via social media campaigns, a severe weather awareness poster contest and other events.

Nebraska's first two offerings of L0105 Public Information Basics were held in Kearney and Dakota City during 2022. The three-day course replaces G290 as one of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's series of PIO courses which also includes PIO Awareness, Advance PIO and the Master PIO Program.

### NEMA Social Media

	2022	2021	Increase
<b>Facebook Followers</b>	<b>14,539</b>	<b>11,171</b>	<b>30.1%</b>
<b>Twitter Followers</b>	<b>9,671</b>	<b>8,500</b>	<b>13.8%</b>
<b>Youtube Views</b>	<b>159,952</b>	<b>151,784</b>	<b>5.4%</b>

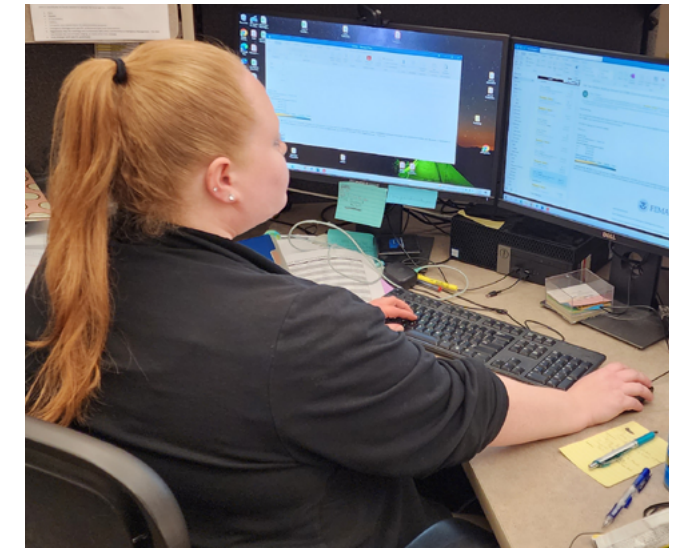
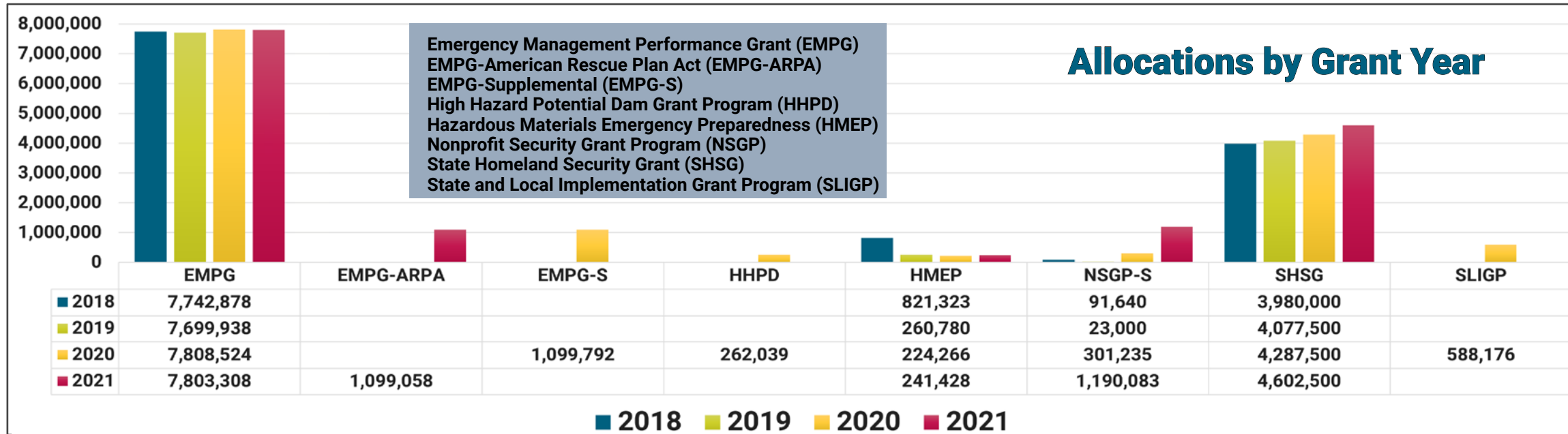


**Ben Bohall**, public information officer for the Nebraska Forest Service, instructs students in the L0105 Public Information Officer course in Dakota City. Bohall teamed up with NEMA PIO **Jodie Fawl** to teach the course.



NEMA staff, from left, **Jodie Fawl**, **Tanya Lyon**, **Logan Lueking** and **Elizabeth Huggins** work the NEMA/FEMA booth at the Nebraska State Fair in August. NEMA promoted preparedness messaging to fairgoers.

# Grants Unit



Federal Aid Administrator III **Chelsea Gray** works on sub-recipient SHSG workplan updates.

## Emergency Management Preparedness Grant

More than 62% of EMPG funds received by the state were passed through to 48 county and regional emergency management offices to assist with paying director's salaries and benefits.

### Emergency Management Preparedness Grant – American Rescue Plan Act

**EMPG-ARPA** provides additional funding to applicable state, tribal and local emergency management offices for reimbursement of operational expenses. Sixty percent of the EMPG-ARPA funds received by the state were passed through to 31 county and regional emergency management offices to assist with paying their operational costs.

### Emergency Management Preparedness Grant – Supplement

**EMPG-S** funding supported planning and operational readiness for COVID-19 preparedness and response, development of tools and strategies for prevention, preparedness and response, and ongoing communication and coordination among federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial partners throughout the response. NEMA was able to provide funding to five local jurisdictions to assist with purchasing PPE, remote operational equipment and emergency operation center upgrades.

### Nonprofit Security Grant Program – State

**NSGP-S** provides funding to nonprofit organizations to prevent and protect against terrorist attacks. NEMA was able to assist eight subgrantees across the state with security enhancements that include security cameras, monitoring services, active shooter training, blast proof windows and access control systems.

## State Homeland Security Program

**SHSP** is a core assistance program providing funds to build capabilities at the state, local, tribal and territorial levels. It enhances national resilience to absorb disruptions and rapidly recover from incidents both natural and man-made as well as to implement the goals and objectives included in state homeland security strategies and initiatives in the state preparedness report. Eighty percent of the funds received are passed through to regional emergency management offices to assist with training, equipment and supply costs.

### Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant

**HMEP** is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and is an 80/20 match grant for states, territories and Tribal Nations. The funds are used to develop and improve emergency response plans and to conduct training of public sector employees who respond to emergencies.

### Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dams Grant Program

**HHPD** makes available federal funds to eligible states for pass through to non-federal governmental organizations or nonprofit organizations for the rehabilitation of dams that fail to meet minimum dam safety standards and pose unacceptable risk to life and property. For the HHPD Program, rehabilitation means repair, replacement, reconstruction or removal of a dam to meet applicable state dam safety and security standards. NEMA worked with the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District on the grant from FY 2020.

## State and Local Implementation Grant Program

SLIGP assisted State, regional, and local jurisdictions with identifying, planning, and implementing the most efficient and effective means to use and integrate the infrastructure, equipment and other architecture associated with the nationwide public safety broadband network to satisfy the wireless broadband and data service needs of jurisdictions. This grant had an 80/20 cost share

and NEMA was able to utilize portions of this grant to support our governance group and the Nebraska Public Safety Broadband Working Group with all FirstNet activities within our state. In addition, NEMA assisted and coordinated the gathering of information requested by FirstNet/AT&T from our state and local jurisdictions.

## State Homeland Security Program Regional Allocations by Fiscal Year

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Adams County	\$20,000	\$20,000	--	--
City of Beatrice	\$20,000	--	--	--
East Central Region	\$435,190	\$438,399	\$446,522	\$492,996
Hall County	\$20,000	\$5,000	--	--
Lincoln County	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$338,913	\$331,000
North Central Region	\$152,025	\$297,031	\$131,463	\$181,565
Northeast Region	\$349,879	\$223,555	\$333,000	\$212,168
Panhandle Region	\$832,348	\$823,826	\$804,611	\$959,367
Platte County	\$20,000	\$20,000	--	--
Red Willow County	\$20,000	\$20,000	--	--
Region 11	\$20,000	\$20,000	--	--
Region 22	\$20,000	\$20,000	--	--
South Central Region	\$318,500	\$530,881	\$636,500	\$926,859
Southeast Region	\$33,300	\$139,400	\$379,357	\$322,420
Southwest Region	\$59,700	\$62,000	\$41,500	\$69,025
Tri-County Region	\$843,058	\$641,908	\$550,272	\$456,726

Numbers are through September 2022. The fiscal year 2022 grant, which is the newest grant, was awarded in September 2022 with a start date of October 2022. Those numbers will be included in NEMA's next annual report.



# Information Technology and Communications Unit

NEMA's Communications, Cybersecurity, and Information Technology staff supports first responder and emergency management personnel during all phases of disaster planning and response.

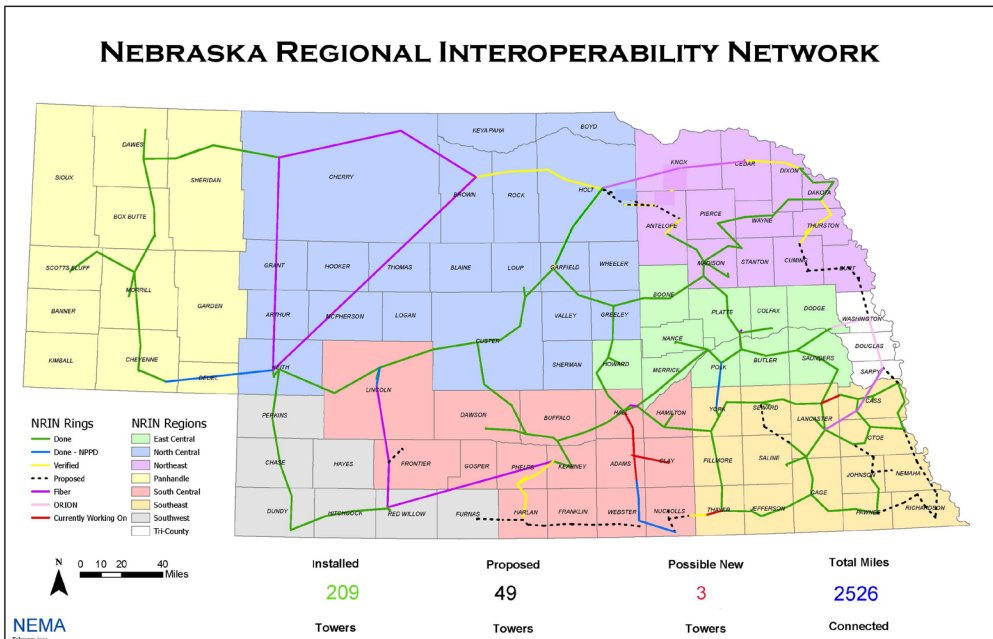
Multiple interoperable systems work together to ensure that local, state and federal partners have access to voice and data services when needed. The Statewide Interoperability Coordinator serves as the single point of contact for the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet.) FirstNet is the nation's broadband communications network dedicated to the public safety community. When the state opted into FirstNet in 2018, FirstNet committed to build eight sites in Nebraska in the first five years, and instead delivered more than 400. FirstNet has invested over \$175 Million in the FirstNet Nebraska network. In 2022, nine new sites were established across the state. Nebraska is also one of the first states to have the initial build completed.

The communications officer manages the Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) for the state. IPAWS is FEMA's national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency and life-saving information to the public through mobile phones using Wireless Emergency Alerts, radio and television via the Emergency Alert System, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Radio. NEMA and the Nebraska State Patrol, 17 counties and 7 regions (an additional 31 counties) are authorized to send alerts. NEMA assists counties applying for alerting authority and provides access to CodeRED, the state's contracted IPAWS software solution.



During 2022, **Nathaniel Smith**, NEMA IT applications developer, led a team to implement a comprehensive over haul of the NEMA website: <https://nema.nebraska.gov>. The new version allows NEMA greater flexibility while also providing a more modern look and feel. The new design makes it easier for the public and emergency managers to access information. It also allows staff to easily and quickly update the website to reflect the latest information during a disaster.

## Nebraska Regional Interoperability Network (NRIN)



NEMA managed the design and implementation of the Nebraska Regional Interoperability Network (NRIN).

This federally funded, locally owned and locally governed IP-routed system consists of microwaves and fiber-optic links, connecting public safety access points and 911 centers.

NRIN is also used by the Nebraska State Radio System for connectivity between system sites providing local first responders and emergency managers, via mutual aid base stations and dispatch systems.



## Cyber Tatanka

NEMA staff participated in the Nebraska National Guard's first-of-its-kind cybersecurity exercise – Cyber Tatanka with participants from an electric utility, banking, other industries and foreign partners.

"The goal of the event was to coordinate and strengthen the state's defense for businesses and infrastructure," said **Nathan Martinez**, NEMA IT infrastructure support analyst/senior. "Cyber attacks are happening and we need to be ready. This training allowed the military experts to share their expertise on how to react to cyber attacks."

## Communications Presentation Becomes Deployment Preparation

NEMA's **Troy Harris** represented the state communications unit at the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management Conference in Grand Island in April to assist with a communications presentation and to provide a demonstration of the cache radios available for deployment to local jurisdictions following an emergency or disaster. That presentation turned into a real-life event when, the state received a request to deploy the radios to the Road 739 Fire in Gosper and Furnas County.

"We stopped exercise operations and transitioned to predeployment preparations," Harris said. "We identified conference attendees who were communication's unit trainees and requested their assistance to program radios and repack the equipment in the unit trailer. It was a great opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities of the unit in action and show how fast we can get equipment out to the field," Harris said. **Corey Simmons** of the Office of the Chief Information Office then left Grand Island to deliver the radios to the field and deploy as the communications unit leader for the fire."



In October, NEMA's **Troy Harris** traveled to Quapaw, Okla., to attend the Central States Communications Association Exercise, the largest communications exercise in the United States. Attending events like this increases the state's response capability to disasters and planned events.



In September, NEMA communications personnel assisted the southeast planning, exercise and training region in hosting a Luke Bryan Farm Tour concert. NEMA staff helped plan the event and worked to solve radio issues prior to the event's start.

## Technical Hazards

Nebraska has a significant radiological footprint that requires an extensive amount of planning, training and exercise activities each year for state and local fire departments, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, EMS, emergency management agencies, political leaders and non-governmental and faith-based organizations. Each organization must stand prepared to support a response to a radiological incident, accident, or event at all times. Comprehensive evaluations are conducted to ensure that each organization is prepared to meet the mission.

NEMA's Technical Hazards staff facilitates and implements the state's Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) program with local partners and stakeholders, including Cooper Nuclear Station, Nemaha, Richardson and Otoe county departments and agencies, as well as the states of Missouri, Iowa and Kansas. The REP program outlines requirements for off-site emergency response organizations when responding to a radiological incident, accident or event involving a nuclear power plant.

The Technical Hazards staff is also actively engaged in the Radioactive Materials Transportation Accident Plan and radiological legacy programs for fixed facilities, hospitals and medical facilities and mining.

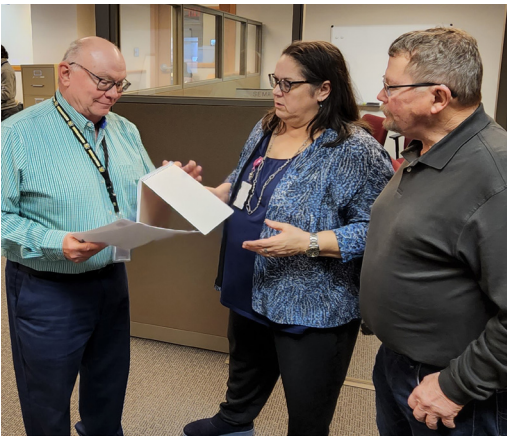
Another benefit of the programs is that they give state departments and agencies, partners and stakeholders the opportunity to exercise together on a regular basis ensuring that everyone involved is better able to respond to any natural or man-made disaster that may occur in Nebraska. Command, control, communications and coordination between all levels of government, partner and stakeholders are routinely exercised, tested, and validated, further demonstrating the preparedness capabilities to protect the citizens of Nebraska.



Federal Emergency Management Agency staff evaluate radiological medical care capabilities at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC).



Personnel from UNMC, Cooper Nuclear Station, FEMA and NEMA conduct a hotwash following a medical exercise to evaluate capabilities related to the reception, decontamination and medical care of a potentially contaminated patient if a radiological incident, accident or event were to occur at Cooper Nuclear Station (CNS).



Nebraska Emergency Management Agency staff hold exercises throughout the year with county officials, representatives of Cooper Nuclear Station, other state agencies and the Federal Emergency Agency staff to test plans and procedures for a response in the event of an incident at the power plant located near Brownville in Southeast Nebraska.

# State Watch Center

The State Watch Center, established at NEMA in 2016, is tasked with gathering information and intelligence on natural and man-made hazards and threats that may have potential, imminent or ongoing impacts to the State of Nebraska.

The State Watch Center disseminates daily situational briefings Monday through Friday—or more often, as conditions warrant—to more than 500 public safety stakeholders at all levels of local, state and federal government—as well as partners in non-governmental organizations and private industry. Its purpose is to provide situational awareness about weather, incidents and events, and available response resources within the state.

The State Watch Center provides stakeholder access to a live web-based dashboard, updated in real time, as incidents, events and weather conditions develop. This creates on-demand access to current information on threats, hazards, and incidents.

To ensure NEMA is able to maintain around-the-clock awareness of incidents, hazards and events that may impact Nebraska or its resources, the State Watch Center maintains two full-time staff members, and an off-hours watch officer system.








On-call watch officers are responsible for monitoring incidents, events, weather alerts and any communications from emergency managers or public safety entities during non-business hours. The watch officers provide supplemental staffing to the State Watch Center during times when additional personnel are needed to monitor or respond to alerts, incidents or events.

During the 2022 calendar year, 40 NEMA staff served as part of the rotating watch officer team.

## Incident Status Reports

Local emergency managers complete an online incident status report (ISR) and send it to the State Watch Center to report on incidents/events that are occurring or expected, and to request additional resources to enhance local response efforts.

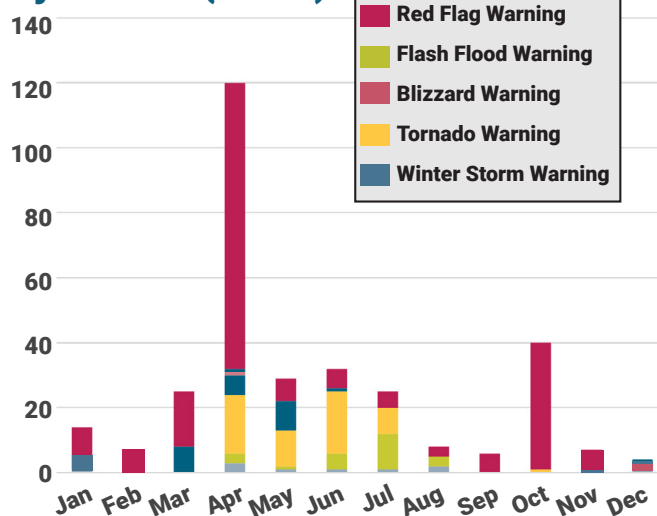
During 2022, the Watch Center received 192 incident status reports from local emergency managers. Of those, 109 were reports on wildfires.

Weather Alerts		2022	2021
	Red Flag Warnings	193	77
	Tornado Warnings	57	59
	Flash Flood Warnings	23	32
	Flood Warnings	10	23
	Tornado Watches	17	2
	Winter Storm Warnings	14	18
	Blizzard Warnings	3	2

Incident Status Reports by Type	2022	2021
Wildfires	109	43
Flooding	4	9
Wind Damage	30	27
Tornadoes	4	3
Hail Damage	11	6
Power Outage	18	14
Hazardous Materials	20	22
Structure Fires	11	7
Ice Jams	1	4
Water Emergencies	1	3
Missing Persons	1	2

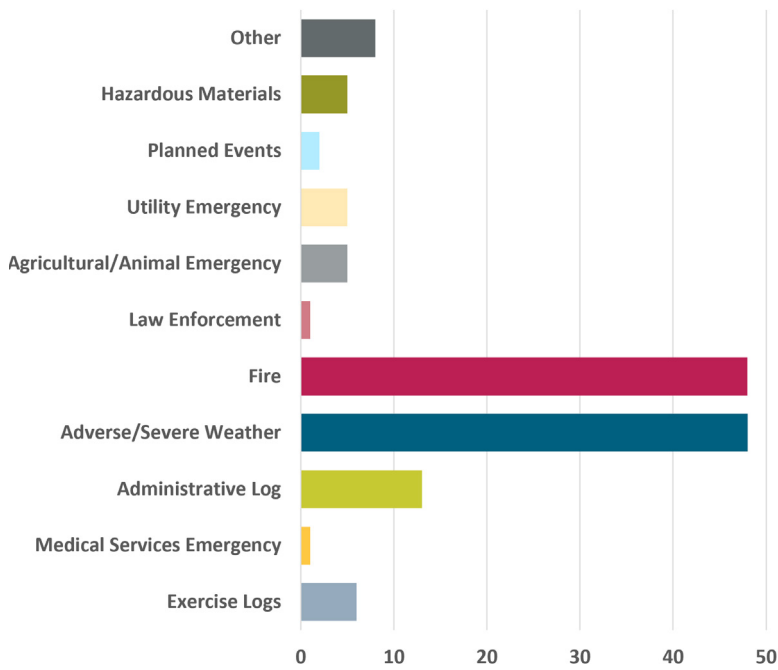
Incident Status Reports by Planning Exercise and Training Region	2022	2021
East Central	6	14
North Central/Sandhills	86	27
Northeast	33	20
Panhandle	17	11
South Central	33	34
Southeast	13	12
Southwest	3	4
Tri-County	1	7

## Weather Alerts by Month (2022)



## Incident/Event Logging and Tracking

### Incidents by Type 2022



The primary method of tracking and logging information related to hazards, threats, incidents and events for the State Watch Center through 2022 was Knowledge Center.

NEMA and its federal, state and local partners access the system to log inputs to events, as well as maintain situational awareness on actions taken by other stakeholders, reports received and resources requested.

With Knowledge Center, both state and local entities have the capability to create their own incident/event logs, as well as the ability to link those incident logs to one another; for instance, several local jurisdictions each create their own incident log to monitor and track a widespread flooding event, and are able to tether it to a state-level flooding incident log, to enhance situational awareness at all levels.

During 2022, state and local public safety entities created 142 Knowledge Center incident logs. Of those, 76 were created at the state level, and 66 were created at the local level.

### National Response Center Reports

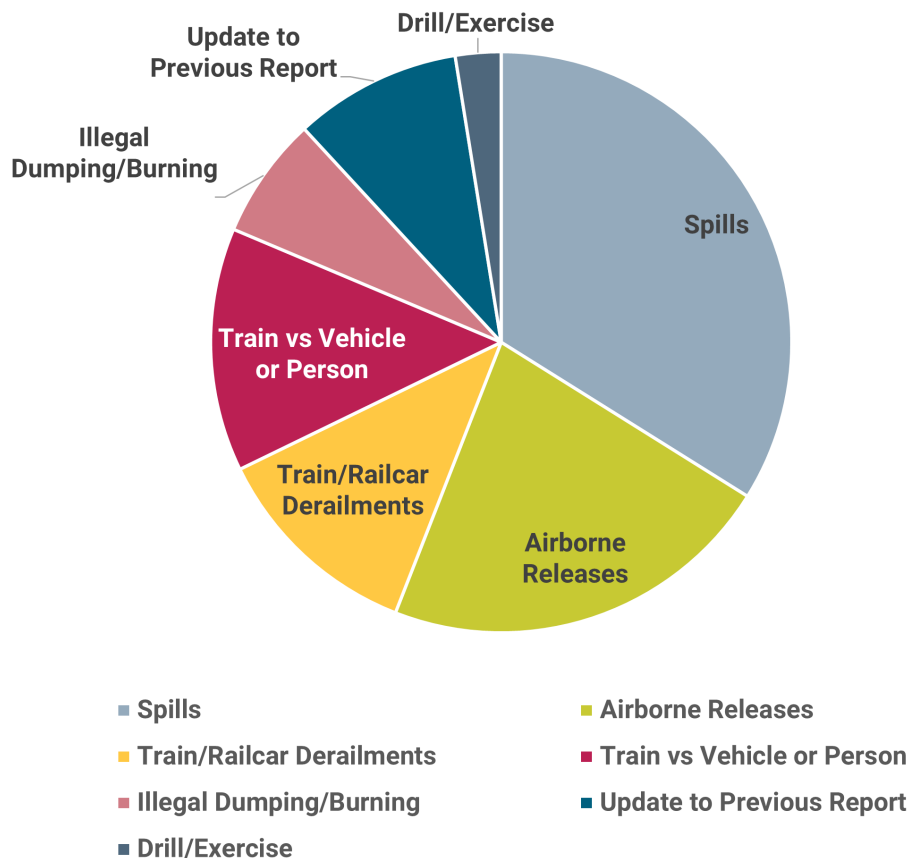
The U.S. Coast Guard maintains a National Response Center (NRC), that reports out on environmental emergencies related to oil and chemical spills, as well as any incidents or events that involve railroad infrastructure.

The State Watch Center receives a notification from the NRC any time there is a reportable incident or event in Nebraska.

The information is then recorded in Knowledge Center and relayed to the relevant local emergency managers, for situational awareness of hazardous materials and railroad incidents that have occurred within their jurisdiction.

During 2022, the State Watch Center received 118 NRC reports.

### National Response Center Reports Received



# A YEAR OF FIRE

For emergency managers and first responders in Nebraska, 2022 was a year defined by wildfires.

From lightning strikes to damaged railcar wheels, the causes varied; however, 2022's unprecedented drought conditions – the fourth driest year on record – allowed fires to spread rapidly across miles of Nebraska's various terrains.

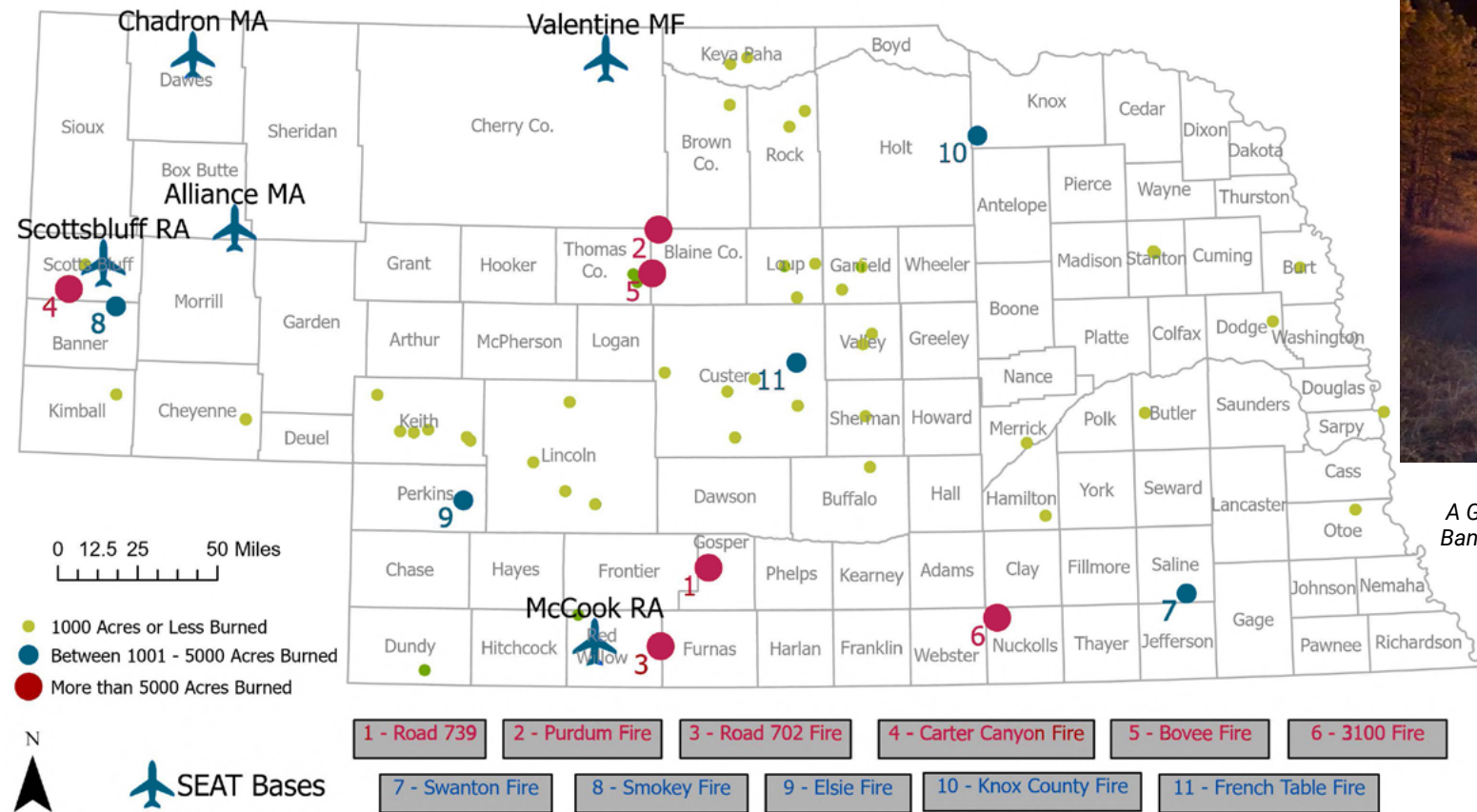
While there are still unmet needs from these wildfires, and mitigating actions to prepare for the future, in the end, these wildfires were successfully contained by local communities with assistance from the State of Nebraska. That would not happen without the sweat, sacrifice and selflessness of Nebraska's local responders and partners who willingly put themselves in harm's way to protect their friends and neighbors - epitomizing Nebraskans serving Nebraskans in its purest form.

In doing so, dozens of men and women suffered injuries, and some paid unconditionally: Elwood Fire Chief **Darren Krull** and retired Cambridge Fire Chief **John P. Trumble** both gave their lives in April on the Road 739 Fire and Road 702 Fire, respectively. Purdum Assistant Fire Chief **Mike Moody** made the ultimate sacrifice while responding to the Bovee Fire in October. Their leadership is an example to be emulated, and their memory remains viscerally present in all aspects of disaster response in Nebraska.



**Gering Fire Department Photo**  
Heavy flames rapidly move through trees at the Carter Canyon Fire southwest of Gering on July 30. The fire consumed 15,630 acres destroying 11 outbuildings and two homes.

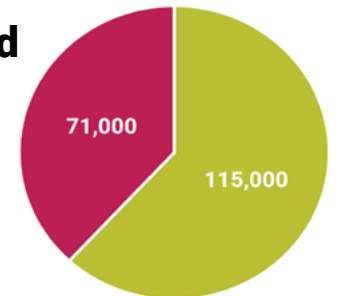
## Nebraska Wildfires 2022



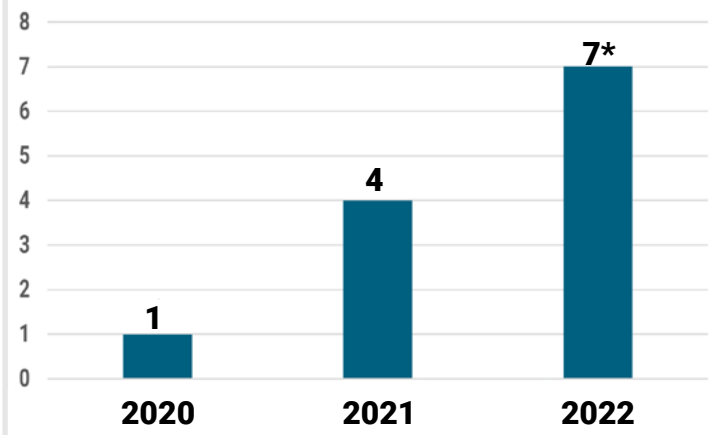
**Photo by Gering Fire Department**  
A Gering Fire Department truck moves through flames at the Smokey Fire in Banner County in September.

### Acreage Burned in 2022

April 2022 (71,000 acres)  
Remainder of 2022 (115,000 acres)

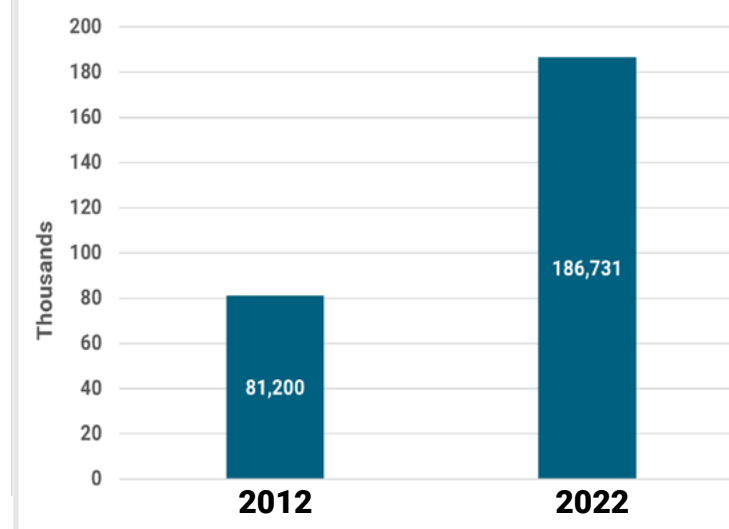


### State Declarations Per Year for Wildfires



\*Authorized under a governor's statewide drought declaration in April the state provided assistance on seven wildfires.

### 2012 vs. 2022 Acres Burned



### Wildfire Costs: Nebraska's Two Largest Wildfire Years Compared



<sup>1</sup>Costs known through December 31, 2022



**Photo by Slim Reece**

Fire burns through trees at the Smokey Fire in September.

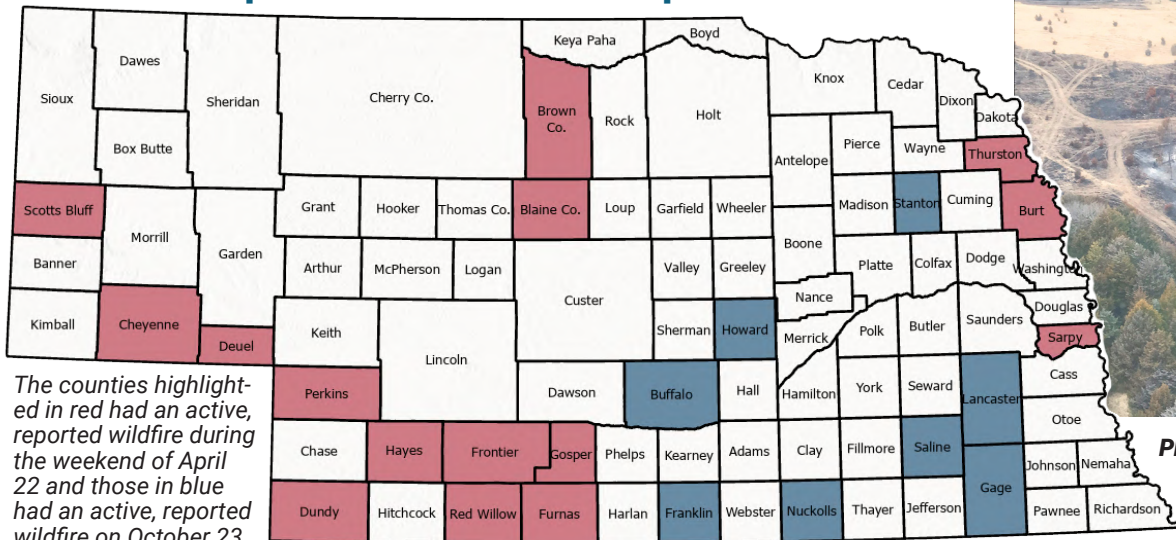
Single Engine Air Tanker Facts	
Number of Planes	2
Operational Period	April to October <sup>1</sup>
Operational Days	244
Fires Flown	38
Gallons of Fire Retardant Dropped	140,000
Assets Protected	Lives, property and natural resources
SEAT Base Locations	Alliance, Chadron, McCook, Scottsbluff, Valentine, and one mobile
Assists from other states	South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Kansas

<sup>1</sup>In a typical year, the State of Nebraska contracts a Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) to provide aerial fire suppression from July into September. Due to the drought and severe fire season in 2022, two SEATs were put on contract, one from April to October and the other from July to September.



Firefighters work on hot spots at the Road 739 fire which started in Gosper County in April.

## Impact to Volunteer Fire Departments



The counties highlighted in red had an active, reported wildfire during the weekend of April 22 and those in blue had an active, reported wildfire on October 23.



**Photo by Larry Fichtner**  
Nine-hundred acres burned at the Votaw Road Fire in March.



# Fire Information

2022 Fire Name	Cost As of Dec. 31, 2022	Responding Entities	Acres Burned	Aerial Suppression	Out-of-State Resources	IMT or IMAT <sup>3</sup>	Structures Damaged or Destroyed
Votaw Road—March 15	\$400,444	45	900	✓	✓	✓	0
Road 739—April 8	\$440,991	66	35,000	✓	✓	✓	59
Road 702—April 22	\$1,189,576	62	44,024	✓	✓	✓	6
Elsie Complex—April 22	\$39,438	16	4,970	N/A	N/A	✓	0
Carter Canyon—July 30	\$769,040	36	15,630	✓	✓	✓	20
Smokey Fire—Sept. 15	\$464,906	33	4,348	✓	✓	✓	0
Bovee Fire <sup>1</sup> —Oct. 2	\$51,003	15	18,930	✓	✓	✓	19
Other Fires Reported to NEMA <sup>2</sup> — 54	\$1,186,833	N/A	62,929	✓	✓	N/A	210
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,542,231</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>186,731</b>				<b>314</b>

<sup>1</sup> Bovee Fire has a cost share with the U.S. Forest Service

<sup>2</sup> This includes the Single Engine Air Tankers, state contracted aerial applicators and Civil Air Patrol flights.

<sup>3</sup> Incident Management Team or Incident Management Assistance Team

Specific fires listed above were state-declared incidents which opened the Governor's Emergency Fund for reimbursement. The number of entities listed are agencies that responded with equipment. Throughout the seven state-declared incidents, those entities put in a combined 13,407 hours of equipment time.



Assets and personnel from Nebraska National Guard, Nebraska State Fire Marshal Agency, Nebraska State Patrol, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency and Region 22 Emergency Management (Banner and Scotts Bluff counties) supported the response at the Smokey Fire in September 2023. The fire burned 4,358 acres in Northeast Banner County.



Operations Chief Allen Michals gives a brief at the Smokey Fire in Banner County.

## Incident Management Team (IMT) Facts

Nebraska IMT or IMAT <sup>1</sup> Deployments	Six: Votaw Road Fire, Road 739 Fire, Road 702 Fire, Carter Canyon Fire; Smokey Fire, Bovee Fire
IMT Members <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Agency Representatives (NEMA, State Fire Marshal Agency, Nebraska Forest Service)</li> <li>Local Emergency Managers and other partners</li> </ul>
Additional Partners to the IMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Emergency Managers and other partners</li> <li>Wildland Incident Response and Assistance Team (WIRAT)</li> <li>Nebraska National Guard (Air and Ground Support)</li> <li>Nebraska State Patrol</li> <li>Office of Chief Information Officer (OCIO)</li> <li>Civil Air Patrol</li> <li>National Weather Service</li> <li>U.S. Forest Service</li> </ul>
Non-profits and Other Partners who Assisted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nebraska Preparedness Partnership</li> <li>Nebraska Cattlemen Association</li> <li>Nebraska Farm Bureau</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> An Incident Management Assistance Team is comprised of command and general staff requested to support a local incident commander.

<sup>2</sup> All IMT Members have been trained in specific support functions, such as planning, logistics, operations, communications or other areas.

# Planning, Exercise and Training

NEMA's Planning, Exercise, Training Unit oversees the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP), Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR), State Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), the Continuity of Government Plan (COG), the Integrated Preparedness Plan and regular revisions of the county local emergency operations plans (LEOPs).

BOLDplanning, an online planning and collaboration platform, was introduced by NEMA to help streamline the planning process for local communities. It is provided to counties at no charge.

BOLDplanning allows for real-time updates and a mobile viewing format for the plan. It allows multiple individuals to view the plan at different locations. This provides the ability for local jurisdictions to respond

more effectively during an emergency.

NEMA continues to establish a level of training in compliance with Department of Homeland Security and Nebraska statute requirements. This includes the encouraged use of courses created by FEMA, via both independent study and classroom instruction.

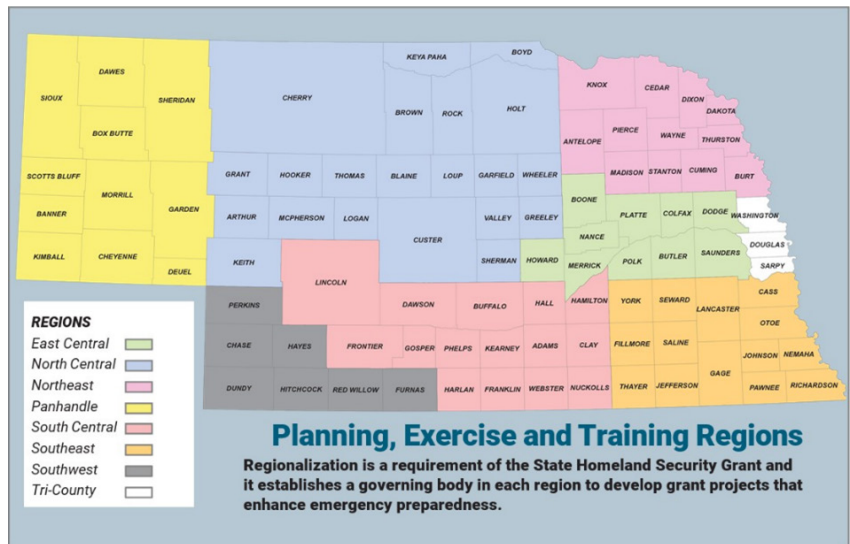
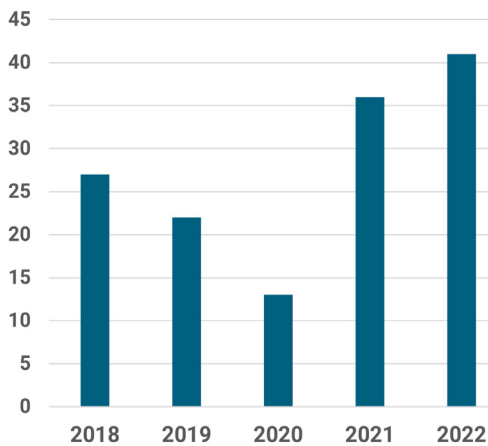
Classroom courses include those that are position specific, intended to be the starting point for those individuals who wish to become credentialed through the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

NIMS is a national standard with a shared vocabulary, system and process for successfully responding to a disaster and which culminates in the completion of a task book.

These task books identify the competencies, behaviors and tasks that personnel must demonstrate in order

**366 Nebraska students have completed incident management team position specific courses since 2011. In 2022, an additional 7.6% finished their IMT course.**

**Training Courses Delivered or Coordinated by NEMA**

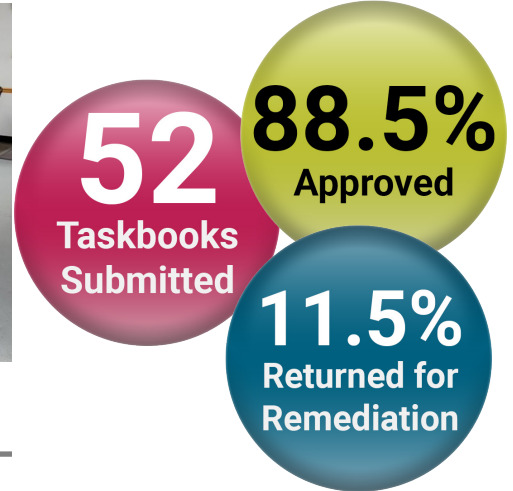


Top: **Gov. Pete Ricketts** recognizes Nebraska Emergency Management, State Fire Marshal Agency and State Forest Service Staff in 2022 for their work to establish the Type 3 Nebraska Incident Management Team. Right: **Larry Fichtner**, a NEMA exercise training officer, assists with an exercise in the State Emergency Operations Center.





Command staff on the Nebraska All-Hazards Incident Management Type 3 Team meet to formalize plans and procedures for the team.

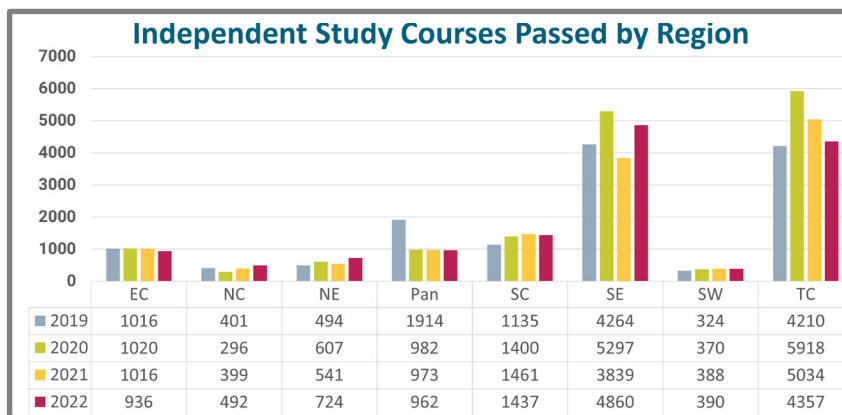
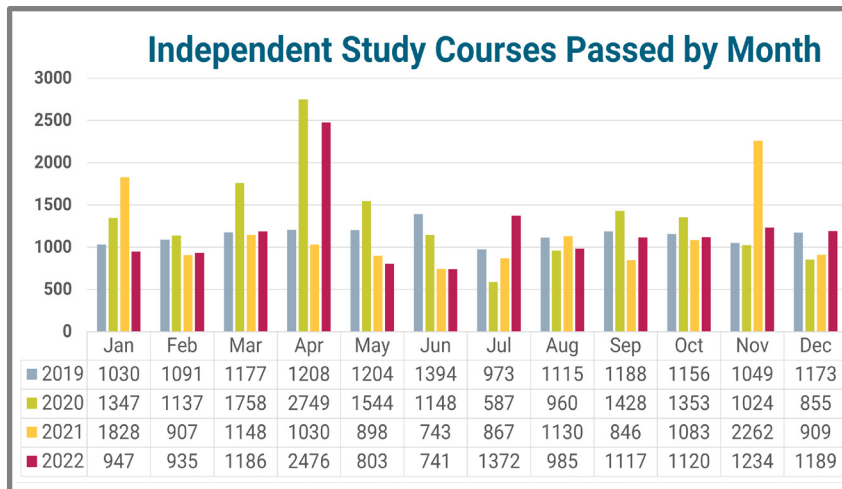


to become qualified for a defined incident management and support position.

The Qualifications Review Board (QRB) examines applications for certification of Position Specific Task Books and makes recommendations to the adjutant general for approval or remediation. The QRB is comprised of the Planning, Exercise and Training Unit supervisor, credentialed Incident Command System (ICS) instructors, Wildland incident Response Assistance Team (WIRAT) coordinators, a representative from the Nebraska State Fire Marshal Agency, a local Emergency Manager and a local Fire Chief.

Of the people who have completed a position specific course, 9% have gone on to become certified in Incident Management Team (IMT) positions. Task book credentialing is important to the development and continued growth of the Nebraska Type 3 IMT. Nebraska's development of a Type 3 IMT saves a significant amount of tax dollars by eliminating the need to bring in IMTs from other states.

The IMT was used in two large wildfires during the 2022 wildfire season. Training continues in an effort to expand the number of credentialed individuals eligible to become members of the IMT.



Lancaster County Emergency Management Director **Jim Davidsaver** and NEMA Planning Specialist **Matt Harrison** are among the local and state staff supporting volunteer firefighter training at the annual Nebraska Fire School, held each year in Grand Island, in May. Using the Salamander system, emergency managers checked in firefighters from across the state who attended. The system also tags, tracks and reports on responders, volunteers and equipment at disaster scenes.

# Public Assistance

In 2022, the Public Assistance (PA) Unit closed out 365 individual projects and 65 subrecipients from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Public Assistance Grant Program.

As authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, FEMA provides funding through the program to reimburse local, state, tribal and territorial governments and select private non-profits for costs associated with response and recovery efforts caused by disasters.

Only damaged public infrastructure is eligible for reimbursement. To consider requesting a federally declared disaster, the state must reach a threshold. The threshold for fiscal year 2022 was \$3,197,251.

The State of Nebraska, through NEMA, is the recipient of the PA grant. The recipient is responsible for administering the program within the state. The agency

disburses obligated funding as a pass-through entity to eligible grant applicants.

The PA Unit coordinates project obligation efforts between FEMA and sub-recipients to ensure the scope of work of each project is aligned with programmatic regulations and accurately addresses the sub-recipient's recovery needs. The PA Unit is responsible for closing out each project and sub-recipient from the program.

The unit handles state funded disasters. In 2022, there was one state funded disaster. On June 11, a severe weather event, that included tornadic activity, straight-line winds, hail and rainfall, swept through the City of Wymore causing damage to the electrical infrastructure and creating vast amounts of debris.

The damage caused Wymore to exceed its disaster threshold and **Gov. Pete Ricketts** approved a state disaster declaration to assist the city's recovery efforts.

## Funds Paid by December 31, 2022

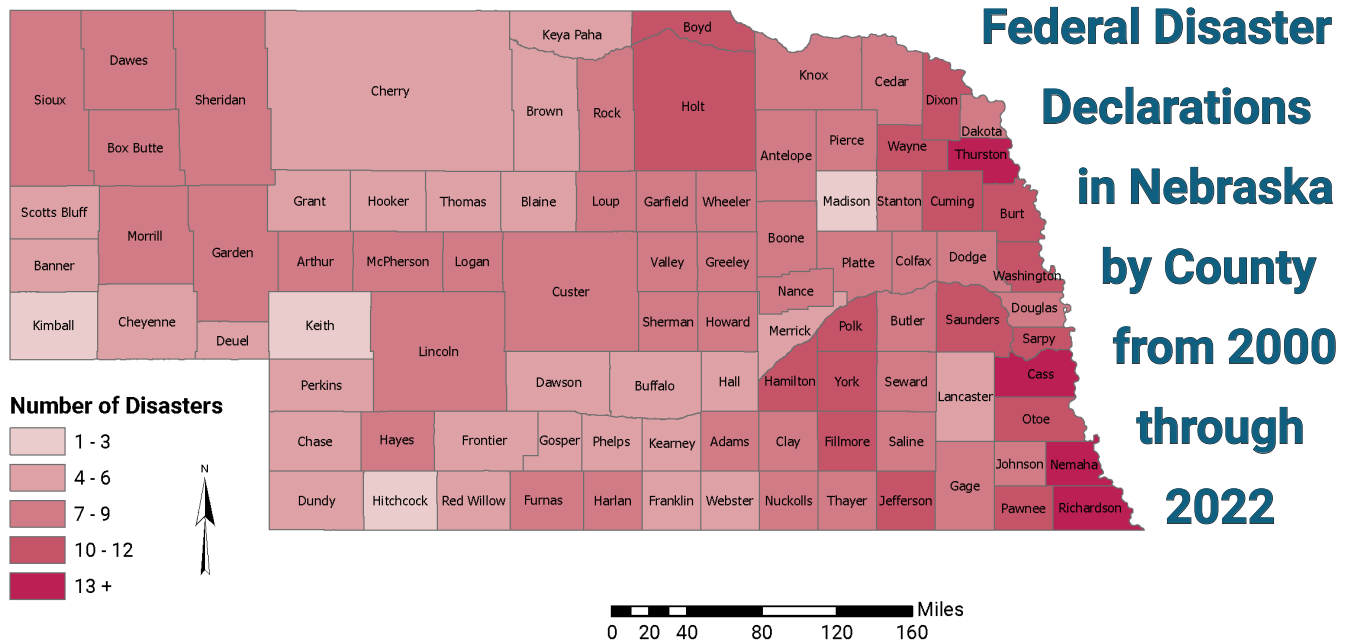
Disaster	Federal Share	State Share <sup>1</sup>	Local Share	Disaster Declaration Date
4225 – Severe Storms	\$13,656,743	\$2,019,422	\$2,826,010	June 25, 2015
4420 – Floods	\$141,164,666	\$4,417,418	\$28,067,783	March 21, 2019
4521 – COVID-19	\$187,507,799	\$-	\$1,490 <sup>2</sup>	April 4, 2020
4616 – Severe Storms	\$15,488,127	\$36,886	\$1,065,834	Sept. 6, 2021
4641 – Severe Storms	\$1,942,754	\$8,700	\$469,475	Feb. 23, 2022
4662 – Severe Storms	\$213,324	\$-	\$65,827	July 27, 2022

## Disasters Closed in 2022

Disaster	Federal Share	State Share <sup>1</sup>	Local Share	Date Closed
4325 – Severe Storms	\$15,098,468	\$297,975	\$4,487,754	March 21, 2022
4375 – Winter Storm	\$7,302,114	\$11,480	\$2,369,174	June 23, 2022
4387 – Flooding	\$2,577,582	\$396,926	\$435,205	May 31, 2022

<sup>1</sup> The local and state shares will not equal each other as certain projects and entities are not eligible for a state share.

<sup>2</sup> Any work that applicants conducted or completed on or after July 2, 2022 will be funded at the 90% cost share leaving them responsible for 10 percent of eligible work.



# DR-4641

# Nebraska Disaster Update

Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds and Tornadoes –  
Incident Period: Dec. 15, 2021

Declared  
Feb. 23,  
2022

17  
Applicants

Obligated  
Federal  
Share  
\$8,680,784

59  
Projects

57  
Projects  
Obligated

Obligated  
Project Total  
\$9,607,485

25 Counties  
Approved for  
Public Assistance



Project obligation is a commitment on behalf of the awarding agency (FEMA) to have funding available for drawdown at the time the grantee (NEMA) determines the sub-grantee has provided enough documentation to establish the project is compliant with all grant program requirements. The initial public damage assessment estimate for this disaster was \$6,791,680.

## Hazard Mitigation

6-Month Funding Estimate: \$1,299,835

Application Deadline: May 24, 2023

Grant Period of Performance:

Dec. 15, 2021 – May 24, 2026

### Projects by Categories

A – Debris Removal	5
B – Protective Measures	3
B – Donated Resources	1
C – Roads and Bridges	0
D – Water Control Facilities	0
E – Public Buildings	6
F – Public Utilities	29
G – Recreational or Other	2
Z – Management Costs	13



Top: one of many downed powerlines.  
Left: damaged conveyer at Omaha Public Power District's Nebraska City facility. Below: Air conditioning unit damage at the Omaha Public Power District's Plattsmouth facility. Right: Tree damage at the Fillmore County Fairgrounds.



# DR-4662

# Nebraska Disaster Update

Severe Storms and Straight-line Winds –  
Incident Period: May 12, 2022

Declared  
July 27,  
2022

**71**  
Projects

**5**  
Projects  
Obligated

**19**  
Applicants

20 Counties  
Approved  
for Public  
Assistance

Obligated  
Federal  
Share  
\$631,555

Obligated  
Project Total  
\$763,210

Project obligation is a commitment on behalf of the awarding agency (FEMA) to have funding available for drawdown at the time the grantee (NEMA) determines the sub-grantee has provided enough documentation to establish the project is compliant with all grant program requirements. The initial public damage assessment estimate for this disaster was \$4,158,465.

## Hazard Mitigation

30-Day Funding Estimate: \$467,827

Application Deadline: July 27, 2023

Grant Period of Performance:  
July 27, 2022 – July 27, 2026

## Projects by Categories

A – Debris Removal	6
B – Protective Measures	4
B – Donated Resources	0
C – Roads and Bridges	0
D – Water Control Facilities	0
E – Public Buildings	12
F – Public Utilities	28
G – Recreational or Other	3
Z – Management Costs	18



Top: Dust storm begins in North Platte. Left: The Grandstand at Nebraska's Big Rodeo in Burwell suffered damage as a result of the straight-line wind event in May 2022. Right: damage to the backside of the damaged grandstands.

# FM-5436

# Nebraska Disaster Update

Road 702 Fire –

Incident Period: April 22 to May 2, 2022

Declared  
April 23,  
2022

Obligated  
Project Total  
To Be  
Determined

0  
Projects  
Obligated

2  
Applicants

1  
Project

Obligated  
Federal Share  
To Be  
Determined

2 Counties  
Approved for the FMAG

The Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) Program is available to state, local and tribal governments, for the mitigation, management, and control of fires on publicly or privately owned forests or grasslands, which threaten such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. The FMAG Program provides a 75 percent federal cost share and the state pays the remaining 25 percent for actual costs.

## Hazard Mitigation Grant Program – Post Fire

This grant becomes available to states that receive a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG). This is the first time the State of Nebraska has received a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program – Post Fire grant.

Funding Estimate: \$786,552

Application Deadline: February 1, 2023

Period of Performance: April 23, 2022 - April 23, 2025



Above: The Road 702 Fire moved rapidly northward through Furnas and Red Willow counties spurred on by high winds and dry fuels on April 22. The fire eventually burned 45,000 acres. Right: Nebraska National Guard helicopters with "bambi" buckets full of water respond.



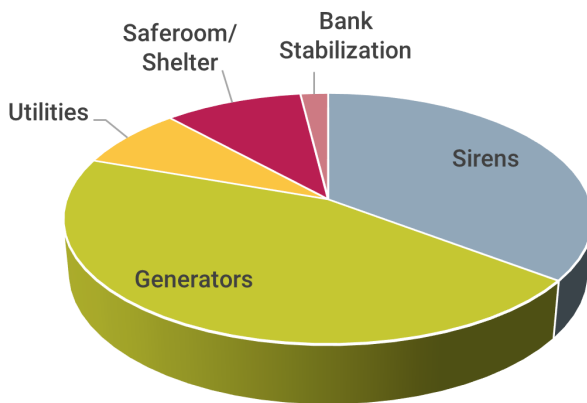
# Hazard Mitigation

The NEMA Hazard Mitigation Unit is responsible for maintaining the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, reviewing local multi-jurisdiction hazard mitigation plans and facilitating the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities (BRIC) grant program.

The unit is responsible for providing technical assistance to local communities on application development, site visits, project final inspections and closeouts.

Hazard Mitigation Statistics	
New Disasters	3
New Grants	4
Disasters Closed/Pending Closeout	5
Active Disasters	5
Individual Projects Closed/Pending Closeout	9
HMA Paid Out 2022	\$5,062,514
Projects Approved 2022	19
Dollars (Federal Share) Approved in 2022	\$2,219,577

## Notices of Interest (NOI) on File



**NOI Submission and Percentage of Funding** – A Notice of Interest (NOI) is submitted by the jurisdiction that has interest in a project that may be eligible for Hazard Mitigation Assistance. Projects fall under three different categories in each grant 5% Initiative, Regular projects 88% and Planning 7%.



The Platte River Gauge project installed five river monitoring cameras and two river gauges along the Platte River to monitor river conditions. (Right) NEMA Program Specialist **Marisa Alvares** inspects the camera mounted at the top of a pole.



The City of Osmond acquisition project conducts a controlled burn demolition of properties acquired through the project.



After demolition and leveling, the area was left as an open lot in the City of Osmond.

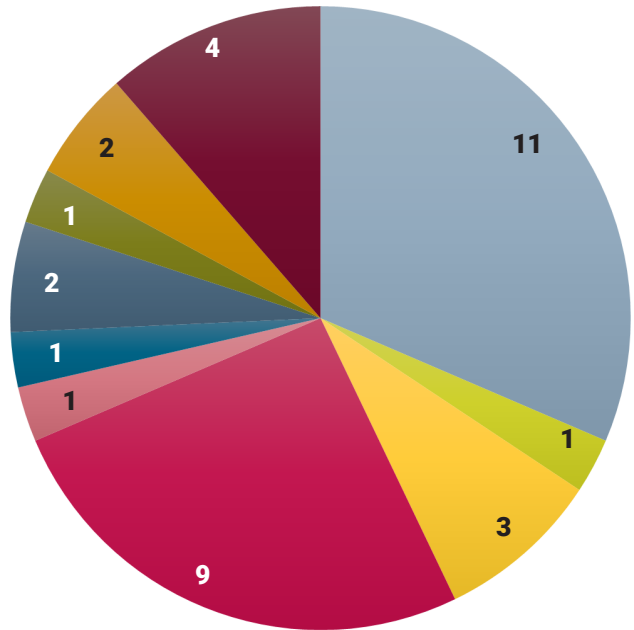




(Top) The Central City Public Schools dome under construction in 2021. (Middle) The completed dome in December 2022. (Bottom) NEMA Program Specialist **Erica Wertz** inspects signage on the community doors leading into the saferoom.

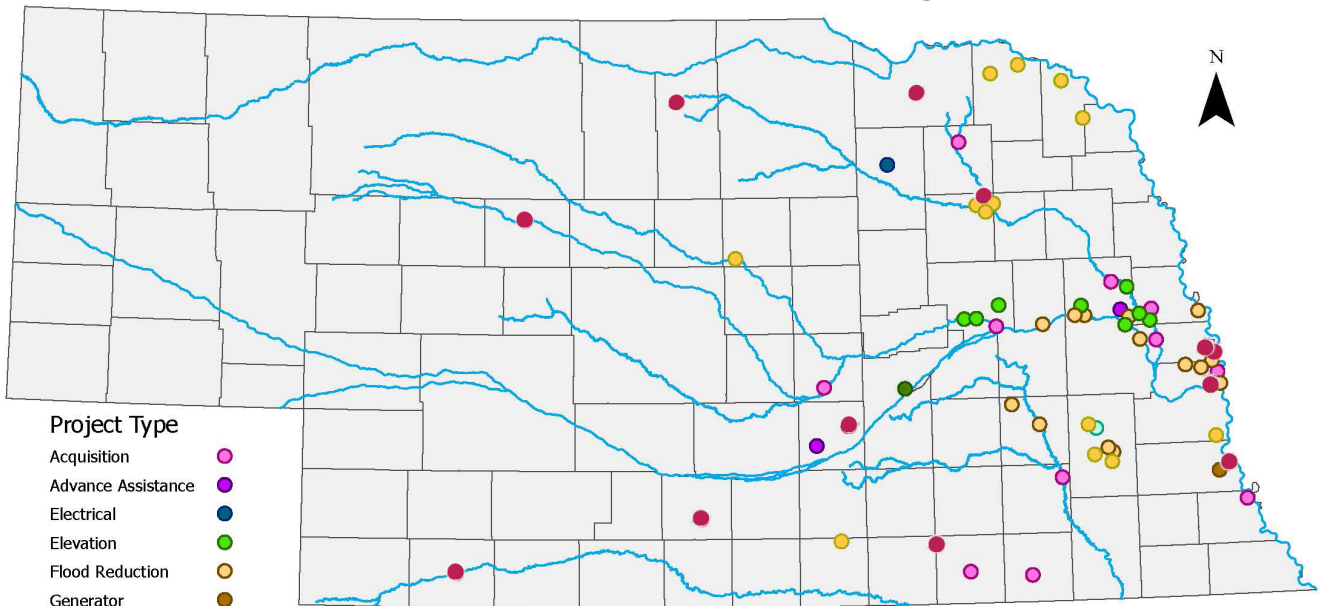


## Open Project Breakdown



- Acquisition
- Plan
- Safe Room
- Elevation
- Project Scoping
- Electrical
- Flood Mitigation
- Advanced Assistance
- Generator
- Warning System

## Active Hazard Mitigation Projects



### Project Type

- Acquisition ●
- Advance Assistance ●
- Electrical ●
- Elevation ●
- Flood Reduction ●
- Generator ●
- Mapping ●
- Plan ●
- Safe Room ●
- Siren ●
- Other ●



# Nebraska Citizen Corps

Nebraska Citizen Corps engages and leverages local networks of volunteers to serve their neighbors and communities in all phases of disaster events to make their areas safe, strong and resilient. Nebraska Citizen Corps consists of four primary programs:

**Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)** educate the public about disaster preparedness and train volunteers in such things as fire safety, light search and rescue, and first aid, to provide additional support to professional responders.



**Fire Corps** works to help fire/EMS departments by engaging with community members, assisting with non-emergency tasks like fire prevention and life safety education, installing smoke alarms, writing grants, and managing social media, among many others.



**Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** trains for, and responds to, emergencies while also actively supporting preparedness initiatives. MRC volunteers include medical and public health professionals and members of the public who want to simply improve the health and safety of their community.



**Neighborhood Watch** connects citizens with local law enforcement to work jointly in community crime prevention and reduction efforts.



**Working in close proximity with Nebraska Citizen Corps are many nonprofit and nongovernment organizations that assist in times of disasters, including:**



## NEVOAD

**Nebraska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NEVOAD):** Comprised of existing voluntary agencies, this organization works to foster more effective responses to the people of Nebraska in times of disaster through cooperation, coordination, communication, and collaboration.

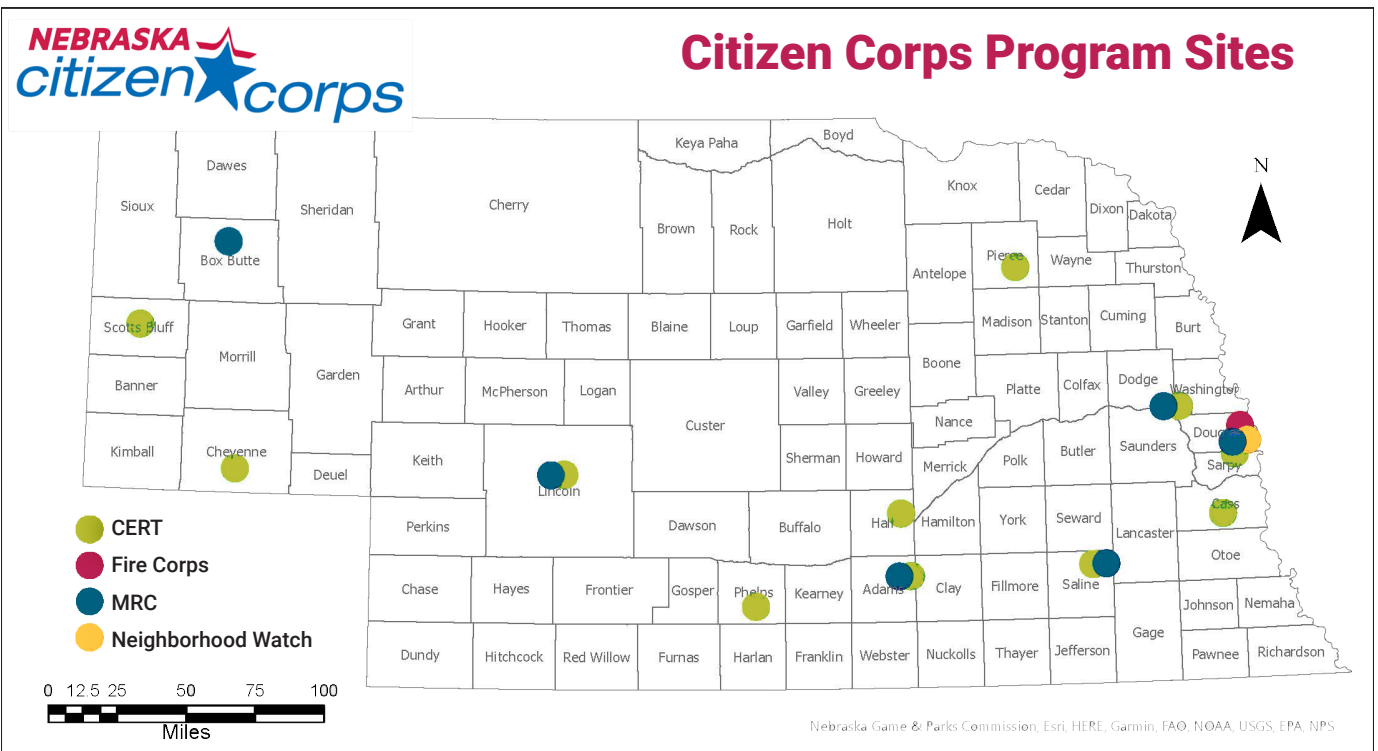
Each member organization maintains its own identity and independence, yet works closely with other agencies to improve service and eliminate unnecessary duplication of efforts in times of disaster.

## COAD

**Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD):** COADs are organizations, based within a community or geographic area, which are composed of representatives from public, private and non-profit agencies. This organization provides a platform for addressing unmet needs groups in their communities in the event of a disaster event.

**Together Nebraska Citizen Corps, VOADs and COADs strengthen the efforts of long-term recovery.**

**Long-Term Recovery is the continued process of a community preparing for disasters from a post-disaster lens. Within the phases of emergency management, Long-Term Recovery is the connecting link between recovery and mitigation.**

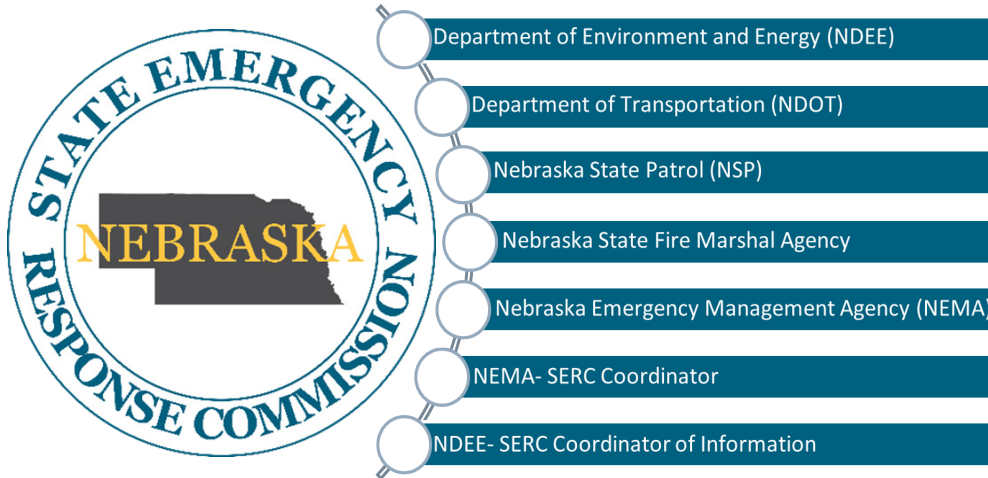


## State Emergency Response Commission (SERC)

- Support and assist the planning and preparedness efforts for hazardous materials and chemical-related disaster and emergency events
- Facilitate the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA)
- Assist and support local emergency planning committees (LEPCs)

## Appointed Positions

- Municipal Government
- Local Elected Officials
- Firefighters
- Local Emergency Management
- Public Health
- Environmental Protection
- Labor
- School District
- Small Business
- Agriculture Business
- Chemical Industry
- Highway Transportation
- Rail Transportation



## Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC)

- Develop, monitor, assess and integrate hazmat plans with other local emergency operations, response and continuity plans.
- Educate the public on hazmat and chemical awareness and protocols.
- Track hazmat and chemical inventories supplied, produced and transported by local industry to or through the community.

## Nebraska Hazardous Incident Team (NHIT)



- NHIT is comprised of members of the Nebraska State Fire Marshal Agency, the Nebraska State Patrol and Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy.
- Individuals assist local and county officials acting as a liaison for additional resources and are trained as hazmat technicians.

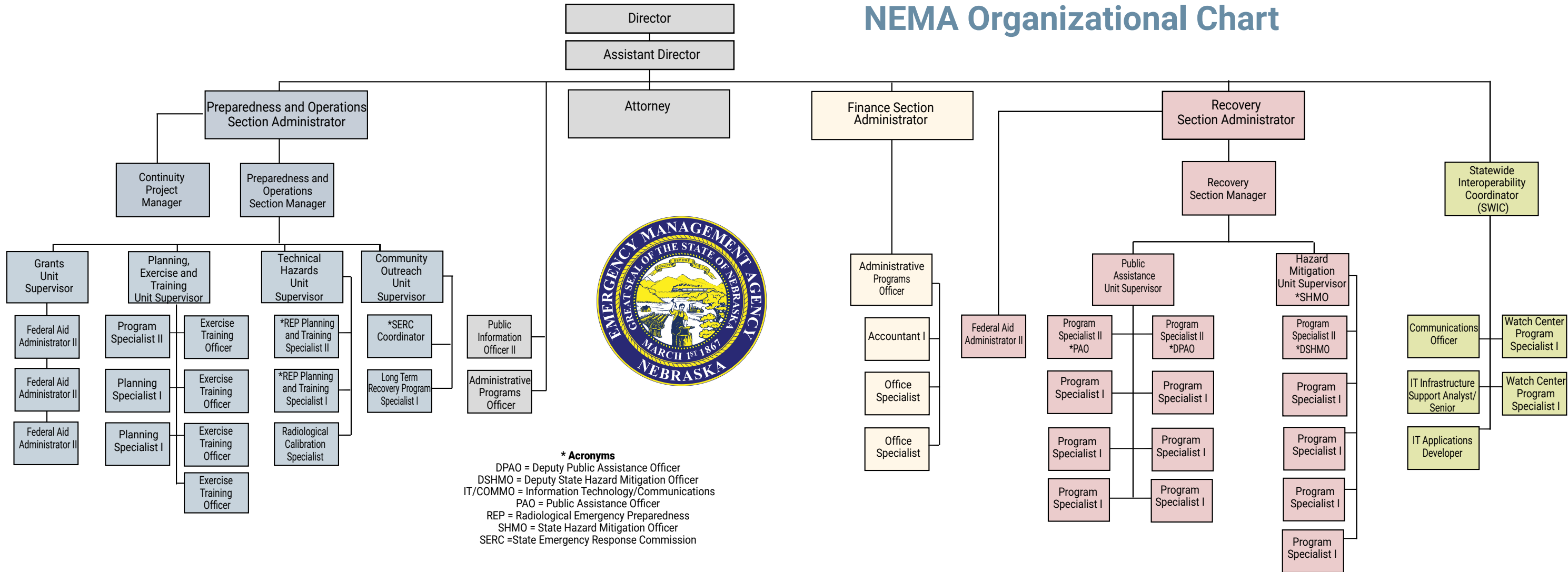
A grid of nine fire department logos representing the SERT teams:

- GIFD (Great Island Fire Department) - EST. 1874
- Beatrice Fire Rescue - 1910
- Columbus Fire Dept.
- Hastings Fire & Rescue - ESTD 1878
- Norfolk Fire
- Fire Department City of North Platte - Est. 1887
- Omaha Safe City USA Fire & Rescue - 1890
- Red Willow Western RFD - 1892
- Scottsbluff Fire Department - EST. 1900

### 9 Hazmat State Emergency Response Teams (SERT)

- These nine agencies are critical in responding all over Nebraska to hazmat incidents beyond local jurisdictions' capability.
- All members of these teams must complete at least, hazardous materials technician level training (80 hours), with additional yearly course refresher training and education.

# NEMA Organizational Chart



NEMA staff get briefed April 22 in the State Emergency Operations Center before deployment to the 702 wildfire burning in Red Willow, Furnas and Frontier Counties.



NEMA staff prepare for an applicant briefing on public assistance and hazard mitigation for disaster DR-4662, the severe storms and straight-line winds that occurred in central and northeast Nebraska on May 12.



*NEMA's Tami Reynolds gives a finance brief at the Carter Canyon Fire in August. The fire, which began on July 30, consumed 15,630 total acres.*

NEMA is responsible for coordinating the state response in any major emergency or disaster, including the support of local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with FEMA and other federal partners. For additional information about the annual report, other agency publications or to be added to the agency email list for news releases and publications, contact the public information officer at 402-471-7428 or [jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov](mailto:jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov).

Governor Jim Pillen  
State Homeland Security Director,  
Lt. Gov. Joe Kelly  
NEMA Director,  
Major General Daryl Bohac  
Assistant Director Erv Portis

**NEMA** Main Number: 402-471-7421



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