Responders Teach in Mexico

It was a step back in time – like about 150 years back in time, according to Montgomery County Emergency Management Director Shari Harrington. That's how she describes her recent trip to Calnali, Mexico, the sister city to Crawfordsville, Indiana.

Harrington and two others, Crawfordsville Fire Department's Captain Eric Small and Firefighter and Paramedic C.J. Mullett, spent five days last month in both Calnali and in Mineral de Forma, Mexico. They were there at the request of Crawfordsville Mayor Todd Barton and in conjunction with the local Rotary Club. The purpose of the trip was to help educate public service agencies in the areas of fire suppression, incident command and overall public safety.

Firefighters in Calnali, Mexico, fill the Darlington, IN fire truck from a wet bridge.

"The local Rotary Club sent a fire engine from Darlington, Indiana, to Calnali," Harrington said. "Calnali is up in the mountains, an elevation of about 10,000 feet, and has a population of about 16,000. It's very remote and really has no medical or fire services. Not only are there no fire hydrants or any infrastructure, this was the first time most people there had ever seen water spray through a fire hose."

Mullett said it put everything into perspective when he saw a fire engine from Darlington there in such a remote part of Mexico. "We were up in the mountains at a village that barely has electricity, and here's this fire engine that was once 10 miles away from us. Now it's thousands of miles away and being put to use."

Harrington said Mexican firefighters are passionate about what they do, but their fire suppression capabilities are truly about 150 years behind the United States. She said when there is a fire, a bell rings and people literally set up a bucket brigade.

The larger the city doesn't necessarily mean better infrastructure. Mexico City has 28 million residents and no fire hydrants. Small said, "They send tankers into the city. They line up at a stream and pour buckets of water into a tanker."

Harrington, Small and Mullett shared knowledge and processes to help public safety personnel better manage their specific regional hazards, which are wild fires, landslides and overall public health issues. They focused mainly on the first steps of incident command, basic fire-fighting techniques and use of fire-fighting equipment.

"We practiced quite a bit with fire suppression related to propane tanks," Harrington said. "Most residents cook with propane tanks inside their homes. The firefighters ignited and practiced on quite a few of them."

She said a trip like this is quite an eye-opener because Americans tend to take for granted medical services and ambulances are equipment. Harrington said ambulances she saw during her trip had virtually no supplies, other than maybe

ISDH Announces Infectious Disease Workshops

In light of Ebola and worries about other infectious diseases, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) is planning two workshops in December.

The first workshop will be for District 8 on December 16th, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Orange County Community Center in Paoli, Indiana. The second workshop will be for District 6 on December 19, from 9 a.m. to noon at the IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital in Muncie, Indiana.

Future workshops for other districts are in the planning stages and will be announced as scheduled. They will most likely take place in January or February.

The intent of the workshop is focused on Ebola and the applicability of current preparedness efforts to emerging infectious disease in general as well as other hazards. Just like preparing for one disaster can help prepare for others; preparing for one outbreak can help prepare for others as well, said Lee Christenson of ISDH.

New IDHS Executive Director David Kane

Governor Pence appointed David W. Kane, of Elwood, as executive director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) effective November 24.

"With nearly 30 years of experience in emergency response and management positions, David Kane has demonstrated his public safety expertise and epitomized what it means to be a true public servant," said Governor Pence. "I am confident that he is the right man at the right time to lead Indiana's efforts to ensure the preparedness of the state and the safety of Hoosiers as Executive Director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security."

Since 2005, Kane has served as federal security director for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (U.S. DHS) Transportation Security Administration (TSA), where he set the direction and oversaw policy implementation of the national transportation security program.

Prior to this role, he served as an assistant federal security director. From 1985 to 2002, he served as an air marshal within the U.S. Department of Transportation's (U.S. DOT) Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Kane has experience working at the county, state and federal level in public safety. His ability to coordinate among numerous emergency response agencies was recognized when the U.S. DHS secretary appointed him as the federal coordinating official for the 2012 Super Bowl in Indianapolis.

Kane serves on the Executive Policy Board for the Indiana Intelligence Fusion Center (IIFC), the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force Executive Board, the U.S. Attorney's Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council, and the Indiana Counter-Terrorism and Security Advisory Committee (C-TASC). He is a graduate of the Indiana Law Enforcement

Academy (ILEA) and has certification from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Kane replaces John Hill, who now serves as deputy chief of staff of public safety for Governor Pence.

Director Kane's entire career has been in public service. He went to work for the Elwood Police Department in 1975, then the Madison County Sheriff's Department and the Madison County Jail before joining the FAA.

Hamilton County Para-Medicine Program
Expands Health Services for Community

Hamilton County is providing expanded services to its citizens in the form of a community para-medicine program.

Para-medicine adds more services beyond emergency response. The goal is to connect with citizens after a health episode and assist with keeping them healthier with additional monitoring and interaction.

Fishers Fire and EMS is launching the new healthcare monitoring and educational program. Firefighter paramedics receive training to conduct in-home patient assessments and provide services to city residents. Joining Fishers Fire and EMS in the venture are social services organizations and the Community Health Network.

The program will include free in-home safety evaluations, free blood pressure monitoring, and some follow-up of

patients discharged from the hospital.

"As part of our normal training, as paramedics, we go out and do patient assessments everyday on emergency situations, so this will be the first for us to go in and do patient evaluations after they are discharged from the hospital," said Fishers EMS Chief Steve Davison. "One of the issues with readmission to the hospital is medication errors. By helping alleviate those questions that they have, or the fact that they may have taken them mistakenly, we can help reduce some of those readmissions as well."

Initially, professional staff will follow up on patients who were hospitalized for congestive heart failure or acute heart attacks. The program will eventually include other conditions such as diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, and surgeries such as knee and hip replacements.

"We will follow up on practically any patient who is not covered by home healthcare," Davison said. "That is what our role is going to be; to catch those people that are not covered by normal home healthcare."

Medical privacy is a concern. Patients will be given information on the program while still at the hospital, and will then decide for themselves if the program is beneficial to them and whether they would like to participate.

The program has the potential to be a great money saver for both patients and hospitals. Insurance may not cover costs if a patient is readmitted to the hospital within 30 days of initial discharge.

Program goals include increasing the overall health and quality of life of citizens.

What's Going On

Indiana's Ebola Preparations

Since the Ebola-infected patient entered the United States, local emergency medical services (EMS), hospitals, emergency management agencies (EMAs), health departments and other agencies and organizations around Indiana have taken steps to protect themselves and the public when responding to a person who may be highly infectious.

The following account includes preparedness actions by Delaware, Vanderburgh, Ripley and Marion counties.

Delaware County

Delaware County quickly began training for response to Ebola or any other infectious disease. The county EMA held trainings with Delaware County EMS personnel to review the appropriate way to respond to such an incident.

Dispatch personnel have been trained to identify potential patients with Ebola or any Person Under Investigation (PUI) by the Indiana State Health Department. If yes, the Variable Incident Pre-Hospital Emergency Response Team will be contacted to provide additional guidance and support.

In addition to standard protective equipment such as N95 masks and face shields, Delaware County EMS has special "throw bags" for PUIs inside every ambulance. Each throw bag contains multilingual instructions and is designed to aid in screen door screenings. With the throw bags and screen door screenings, EMS personnel can walk a patient through an assessment, and if need be, use the contents of the bag to create a barrier between themselves and EMS personnel.

Contents of the throw bags:

- Adult absorbent undergarment
- Adult Tyvek jumpsuit
- Sickness bag

- Non-latex gloves
- N95 respirator mask and surgical mask
- Multilingual instructions in English, French, Spanish and Hindi.

Delaware County is continuing to refine its response to any kind of infectious disease.

Evansville/Vanderburgh County

Shortly after Ebola rose to national attention, the Vanderburgh County health department began coordinating conference calls for District 10 emergency responders, as well as Henderson, Kentucky responders. During these calls it became apparent to Cliff Weaver, director of the Vanderburgh County EMA and Chad Woodburn, the deputy director, that a tabletop exercise was needed to get all involved on the same page.

On November 19, the Vanderburgh County Emergency Management Agency organized a tabletop exercise to practice response to a patient with Ebola. Ninety five participants came from many groups, including the District 10 EMA directors, local health departments, law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel. These participants played out the response to a patient with Ebola, and also handled different injects, forcing the group to adjust plans and address a new set of issues.

Ripley County

Ripley County is an example that rural counties can prepare for Ebola. As soon as Ebola became a concern, Jim Corbin and Scott Huffman with Ripley County EMS set out to develop a training course and offered it at several locations so all involved could be present.

The presentation consisted of what Ebola

The Evansville/Vanderburgh County Emergency Management Agency hosted an infectious disease tabletop involving responders and emergency management officials from all District 10 counties and some from Kentucky.

is, where it comes from, how it is spread and what measures need to be taken to react should Ebola come to Ripley County. Attendees included members of Ripley County communications staff, Batesville city dispatch, Ripley County Health Department and the Ripley County EMA.

Corbin and Huffman then explored the possibility of partnerships with other departments when dealing with potentially infectious patients. Ripley County EMS worked with Batesville Fire and EMS, Milan Volunteer Fire Department, Sunman Area Life Squad, Ripley County Fire Chiefs Association, the Decatur County Health Department, Dearborn County Health Department and the Ohio County Health Department. They also worked with Margaret Mary Health to coordinate treatment and transfer of any infected patients.

From the training sessions, the idea came to have all Ripley County EMS services join together to form an Ebola task force. Milan Rescue 30, Inc. set aside a spare ambulance that is designated to be used to transport patients with highly infectious or contagious diseases. This ambulance is being updated to keep up with CDC recommendations.

Ripley County dispatch center screens all EMS calls according to CDC recommendations. Should any crew come in to contact with a suspected

Indiana Prepares for Ebola *(cont.)*

Ebola patient, the Ebola task force will respond and treat and transport the patient. Anyone else who came into contact with that person would be quarantined. Decontamination guidelines are still being developed.

Indianapolis/Marion County

Indianapolis Emergency Medical Services (IEMS) is using a data analytics platform to get in front of a possible Ebola outbreak in the city.

IEMS is using the analytics to track influenza-like symptoms to identify changes in normal patterns. Large changes can identify an infectious outbreak and better prepare healthcare providers and the community to aid an infected patient.

"IEMS is using (a software) platform to visually display trends of influenza-like symptoms. The dashboard system allows us to quickly view a change in what is considered a normal pattern. Any spike

Delaware County EMS and EMA personnel review tactics and procedures for potentially infectious patients.

or trend is then further investigated by our public health partners to determine if there is a cause which would signal a need to modify our operations," said Charles Miramonti, Chief of IEMS. "Since Ebola presents with many influenza-like symptoms, we are able to monitor our community for any variation outside of normal expectations and be proactive."

IEMS also is using analytics to determine which ambulance runs should be treated as non-emergent, how protocols in the field affect long-term patient outcomes, which emergency treatments are most costly, which types of calls occur in specific areas of the city, where gaps exist in training, as well as injury trends and recommendations for prevention. Data that previously took weeks to evaluate is now available in real time.

Indiana State Department of Health

In response to concern in Indiana, the Indiana State Department of Health developed a website dedicated to providing Ebola information (http://www.in.gov/isdh/26447.htm.) The Centers for Disease Control also issued and updated guidelines on response and proper gear for helping those who may be infected with Ebola. A public call line is available 24 hours a day at 877-826-0011.

Firefighters, EMA Teach in Mexico *(cont.)*

an oxygen tank. She had taken with her a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) bag and a preparedness bag. Those she trained were astounded at the contents of both bags. Harrington, Small and Mullett encouraged villages and cities to establish mutual aid agreements and to inventory what supplies were available.

Despite the language barrier, cultural differences and the gaps in training and equipment, Mullett said one thing is for sure. "It doesn't matter where you go. We are all brothers and sisters in the fire service. They are just as passionate as we are when it comes to serving their communities."

Small, Mullett and Harrington (left to right, front row center) pose with their firefighter counterparts in Calnali, Mexico.

Rush County Public-Private CERT Training

Rush County Emergency Management Agency partnered with Emerson Climate Technologies, a local company, to provide staff with Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training.

The training helped prepare personnel to respond to incidents inside the facility and to provide aid until responders arrive. When needed, the team can also provide support to the Rush County CERT.

"We trained 25 individuals, 13 of them were safety team members," Darrel Robertson, human resources specialist at Emerson Climate Technologies, said. "We have one more training left next Monday, the last of four trainings which takes about 30 hours to complete."
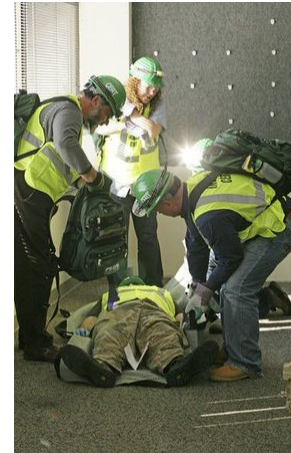
Chuck Kemker, director of Rush County EMA, handled the training.

"There are eight sections of training that we build upon as we go through: CERT organization, disaster psychology, terrorism, incident command, triage, basic first aid, disaster first aid, etc.," Kemker said.

The CERT concept was initially developed by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985. Earthquakes in 1987 demonstrated the need to train civilians to handle an emergency situation until emergency responders arrive on scene.

CERT members are provided training in disaster preparedness, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, fire safety and utilities control, disaster psychology and terrorism. When emergencies happen, CERT members can give critical support to

Staff at Emerson Climate Technologies use the skills learned in the CERT Basic course to respond to a simulated situation. Many CERT programs use these in lieu of a written test to review skills.

first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims, and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. A CERT team is especially critical in the first three days following a disaster when conditions may prevent access by emergency response personnel.

Use Caution when Shopping on the Internet

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security encourages Hoosiers to shop smart and safe this holiday season.

While shopping may seem like a simple, safe transaction, there are still many safety tips to keep in mind. Online shopping, though convenient, can be risky. Following simple steps can help prevent identity theft and financial scams.

Holiday email safety:

- Email advertisements and spam traffic may increase during the holiday season. If the subject of the email from a known or unknown sender seems suspicious, delete the email without opening.
- Never open email attachments or follow embedded links from unknown senders.
- Never convey personal information such as credit card numbers, bank account numbers, Social Security numbers, passwords, etc. in emails.

Online shopping safety:

- Keep all virus protection and security software updated.
- Make sure the Internet connection is secure. Some browsers will have a padlock in the address bar to indicate a secure connection.
- Use complex passwords to safeguard personal information like credit card numbers and billing addresses.
- Avoid visiting unknown web pages; malicious software could be downloaded. Stick to shopping only well-known reputable sites.

Safe online purchasing:

- If available, consider using your bank's virtual credit card service.
- Make sure to print or save an electronic copy of every transaction receipt in case there is confusion later about payment.
- If making purchases on a smart phone, make sure to have updated security software before purchasing.

Visit
GetPrepared.in.gov

IDHS grant assists BOAH with Animal Tracking

Updated software to aid in disasters

Information management is at the core of the preparedness and planning activities of the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH). The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) has provided grant funding support to BOAH for a database system to manage information for farms in Indiana.

The database system, called U.S. Animal Health Emergency Reporting Diagnostic System (USAHERDS) keeps records of farm premises, types of animals present, reports on disease investigations for animals associated with the sites, and contact information for the owner, manager and veterinarian for the farm.

USAHERDS also helps BOAH maintain a roster of credentialed private veterinary

practitioners who serve as surge capacity to the state veterinary team. This system is capable of generating contact lists, data charts and maps to help BOAH make decisions in the field about response to disease breaks and natural disasters.

One success story for the application of USAHERDS happened in Carroll County, Indiana when flood waters forced the evacuation of a cattle farm. The radius mapping function allowed BOAH to identify alternate housing sites for the animals.

Likewise, after the March 2012 Henryville tornado activity, which was declared by the president as a disaster and qualified for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster

recovery grants, as well as assistance from other federal agencies, BOAH was able to make contact with livestock owners in the area to determine what, if any, assistance they needed.

On a daily basis, USAHERDS provides mapping support and a tool for managing disease breaks, such as influenza in swine during the last three county fair seasons. Tracking this infection, which can also afflict humans, using USAHERDS' premises database helped BOAH work closely with state and local public health officials in determining risk levels and spread patterns. This information can help the agencies take protective actions to reduce the spread of infection between animals and humans.

Indiana Senator Wyss Thanked for Service

At a recent meeting, retiring Senator Tom Wyss was recognized for his past contributions to the Indiana Homeland Security Foundation.

In 1999, Sen. Wyss was the sponsor of the bill that created the license plate now known as the Secure Indiana license plate and the foundation now known as the Indiana Homeland Security Foundation. Since then, the foundation has awarded more than $2.6 million in grants to public safety agencies.

He has also served as a member of the foundation since its inception. The foundation was originally known as the "Indiana Emergency Management, Fire and Building Services, and Public Safety Training Foundation."

The license plate is the Secure Indiana license plate, but was initially called the Hoosier Safety license plate. During its first year of sales, in 2000, plate sales brought in $90,900.

Sen. Wyss has worked on many public safety campaigns. In addition to

establishing the Indiana Homeland Security Foundation, he led a long battle to establish the legal limit of blood-alcohol level at .08 percent and helped create a new law to make it easier for service members to apply their military skills toward an emergency medical services license.

Other memberships and contributions from Sen. Wyss:

- The Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) as a member of the State and Local Officials Senior Advisory Committee (7 years.)

- As HSAC representative to the National Conference of State Legislatures

- Member of DHS FEMA Preparedness Task Force, as well as:

- Department of Justice (DOJ) Global Advisory Committee and the Global

Senator Wyss, left, received a clock in recognition of his efforts and service to the Indiana Homeland Security Foundation from Ken Neumeister, the current chair of the foundation. Wyss also received an award from the Counter Terrorism and Security Council.

Intelligence Working Group. (7 years, 6 months.)

- Member of the National Homeland Security Consortium (7 years, 1 month.)

Whitley County is WRN Ambassador County

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has named Whitley County as a Weather-Ready Nation (WRN) Ambassador.

As a WRN Ambassador, Whitley County will work with NOAA and other WRN ambassadors to help strengthen national resilience to extreme weather. The WRN Ambassador initiative is an effort to unify all levels of government, non-profits, and private industry toward becoming more ready and responsive to extreme environmental hazards.

"What we'll be doing is building better relationships with all the stakeholders in Whitley County," said Charlie Heflin, Whitley County Emergency Management Agency Director. "Going forward, we'll be involving police, fire, EMS, the Salvation Army, and Red Cross into our weather programs."

Police, fire, and EMS will be encouraged to attend training classes, including storm spotter training.

"The reason we'll be encouraging them to be involved is because they are out in the field and they can be another set of eyes for us," Heflin said. "They all have communications when they are out in the field and they can provide us accurate storm reports when we're in an activation."

Non Profit Organizations

Heflin said the county is also building relationships with local non-profits to help provide and prepare shelters. There are sheltering agreements in place with several agencies, and plans are being made to provide shelter to those who live in trailers or mobile home parks.

A notification system has been developed for all the schools in the county. The system helps alert school officials when severe weather is imminent. The National Weather Service (NWS) has also been provided with a schedule of all outdoor sporting events at each school.

"This adds to heightened awareness at the NWS and allows them to contact myself or the athletic directors in the event their sporting event would be affected by severe weather."

Storm Ready County

In addition to becoming a WRN Ambassador, Whitley County is already a NWS Storm Ready County. As a Storm Ready County, emergency managers and community leaders work to strengthen local safety programs, and are prepared with the communication and safety skills needed to keep the public safe in the event of severe weather.

Furthermore, Whitley County has begun signing individuals up to become part of a new Winter Operations Support Team (WOST). WOST members will consist of individuals throughout the county who own four wheel drive vehicles, snowmobiles or tractors that can assist emergency response personnel.

"It all revolves around making our community better prepared and promoting the preparedness initiatives that are provided by the NWS," Heflin said.

Winter Weather Preparedness: Don't forget Pets

Pets are important members of most households so, while preparing for possible emergencies, don't overlook the needs of pets, says the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).

During a disaster, sometimes evacuation is necessary.

Here are simple tips for evacuating with pets.
• Identify a list of places that will accept people and pets
  ◊ Some public shelters may not allow animals.
  ◊ Have a back-up location like a hotel or even friends or family who may be able to accommodate people and pets in an emergency.

• Prepare a portable disaster kit for pets:
  ◊ A leash or harness with collar, pet carrier or cage for each pet
  ◊ Two-weeks' supply of food and water, can opener, towels or blankets for bedding,
  ◊ Pet toys, cat litter and small litter pan for cats, plastic bags for waste clean-up,
  ◊ Current photos of each pet, medications, vaccination records and medical records.

• Familiarize pets with their carriers or cage: Emergencies are stressful times for everyone and not the time to try to get pets comfortable with a carrier or cage.

Below are safety tips if pets must be left behind:

• Bring pets inside and place them in areas that are easy to clean and preferably are without windows.
• Keep dogs and cats separated, even if they normally get along.
• Never leave pets tied outdoors.
• Leave only dry food and put the food and fresh water in non-spill containers.
• If possible, leave a faucet dripping into a container or partially fill a bathtub.
• Try to set up a buddy system to check on each other's pets.
• Leave a note on the outside of the room(s) where pets are to warn responders who may be doing welfare checks or searching for people who need help.

For more information visit, http://www.in.gov/boah/2441.htm.

Mission

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security will provide statewide leadership, exemplary customer service, and subject matter expertise for the enhancement of public and private partnerships and the assurance of local, state and federal collaboration to continually develop Indiana's public safety capabilities for the well-being and protection of our citizens, property and economy.

Contact