EVACUATION

EXECUTIVE GROUP
REGION 22 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
DIRECTOR
INCIDENT COMMANDER

EVACUATION COORDINATION

RESPONSE FUNCTIONS
- WARNING
- EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION
- MOVEMENT CONTROL
- SECURITY

SUPPORT FUNCTIONS
- MASS CARE
- SOCIAL SERVICES
- TRANSPORTATION

STATE SUPPORT:
Emergency Support Function # 5, Emergency Management
Lead Agency: Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
EVACUATION

I. PURPOSE

This Annex provides direction and planning guidance for the implementing a timely and orderly evacuation of all or any part of SCOTTS BLUFF County when that is the most effective means for protecting the population.

II. SITUATION

A. The most likely causes for evacuation are floods, hazardous material spills or release (regardless of the cause or type of material) and fires.

B. Some flooding along the North Platte River occurs almost annually. While much of this involves lowland agricultural flooding, damage to public property (bridges, highways, and county roads) is a primary concern. Maps showing the 100 year flood plain are located at the Region 22 Emergency Management office and the Scotts Bluff County Planning and Zoning Department. Rapid spring snow melt, already full dams, full irrigation canals, and unexpected heavy rains have had an impact on flooding, even in most recent years. Rapid spring snow melt, already full dams, full irrigation canals, and unexpected heavy rains can have an impact on flooding. Scotts Bluff County could also be affected by failure of the Grayrocks and Guernsey Dams located in Wyoming. The failure of any one of the controlling dams in Eastern Wyoming could cause a “domino effect” of full dams. Rapid snow melt in the mountains and heavy rains can cause additional stress and pressure on the dams. While much of this involves lowland agricultural flooding, damage of public property (bridges, highways, and county roads) and the potential for evacuation of Terrytown and portions of Scottsbluff are primary concerns. Flooding can also occur by failure of the Lake Alice, Lake Minatare, and Gering Valley Watershed Dams A, B, C, Lower G, and H). See Appendix 1 for flooding details.

C. Anhydrous ammonia and other hazardous materials are transported, used and stored in the county. A hazmat spill, release or accident could require an evacuation. Transportation accidents on Highway 26, Highway 71, Highway 96, Union Pacific Railroad or Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad could affect evacuation movement.

D. There are places where large gatherings occur. Among these are the schools in the county with a student population over 7500 and Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff with a population of over 2000 students and faculty. Other facilities that could pose special evacuation problems are Regional West Medical Center in Scottsbluff and the seven health care/senior citizen facilities located in Scottsbluff, Gering, and Mitchell. The Scotts Bluff County Fairgrounds in Mitchell frequently has a large population in attendance as well as other areas throughout Scotts Bluff
County that provide entertainment functions as well as recreational functions. Each of these facilities and events should develop and exercise their specific evacuation plans and may coordinate with the EM for planning information or to participate in jurisdictional or regional joint exercises.

III. ASSUMPTIONS and PLANNING FACTORS

A. Each jurisdiction will develop a Primary Evacuation Plan specific to the community and their needs. This Plan addresses at least the listed assumptions and planning factors, yet keeps in mind that unique situations may cause departure from portions of the Primary Plan. This Primary Evacuation Plan will be the guide for local or incident evacuation decisions.

B. While some evacuations allow time for incident planning, the worse case assumption is that there will be little or no warning of the need to evacuate. The evacuation decision could occur day/night and in all weather conditions.

C. All evacuation decisions and resultant actions are event or incident driven.

D. Evacuation plans will give due consideration to closing of schools, malls, businesses in the risk areas or during pandemic events.

E. Evacuation plans will give due consideration to functional needs populations that require transportation and populations with companion or service animals.

F. Evacuation plans will give due consideration to the transportation and sheltering of household pets.

G. All safe and practical modes of transportation will be considered for evacuations. Most people will use their own vehicles to leave the evacuated area. Fuel shortages may occur and evacuation routes may be blocked with vehicle breakdowns.

H. Maximum traffic congestion should be expected.

I. In urban areas, additional time is required to inform citizens, develop assembly areas, load and transport those needing mass transportation, prepare public announcements of designated assembly areas, review or create usage agreements for use of privately owned assembly areas. Plans to transport mobility impaired individuals to the safe areas should be in place and is essential in the Primary Evacuation Plan.

J. There would not normally be time to obtain personnel support from outside the county. Local government resources could be severely stressed with many responders and their families affected by the evacuation.
K. Evacuees will have little preparation time and may require maximum support in shelter/reception centers, particularly in the areas of food, bedding, clothes, and medical supplies. Many will be concerned about the care and welfare of pets and animals.

L. Reception centers and shelters, within the county and neighboring counties, need as much advance notice as possible. At the time of public announcement of the evacuation order, shelters may not be fully set up to handle the evacuees, especially for those with functional needs or those at risk. Medical shelters are for medically fragile people who require care provided in hospitals and nursing homes. People with disabilities can be integrated into a shelter setting appropriate to their needs which is typically mass care.

M. Voluntary evacuation could occur after the public has been advised of a potential problem or danger, even though the situation does not warrant an official evacuation. Under this situation:
   1. Voluntary evacuation in excess of 50 percent of the residents of the affected area is a possibility if there is an extended danger period.
   2. News reports of a hazard situation may cause voluntary evacuation.
   3. If evacuation is directed for a small area, then voluntary evacuation of adjacent areas should be expected.
   4. A large percentage of voluntary evacuees will leave because they have a place to go such as to relatives, friends, etc.
   5. Those concerned about their pets, livestock, research and commercial or production animals should be advised to implement their individual family/business evacuation plan that addresses the care and welfare of their animals.
   6. Following an event, fear and anxiety can be expected from individuals, first responders, care providers and the worried well; all of which will stress support agencies beyond those directly involved with the movement of people.

N. Animal owners have the primary responsibility for the survival and well being of their animals and are responsible for all costs associated with the care and well being of their animals.
   1. Some evacuees, not having their own transportation, will still want to take and be sheltered with their pets.
   2. Some animals will pose a threat to other animals and humans. Therefore animals being evacuated by public means should be appropriately restrained, muzzled or confined.
3. Household and service animals require the same general care as people; food, water, exercise, places for relief, security, etc.

O. Some people will refuse to evacuate.

P. State and federal highways will receive priority snow removal by the Department of Roads and are expected to be open at all times. County roads in the area are mainly graveled, and the road networks are sufficiently developed that alternate routes can be developed if temporary closures are experienced.

Q. The Emergency Manager will share local plans with neighboring or regional jurisdictions so that roles and responsibilities are defined and traffic control, sheltering, public information and other essential functions are coordinated and monitored. The most recent version of a county’s LEOP can be found on the NEMA website: www.nema.ne.gov.

R. An evacuation communications plan will be developed and implemented to maintain coordination between Incident Command, the EOC, responders, receiving sites and the evacuees and non-evacuating populations.

S. Plans to reconstitute or return citizens back to their homes, schools and businesses will be developed concurrently with the incident evacuation plan. This plan will consider staged or phased time periods for returns. Any health and general safety concerns and available emergency shelter should be addressed should the returning individuals find their homes uninhabitable, permanently or partially.

T. Re-entry plans will give due consideration to expected medical or health issues, the recovery of the dead, the recovery and disposal of animal remains.

U. Re-entry and restoration of the affected area may take weeks to months. Return plans should address this issue for returning evacuees.

IV. ORGANIZATION and RESPONSIBILITIES

The overall responsibility for issuing evacuation orders rests with the chief elected executives of the affected political subdivisions. When there is an immediate need to protect lives and provide for public safety, the Incident Commander can make the decision to evacuate. Key organizational requirements are:

A. Jurisdiction’s Chief Elected Official (CEO)

1. When circumstances permit, the CEO will formally declare the evacuation order; maintain the management, direction and control, and

B. Region 22 Emergency Management Director:

1. Responsible for advising the Executive Group on the evacuation decision, for coordinating evacuation support activities, coordination with the Incident Commander, providing for special transportation needs, sheltering issues, closing of hospitals, schools and businesses, and managing resources.

2. Will coordinate the development of the Evacuation Incident Action Plan with Incident Command and the other agencies involved in an evacuation.

3. Co-authors the evacuation communications plans with the Communications Officers and the Incident Commander.

4. Notifies the PIO and with the IC, determines the JIC activation level.

C. Law Enforcement Agencies:

1. Responsible for conducting actual evacuation efforts, for designating evacuation routes, providing traffic and movement control, monitoring traffic flow, and establishing security of the evacuated area.

2. If necessary, they will also assist in warning the public.

3. Coordinates with the EOC and IC on the development, implementation and demobilization of the evacuation plan.

D. Fire Departments:

1. Responsible for on-scene control and for advising executives on the evacuation decision for hazardous material and fire incidents.

2. Responsible for fire security in evacuated areas and assistance in warning the public.

3. Coordinates with the EOC and IC on the development, implementation and demobilization of the evacuation plan.

E. Public Works Director / County Roads/Bridge/Flood Control/ Street Superintendent:
1. Responsible for maintenance of the evacuation routes and for providing traffic control devices.

2. May be assigned the responsibility for care and maintenance of portable toilet facilities, monitoring emergency fuel supplies and distribution, and dealing with disabled vehicles blocking the evacuation routes.

3. Coordinates with the EOC and IC on the development, implementation and demobilization of the evacuation plan.

F. Local government and/or non-governmental schools, animal shelters, zoos, refuges, veterinary facilities, voluntary animal care organizations:

1. These entities may provide advice to the public about the welfare needs of the animals, availability of space within their facilities, trained staff to assist in mass care shelters, and resources such as food, cages and medical supplies for evacuated animals.

2. These groups may provide insight and additional information on animal care during an evacuation for inclusion into the Primary Evacuation Plan and will cooperate with local law enforcement agencies and the EOC during an incident.

3. Individuals with pets and service animals are responsible for their animals care, maintenance and welfare at public shelters, if such shelters are available.

G. Public Information Officer:

1. Responsible for the dissemination of emergency information advising the public of what evacuation actions to take, availability of shelters and re-entry.

2. Responsible for rumor control and responding to requests for information from the media and messages to the non-evacuating population.

H. American Red Cross:

1. After the initial response, the ARC is responsible for coordinating mass care activities including registration, lodging, and feeding. The Salvation Army and other service organizations may provide support as defined in Annex I.

2. The Red Cross may provide animal friendly sheltering or information to registered evacuees of animal sheltering options.

I. Panhandle District Office, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services:
Will ensure that Social Service programs are continued and supported by other area programs, such as the Area Aging Office of Western Nebraska, and may assist in crisis counseling and other activities for the handicapped, infirm and elderly. Social Services actions are defined in Annex G.

J. **Game and Parks Commission:**

1. Will assist evacuation efforts in state parks and recreation areas during major emergency/disaster operations.

2. Will support other law enforcement agencies as practical.

K. **Affected Facilities (Hazardous Materials Incident):**

The Facility Emergency Coordinator will advise local and State officials if the facility management recommends evacuation or in-place shelter.

V. **CONCEPT of OPERATIONS**

A. **Direction and Control**

1. The primary responsibility for evacuation activities rests with the local government. Public officials are expected to:
   
   a. Provide security and access control for the evacuated area,
   
   b. Provide temporary shelter and mass care support for the evacuees,
   
   c. Coordinate the return of people to their homes as safety permits,
   
   d. Manage recovery operations, and
   
   e. Return to normal operations.

2. The Emergency Operations Center may be activated because of the primary hazard event. Executive direction and control of the incident and any ensuing evacuation may be conducted from the EOC as outlined in Annex A. The Region 22 Emergency Management Director may coordinate all evacuation support activities.

3. Large-scale evacuations spanning multiple jurisdictions or regions require comprehensive response strategies. To facilitate resource support and coordination of the Incident Command Post(s) across local or regional boundaries, it is suggested that a Regional Unified Command structure or Multi-Agency Coordination Centers (MACC) be established.
4. Reception plans of the counties or cities agreeing, by established Mutual Aid Agreements or MOUs, to host evacuees and the designated shelters for large-scale or regional evacuations need to be implemented early in the response. Area hospitals will be alerted to the situation.

5. Implement appropriate portions of the jurisdiction’s COOP-COG Plan to ensure that vital and essential functions of government services continue during and after a disaster, especially when government facilities and staff are affected.

B. Evacuation Order

1. The Chief Executive of the affected political subdivision will normally order an evacuation.

2. In situations where rapid evacuation is critical to the continued health and safety of the population, the Incident Commander may order an evacuation.

3. During floods, evacuation orders will generally be initiated after evaluation and recommendation of Scotts Bluff County Public Works Director and/or Region 22 Emergency Management Director. Dam failure/flooding considerations are in Appendix 1 of this Annex.

4. In a radiological incident/accident, the evacuation order will be based on the recommendation of the Nebraska Health and Human Services.

5. All evacuation orders will contain instructions for at-risk populations to take medications, supplies and special equipment with them or to notify the Region 22 Emergency Management (depending on circumstances – Director, Hotline, or transportation officer) for transportation assistance.

6. All governmental agencies will account for their financial expenditures from the time of the threat or incident occurrence, during and after the evacuation and re-entry.

7. All potentially impacted jurisdictions supporting the response will be notified of evacuation decisions and given briefings as the response progresses.

C. Evacuation Decision Considerations

Evacuation may be only one of several protective action alternatives. Decision makers must exercise care to ensure that a directed evacuation will not place the affected population into a more dangerous situation than posed by the primary hazard. When ordering the evacuation, the following considerations should be addressed:

1. Weather conditions,
2. Evacuation routes, their capacities and susceptibilities to hazards,

3. The availability and readiness of shelters for evacuees,

4. Effective means of providing public information and direction, especially to those with physical, behavioral, cognitive and medical conditions.

5. Modes of transportation for evacuees and for those unable to provide their own,

6. The location in the evacuation area of functional needs individuals including nursing home or hospital patients, day care centers, apartment complexes, schools, jails, businesses, other congregate areas. These may pose unique evacuation problems and the evacuation itself could be more life threatening than the initial hazard.

7. In the event of a hazardous material incident the choice needs to be made between evacuation and in-place shelter. The decision should be based on the wind speed and direction and density of the plume and the chemical substance involved.

D. Evacuation Area Definition

The definition of the area to be evacuated will be determined by those officials recommending or ordering the evacuation based on the advice of appropriate advisory agencies. In the case of hazardous materials incident/accidents, fire chiefs should refer to the DOT Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Guide book, or follow the recommendation provided by CHEMTREC. In all cases, the hazard situation will be continually monitored in case changing circumstances, such as a wind shift, require redefinition of a potentially affected area. The PIO will ensure that the evacuation area is described to the public in understandable terms.

E. Public Notification

Persons to be evacuated should be given as much warning time as possible.

1. Pre-evacuation Warning: For slow moving events, pre-evacuation notice should be given to affected residents. Residents should be advised that they might have to move out with little or no additional notice. Those with concerns for their pets should be advised to implement their family evacuation plans. Consideration should be given to early evacuation of schools and large gatherings. Hospitals and nursing homes will be kept fully advised of the situation and be given earliest possible warning because of the extra time required to evacuate.
2. **Evacuation Warning:** All warning systems will be utilized to direct the affected population to evacuate. Wherever possible, the warning should be given on a direct basis as well as through the media. The use of vehicles moving through the affected area with sirens and public address is usually effective. Door-to-door notification should be considered, particularly in rural areas. Responders should sweep the evacuated area to ensure all persons have been advised. Persons refusing to follow evacuation instructions will be advised of possible consequences and then left alone until all who are willing to leave have been provided for. Time permitting, further efforts may be made to persuade them to evacuate. In accordance with the jurisdiction’s Primary Evacuation Plan, persons with animals refusing to evacuate may be advised that further attempts at evacuation will be made only when there is the capability to assist them without risking the lives and safety of the rescuers. See Attachment 1, Responsibilities of Household Animal Owners.

3. **Emergency Public Information:** The Public Information Officer will ensure that evacuation information is disseminated to the media in a timely manner. Instructions to the public such as traffic routes to be followed, location of temporary reception centers as well as situation updates will be issued as that information becomes available. Specific public information guidelines are contained in Annex D.

4. Both government and non-government shelter agencies and managers need to be notified and briefed early in the process: Shelters require lead time in preparation to receive evacuees. In large scale or regional events, the host counties, cities, villages beyond the affected jurisdiction(s) need notice as soon as possible in the response phase.

F. **Movement**

Law enforcement agencies will direct and control the vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow during the evacuation.

1. The jurisdiction’s primary evacuation plans will be used to determine the specific evacuation routes at the time of the evacuation decision.

2. Evacuation procedures and instructions will be part of the warning and subsequent public information releases.

3. If at all possible, two-way traffic will be maintained on all evacuation routes to allow continued access for emergency vehicles. Specific traffic control points will be determined at the time based on anticipated traffic volume and identifiable problem areas.

4. The Scotts Bluff County Consolidated Communications Center will coordinate the use of wrecker services needed to clear disabled vehicles.
5. Traffic control devices such as signs and barricades will be provided by the Public Works Departments/County Road/Bridge/Flood Control Department.

6. Fuel shortages that could be experienced by the evacuees will be addressed under the primary plan.

G. Transportation of functional needs populations

The Region 22 Emergency Management Director will determine requirements for special transportation and coordinate with the EOC and social service support agencies, for the use of transportation resources to support the evacuation, especially transportation for dependent populations.

1. Assembly (Staging) Area: If the potential evacuated population is of significant size, there could be many people without private transportation. Convenient centralized locations in the evacuation area, such as schools or churches, will be identified as assembly areas. These locations will be announced in evacuation instructions issued by the Public Information Officer. Residents will be instructed to go to the assembly areas for transportation. The transportation of persons with animals, other than service animals, will be a consideration in the Evacuation Action Plan.

2. Functional needs Transportation: There could be cases where elderly, infirm or handicapped persons in the evacuation area will not be able to get to the assembly point or would need special types of transport. The Region 22 Emergency Management Director will make provisions for the use of government or volunteer vehicles to transport these individuals. The public will be instructed to notify the Region 22 Emergency Management office, transportation officer or Hotline (a special number may be provided) of any special transportation problems.

3. Health Care Transportation: The evacuation of the nursing homes or the hospital poses special transportation problems. The institutions' administrators will determine specific transportation needs and coordinate with the Region 22 Emergency Management Director if transportation assistance is needed. Ambulances from fire and rescue departments within the County may be the primary resource for medical transport. The health care provider should maintain a list patients using durable medical equipment and arrange for transportation for this specialized need.

4. Transportation Resources: School buses operated by the various school systems and the Handy-buses operated by Scotts Bluff County would all be available during emergencies. The Emergency Management Director maintains a listing of all such resources (Annex L).
H. Mass Care of Evacuees

While many evacuees will go to the homes of friends and relatives, there may be requirements for temporary mass lodging and feeding. The jurisdiction may have to provide temporary receptions centers until the Red Cross can establish short term shelters. Mass care of evacuees will be managed by the American Red Cross. Mass Care operations are covered in Annex I.

I. Health Care Facilities

Evacuations of health care facilities create special problems and may extend the time required to clear the affected area. Health care evacuation considerations are addressed in Annex G.
J. **Schools**

1. All schools have internal emergency evacuation plans.

2. Area Schools have radio-equipped buses and vans capable of carrying a total of 3,000 passengers. Under normal circumstances, no additional buses would be necessary. If buses are required to make more than one trip, they will take students and staff to a temporary staging area outside the hazard area and return for additional passengers.

K. **Access Control**

1. Law enforcement agencies will establish a perimeter control to provide security and protection of property. An access pass system will be established.

2. Curfews may need to be established to limit risks to responders and victims who might wish to remain or re-enter the disaster area.

L. **Re-entry**

Reoccupation of an evacuated area requires the same considerations, coordination, and control of the items undertaken in the original evacuation and is addressed in the initial and all revised Evacuation Action Plans. The chief executives will make the re-entry decision and issue a Re-entry order after the threat has passed, the evacuated area has been inspected and found safe by fire, law, health, and utilities personnel. Some specific re-entry considerations are:

1. Ensure that the threat which caused evacuation is over.

2. Ensure that search, rescue and recovery missions are completed so that survivors and any human or animal remains have been attended to and recovered.

3. If needed, ensure that homes have been inspected to determine if they are safe to return to and unsafe structures are so marked to prevent entry.

4. Determine the number of persons in shelters who will have to be transported back to their homes.

5. If homes have been damaged, determine the long-term housing requirements.

6. Coordinate traffic control and movement back to the area.
7. Implement the portion of the Evacuation Plan that provides assistance to individuals with lost or missing family members.

8. Inform the public of proper re-entry actions, particularly cautions they should take with regard to re-activating utilities in addition to issuing instructions for proper clean-up and debris disposal.

9. Implement the portion of the Evacuation Plan that provides assistance to individuals requiring counseling, see Annex G, or financial or housing assistance.

M. State Support

Under disaster conditions, evacuation support and resources may be available from a number of state agencies. Assistance will generally be requested through the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. Assistance includes manpower, transportation, supplies and technical advice. The following agencies may become involved in the emergency evacuation of an area.

1. **Department of Roads:** The Department of Roads will provide updated information on road conditions, load bearing capacities and usability to support evacuation or rerouting of traffic. They will also provide equipment and manpower to maintain or repair roads and bridges to usable condition in support of an evacuation. Personnel may assist in traffic control by erecting barricades, warning lights and signs, or providing manpower.

2. **Health and Human Services:** The Nebraska Health and Human Services will make recommendations to local authorities and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency regarding health problems within an area which may dictate that evacuation of that area is necessary. Special consideration will be given to hospital and nursing home evacuation. If an evacuation is initiated, maintenance of the health standards in reception areas will be closely monitored. This agency is responsible for the prevention of overcrowding, spread of disease, and the development of unsanitary conditions/practices.

3. **State Fire Marshal:** The State Fire Marshal may recommend that evacuation of an area be initiated because of an existing fire emergency. The State Fire Marshal may coordinate manpower from local fire departments for disaster assistance.

4. **Nebraska State Patrol:** The State Patrol will establish control points for traffic control, assist in maintaining order, issue passes to prevent unauthorized entry into areas, obtain medical help and direct emergency vehicles to the proper destination within the disaster area.
5. **Nebraska National Guard**: The National Guard will provide support to the civil authorities when authorized by the Governor. Any National Guard facility or area may be used as an assembly or dispersal area in support of evacuation procedures with the approval of the Nebraska National Guard on request by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

6. **Game and Parks Commission**: The Game and Parks Commission field personnel may be able to provide information on local conditions or augment law enforcement personnel in traffic control. The Game and Parks Commission also has boats available to assist in evacuation during floods.

N. **Non-Governmental Organizations**

The Nebraska Humane Society and the local affiliates may provide advice to the public about the welfare and sheltering needs of the animals, trained staff to assist in mass care shelters, and resources such as food, cages and medical supplies for evacuated animals.

VI. **ADMINISTRATIVE**

A. After each evacuation of any scale, the incident involved officials, first responders, Emergency Management, other support agencies and jurisdictions, and possibly interested citizens will conduct a post-incident critique and write after-action reports (AAR) and evaluations. These documents will be the basis for review of and revision of policy.

B. The County Emergency Management Director is responsible for the annual review and update of this Annex. The AARs and evaluations will provide guidance in this annual update.
VII. TRAINING and EXERCISING

A. Training

The training program will be consistent with the Homeland Security Exercise Plan process. All training supported by the Homeland Security grant process must be DHS (Department of Homeland Security) approved.

B. Exercising

All exercises and drills will be evaluated and any follow-up activities conducted in accordance with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTACHMENT #</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Responsibilities of Household AnimalOwners</td>
<td>E-17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 1 Flood\Dam Failure Evacuation E-19