A note from Kim

Dear EMD Family,

We’ve had several emergency incidents since this past quarter. Most recently, the Canyon Fire prompted an activation of the QA EOC, field damage assessments, as well as an emergency proclamation issued by the Board of Supervisors. We also activated the Medical Health Communications Center during an extended power outage impacting a trauma center in the desert. These larger events were in addition to several smaller incidents for fires and power outages.

I continually receive compliments from our partner agencies, the Executive Office, and the Board of Supervisors, on how well we shared information and responded to these incidents. I cannot thank you enough for your professionalism and commitment to our department and to our Operational Area partners.

Throughout Sept., many of you participated in public education events and speaking engagements for National Preparedness Month.

CONTINUED ON PG. 2

Businesses unite under EMD vision

Last month, EMD embarked upon a new venture to involve businesses in all phases of emergency management with the launch of the Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC). Under the tutelage of Angie Johnson, Administrative Services Analyst II with Operations, the Riverside County BEOC took flight.

“Businesses play a vital role in the resiliency and recovery of a community following a disaster,” said Johnson. “The BEOC is a way for us in local government to establish partnerships, share information and leverage resources within the private sector.”

On Aug. 24, Johnson held a BEOC launch event at Crestmore Manor in Jurupa Valley to share detailed plans and agreements. Expert speakers presented on several topics aimed to create business resiliency to a crowd of approximately 80 business and emergency management professionals.

The BEOC creates a network within Riverside County in which businesses will share plans and training during times of preparedness. During disasters, these businesses will join response and recovery efforts by activating within an ICS framework known as the BEOC.

For example, once the BEOC is activated, a local hotel or casino participating in the BEOC may bring meals to a community shelter without adequate supplies.

“In a catastrophic disaster, we’re all in this together,” said Johnson.
KIM, CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

Thank you for taking time out of your weekend and home life to participate in these events. As community members were eager for information, I’m confident that EMD was able to provide vital instructions that could save lives. As you may know, the Board issued a proclamation on Sept. 12 in honor of National Preparedness Month, which is another demonstration of the Board’s commitment to emergency preparedness.

We also recently issued our second annual report highlighting our accomplishments from fiscal year 2016/2017, as well as sharing our goals for the next 12 months. Visit our department’s website at RivCoEMD.org for an electronic version of the report, and to read the National Preparedness Month proclamation.

Sincerely,
Kim S.

EDITOR’S NOTE:
The Source is produced by EMD personnel. Please submit story ideas and pictures to bfederico@rivco.org.

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Taking preparedness to the streets

Following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. government proclaimed the month of Sept. as National Preparedness Month. Managed and sponsored by the Ready Campaign, National Preparedness Month is designed to raise awareness and encourage Americans to take steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, schools, workplaces, organizations, businesses and places of worship.

National Preparedness Month is an opportunity for EMD to share emergency preparedness information and host activities across the county to help our residents understand what it truly means to be ready. Considering that hurricanes and earthquakes occurred in different parts of the world throughout September, the message was especially timely and the audience was truly engaged.

A preparedness event was held weekly in each of the five supervisorial districts to increase readiness within our community. In addition to the Saturday events, EMD personnel attended several other events to discuss emergency preparedness, including the Employee Campaign Kickoff at the County Administrative Center and the Deaf Awareness Week Kickoff in Downtown Riverside.

Get ready to Shakeout!

Practice makes habit. On Oct. 19, at exactly 10:19 a.m., community members throughout California will assume the drop, cover and hold on position for three minutes to simulate an actual response to an earthquake.

The annual Shakeout is a time to practice the correct way to respond to ground shaking. There are many mis-truths regarding how to protect yourself during an earthquake. The Shakeout focuses on the right way to do it.

Step 1: Drop wherever you are and curl up. If you don’t drop, the shaking could drop you.

Step 2: Take cover under a table, if it is available. If no cover is available, cover your head with your hands.

Step 3: Hold on to your cover and move with it.

Renee Poselski, Business and Finance, and Dana Lagunas, Preparedness, pose for a superhero selfie at the County Administrative Center preparedness booth and Employee Campaign kickoff.
CERT volunteer leads the pack

After 36 years of teaching with the Jurupa Unified School District, Vince Rosse decided to pursue his passion. Rosse said he enjoys travelling, hiking, camping and spending time with his dogs. However, those activities were not his main focus after he retired. Instead, Rosse chose to give a greater purpose to his retirement – by volunteering his time with the Riverside County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

CERT is a program under Disaster Corps, which is the parent volunteer group within EMD. CERT volunteers are trained in basic disaster response skills, team organization, supporting emergency preparedness projects, and assisting when professional responders are not immediately available.

“CERT allows me to keep learning and I really enjoy helping,” said Rosse. “It’s a great feeling to give back to the community.”

EMD Lead Emergency Services Coordinator Michelle Kelly has worked closely with Rosse on several occasions, mainly with course logistics during CERT training.

“Mr. Rosse always represents Riverside County well – he is consistently professional, personable, and helpful,” Kelly said.

Kelly explained that Rosse works well with the CERT teaching cadre and often knows what actions are needed without being asked.

Rosse’s proactive approach could be linked to his passion for disaster preparedness, which began well before his retirement. While working with Jurupa Unified, Rosse often advocated for preparedness and safety, sharing information with coworkers and students. This started a domino effect as more faculty began independently thinking about preparedness.

Rosse’s knack for leadership, hands-on approach, and positive outlook are some of the many reasons that he has stood out among so many other shining stars. Rosse said he plans to remain a volunteer in the coming years and emphasized the importance of volunteering.

“I will do whatever I can,” said Rosse. “It’s a passion of mine.”

The CERT program has 2,794 trained volunteers. EMD is currently forming three CERT teams by the end of 2017.

Southwest players join for tabletop

One hundred players converged upon the Loma Linda Medical Center in Murrieta on Sept. 21. These players weren’t gamers. Rather, these players consisted of councilmembers, city managers, emergency managers, risk managers, financial officers and first responders. Their objective was to test their emergency operations center (EOC) readiness during the Southwest Tabletop Exercise.

“The most valuable thing someone can give is their time,” said Emergency Services Coordinator Jerry Hagen. “These very busy policy makers and city staff gave us their time and attention to increase their disaster readiness within their city.”

Dubbed What does my EOC section do?, all six Southwest cities attended the exercise, spanning from Lake Elsinore to Temecula. The exercise began with presentations by EMD subject matter experts on public information, planning and intelligence, as well as communication flow. The large group then broke up into their respective EOC sections to drill down into best practices of EOC processes, forms and communication flow.

This was the 10th ever Southwest exercise, which highlights the commitment from our city partners to maintain a constant state of readiness. It’s not if the next disaster will impact Riverside County, but when.
Michelle Bueller (sitting) of CALFIRE/Riverside County Fire Department, James Lee (standing left) of REMSA and David Olguin (standing right) with American Medical Response review an emergency medical dispatch call.

The best response is not always the loudest response

When someone calls 911, they often expect to see paramedics and ambulances rushing to the scene under a storm of red lights and sirens (RLS). Unfortunately, many times the medical needs of the patient do not warrant this type of a response. RLS actually puts paramedics and emergency medical technicians at risk while driving through traffic.

This is why the Riverside County Emergency Medical Services Agency (REMSA), and partner agencies, embarked upon applying national standards to appropriately match resources to the patient’s medical needs. All while reducing unnecessary risk of RLS response to lower priority medical calls.

Previously, all 911 medical calls resulted in both a paramedic fire engine and a paramedic ambulance – regardless of patient need. Under the use of emergency medical dispatch, the resources sent and how they are sent (i.e., with or without RLS) depends upon the nature and severity of the emergency.

“We’ve seen a 15 percent decrease in the use of RLS during response calls,” said REMSA Director Bruce Barton. “Which results in increased safety for our first responders, EMTs and the thousands of community members riding in their cars.”

More than 30 years of evidence-based research indicates that properly using a response triage system is both safer and more effective. Bringing the use of emergency medical dispatch to fruition in Riverside County was a joint collaboration among REMSA, CALFIRE/Riverside County Fire Department and American Medical Response (AMR), which were the initial first-response agencies to use the new call triage system.

The use of emergency medical dispatch is one phase of an ongoing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System Strategic Plan update. In 2016 and 2017 the EMS Strategic Plan workgroup implemented:

- Improvements to REMSA emergency medical dispatch policy requiring standardization to international standards.
- Developed a continuum of care timeline that identifies critical time stamps and intervals from when a 911 call is received until the patient is released from the hospital.
- Continued development of improved data collection, performance reports and recommendations for prioritization of resource response.

By the numbers

**Mexico City Earthquake**
- 7.1 Magnitude - 9/19/2017
- 216 Fatalities
- 50 buildings collapsed
- 5 million people without power a week later
- 32 year anniversary of 1985 earthquake, in which there were 9,500 fatalities and 30,000 buildings damaged. CERT was created following this earthquake to organize citizen responders and keep them safe while assisting with disasters.

**Great Shakeout**
- 10/19 at 10:19 a.m.
- 55 million people participated in 2016
- 3 mins of assuming the drop, cover and hold on position

In related REMSA news, the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) approved the REMSA Emergency Medical Services Plan on Sept. 25 with only one noted deficiency. The sole deficiency indicated that REMSA must establish a response time standard for first response agencies by Aug. 2018. EMSA is the state governing authority issuing guidance and regulations for all local emergency medical services agencies.
Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee, who has three million virtual dollars? That’s right ... EMD!

No, we didn’t win the purse in the latest boxing match but we did put up a good fight by displaying copious amounts of stamina and control. With the entire county sitting ringside, EMD employees hit ‘em hard by taking the grand prize in the Feel Like a Million (FLAM) challenge.

“EMD rocked it,” exclaimed Nicole Foust, OAIII with Preparedness. “We had the determination and willpower to bring it home for our department!”

EMD: a Million-Dollar Baby

on the number of registrants, days logged, and completed surveys. The checks were presented by representatives from Culture of Health, County of Riverside Human Resources.

Alongside Foust, Team SanBag included EMD employees Patricia Uematsu, Martin Baxter, Nicole Hemmans, Ofelia Acosta, Mary Valterria and DPSS employees Gerardo Sanchez and Catherine Cabag. The team motivated each other to eat better, be active and to adopt healthier habits. Collaboration was key with proven results. “We had so much fun but we also worked really hard,” said Uematsu. “We really took this competition serious and I was so

EMD staff presented with million dollar checks in the Feel Like a Million challenge. From left: James Lee, Dana Lagunas, Valerie Mendoza, Jennifer Dominguez, Carol Gonzalez, Gerardo Sanchez (DPSS), Catherine Cabag (DPSS) and Nicole Foust.

July 2020

Healthy motivations

September is Fruit and Vegetables More Matters Month.

Having a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables lowers the risk of heart disease, type II diabetes, certain cancers, obesity and high blood pressure.

Pro tip to increase fruit and veggie consumption: visit the Mobile Fresh Bus. The nearest site to Riverwalk is Magnolia Gardens at 8507 Magnolia Ave, Riverside, CA 92504 from 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. They offer fresh produce at a great price every Thursday.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Early detection is key. Get a mammogram if you are a female over 40 years old. Talk to your physician if you have any concerns.

November is National Diabetes Month.

Lower your risk of type II diabetes with these simple steps:

1. Always eat breakfast. It helps to give you energy and keep steady blood sugar levels.
2. Eat healthy fats like sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, almonds, and pecans.
3. Get at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise daily.

FLAM is offered by the County of Riverside Culture of Health, whose commitment is providing the best workplace environment to benefit employee well-being. FLAM participants earned pseudo cash in five different areas of focus. The goal was to accumulate $1 million in 12 weeks by practicing healthy habits and rituals. EMD did just that, with numerous single participants and two winning teams.

Team SanBag placed first while The Goal Diggers placed third, each accepting an oversized check in the amount of $1 million. A third check was presented to EMD for placing first in the “Top Department” category, which was based

happy to find out that we took first place.”

The Goal Diggers, who also gained top three ranking, was comprised of EMD employees Jennifer Smith, Valerie Mendoza, James Lee, Kelly Moore, Dana Lagunas, Reyshawn Bobo and Jennifer Dominguez.

“I felt validated that my hard work was being recognized,” said Lagunas proudly. “My team put a lot of effort into every segment of the competition.”

The County of Riverside Human Resources Culture of Health group is working to create a video montage of all the winning departments and teams.
Employee campaign kicks off with a superhero bang

Pop! Zip! Boom! Superheroes unite! The annual employee campaign has begun and the call for help loudly reverberates within our Riverside County charities and federations every year.

Chaired by EMD Director Kim Saruwatari, the employee campaign kickoff at the County Administrative Center on Sept. 12 was filled with a technicolor display of superhero capes. Saruwatari herself dressed as Mighty Mouse and Vice Chair Jason Uhley, Director of Flood Control, dressed as a superhero known as Flash Flood. The Board of Supervisors even donned Superman shirts.

Local food trucks dropped in to serve deliciously indulgent food, with a portion of the proceeds benefitting the campaign. $150 were raised at the event. Kaboom!

“Measured not by super human strength or the ability to leap over tall buildings,” said Saruwatari. “Rather our County superheroes are evident every year through the compassion of our super human sized hearts.”

This year’s goal is to raise a record breaking $800,000! Learn more about how you can be a superhero at the campaign’s website: www.uwiv.org/county.
Welcome the Great Eight to the EMD team

The Emergency Management Department (EMD) welcomed eight new players to the EMD team this quarter.

In recent months, EMD welcomed Jose Contreras, Moises Evangelista, Susan Peters, Reyshawn Bobo, Robin Mammoth, Rubi Reyes, Belinda Flournoy, and Addison Hesslink to the department. The new additions to each division have shown solid potential and a promise for success.

Flournoy joined EMD’s fiscal section of the Business and Finance Division (BFD) as a Principle Accountant. Before coming to EMD, she held the title of Senior Accountant with the Behavioral Health Revenue Unit. Mammoth joined BFD a short time later as a TAP Office Assistant III. She previously worked at County Purchasing and Fleet Services as an Administrative Services Assistant II. The Riverside County EMS Agency (REMSA) added both Peters and Evangelista as TAP Research Specialists. Peters held a TAP Administrative Services Assistant I position with EMD before moving over to REMSA. Evangelista works with REMSA on Fridays only, as he continues to work as a Systems Analyst II with DPSS in Los Angeles County. Bobo started as a TAP in REMSA doing outreach on public automated external defibrillators and hands-only CPR. Bobo recently promoted to a permanent position within the Preparedness Division as an Administrative Services Assistant.

Hesslink and Contreras both came to the Operations Division as Emergency Services Coordinators. Hesslink is currently working with the City of Indio and was previously a Grants Manager with the Department of Health-Bureau of Health Emergency Management in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Contreras is covering the east desert communities within the area of Coachella and Palo Verde Valleys. He previously held the title of Emergency Services Coordinator I with the Office of Emergency Management, Imperial Irrigation District.

Reyes is the most recent addition to the group. She is a student at California Baptist University who has come to EMD as an intern with the Preparedness Division. Reyes is working on researching outreach sites for flu clinics and updating presentations for Public Health orientations.

Each new employee brings distinct skills and fresh perspectives, enhancing the department’s existing group of esteemed staff. The game has begun and the great eight have taken the field!

Service Awards
Service awards are for total service to the County of Riverside. Anniversaries below are for Aug. – Oct. 2017. Thank you for your dedication to public service!

Martin Baxter – 18 years
Georgia Herbaugh – 18 years
Nadine Hays – 16 years
Renee Poselski – 14 years
Anne Accurso – 12 years
Mary Valterria – 11 years
Michelle Kelly – 6 years
Ofelia Acosta – 4 years
Dan Bates – 4 years
Sandy Olinga – 3 years
Valeria Mendoza – 2 years
Brooke Federico – 1 year
Carol Gonzalez – 1 year
Christina Rich – 1 year

Parting shot
An EMD vehicle drives down Sierra Peak in Corona where Emergency Services Coordinators Dennis Day, Jerry Hagen and Shane Reichardt conducted damage assessment following the Cayon Fire.