

LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Terry Hummel is Emergency Management Coordinator for the Pott. Co. Emergency Management Agency. Terry explained his office is under the purview of the county Emergency Management Commission, which is made up of all mayors, the Board of Supervisors, and the Sheriff. The Commission is responsible for homeland security, emergency preparedness, emergency response, disaster recovery, and hazard mitigation. Terry further explained the County Commission is governed by the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, which reports to the new, national U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Besides informing the public about the local Emergency Management Agency, Terry said he has been heavily involved on grant applications to receive the Homeland Security funding for local purposes. New equipment is being distributed at strategic locations around the county to fulfill the Emergency Management Commission responsibilities for public safety and security. Terry noted that there is a great deal of cooperation throughout the Omaha-Council Bluffs area to meet the needs for emergency preparedness. For example thirteen hospitals and about forty agencies work together as the Omaha Metro Medical Response System. Terry emphasized that we each have responsibilities for emergency preparedness. We can support local volunteer fire and rescue units. We can join Community Emergency Response Teams to supplement the professional responders. We can be more aware of surroundings and unusual activities. We can be prepared for emergencies at home. We can pay more attention to state and national legislation.