

NEVADA

Highlights of State Council Activities

The Nevada State Citizen Corps Council is sponsored by the Governor of Nevada, who appoints members to the Council. Members hold quarterly meetings. The goals of the Council are to promote citizen preparedness and volunteerism and to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of the citizens of Nevada.

The Council encouraged and observed Citizen Corps involvement in major regional exercises, during actual emergencies in Nevada and the Gulf Coast as volunteers responded simultaneously to Hurricane Katrina and a major flooding event in downtown Reno. The growth in numbers, experience, and professionalism of the volunteer pool available to emergency management personnel in Nevada grew significantly in 2005.

The Nevada State Council set its 2006 goals to include continuing to encourage and to promote formally established Citizen Corps Councils; encouraging ad hoc citizens groups to organize into Citizen Corps Councils and register them in the National Database; and establishing a formal state level awards program to recognize outstanding citizen contributions.

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Public Education and Outreach

In 2005, Nevada Citizen Corps was joined by a new Council in Churchill County, organizing already established citizen volunteer involvement in the county. Citizen Corps briefings were given at various community activities throughout the State in established venues such as town hall meetings, a sheriff's picnic, the Metal Workers Association luncheon, Incline Village residents' meeting, and the North Lake Tahoe Fire District meetings.

Training and Exercises

Participation in major exercises increased during 2005 and training at the local Councils continues. Local Councils continue to recruit and train new Citizen Corps members. Local training is an ongoing endeavor for the two metropolitan regions in the State.

Two major exercises were conducted in 2005, one in each of Nevada's two major metropolitan areas: Clark County and Washoe County. Exercise *Rotunda Thunda* in Las Vegas included local Citizen Corps volunteer participation; and Washoe County regional Emergency Operations Center leaders conducted Exercise *Noble Responder*, using trained Citizen Corps volunteers for a variety of duties. Both exercises were successful, especially in terms of engagement of Citizen Corps volunteers.

Volunteer Programs and Support

The State Emergency Manager's Annual Conference held in October included representatives from all state jurisdictions. Citizen preparedness and Citizen Corps Council participation was evident throughout the conference.

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office organized a new program called Rail RATS, or Rail Auxiliary Teams, to educate and train enthusiasts on terrorist activities and tactics. The Rails RATS observe trains as usual, but now have indicators to look for and contacts with local railroad operators to whom they can report suspicious activities.

Support for Hurricane Katrina Response

Hurricane Katrina support was a large endeavor for Nevada and its Citizen Corps members in the metropolitan areas of Reno and Las Vegas. Nevada did not officially receive evacuees, but Reno and Las Vegas received "self-evacuated" hurricane victims. Las Vegas opened an Evacuee Assistance Center and utilized, among others, its Citizen Corps volunteers to assist victims. Reno Citizen Corps volunteers assisted evacuees seeking help from the county offices.

Citizen Corps volunteers also answered phones during major flooding in the Reno and Sparks areas. The EOC established a citizens' assistance non-emergency phone number to prevent calls to 911 operators for assistance in non-life-threatening situations. This number was established during the 2004-2005 winter storms and its success was heralded by the county Emergency Manager as a tremendous help to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the 911 operators. The Citizens Assistance Phone Lines are now a permanent part of the EOC and the Washoe County Citizen's Corps.