

## **Douglas County Meeting with the First Responders Foundation**

July 7, 2016

The Douglas County Emergency Management Agency (DCEMA) is key to providing a unifying approach when responding to and recovering from community emergencies and natural disasters. Among its duties, DCEMA supports the incident command staff by providing the technology and process to obtain information and procure resources. This unifying approach will be strengthened when the Agency's administrative offices are relocated to the Thomas Fitzgerald campus.

- Moving DCEMA's administrative offices to the Thomas Fitzgerald campus will enable DCEMA staff to engage in face-to-face planning sessions with its multiple partners who are instrumental in emergency response and recovery. The Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Douglas County Engineer's Office, Douglas County Emergency Communications and Douglas County Environmental Services each play a key role in the emergency planning process.
- DCEMA's mobile emergency management trailers are currently located and stored at the Thomas Fitzgerald campus. Among their many uses, these trailers are used for urgent deployment to anywhere in the county. The trailers have been deployed for natural disasters and special events such as the College World Series and U.S. Olympic Swim Trials.
- The Thomas Fitzgerald campus allows for public access and parking on site for meetings and planning sessions with outside organizations. Each organization plays a role in responding to and recovering from disasters including providing needed personnel.
- DCEMA operates approximately 120 sirens throughout Douglas County. DCEMA's activation equipment is housed at the Douglas County Emergency Communications 911 Center and at the base of the 911 antennae. Maintenance, troubleshooting and testing of the equipment will be made easier to perform with enhanced reliability.
- Being located at the Thomas Fitzgerald campus facilitates easier communication with our rural fire districts and police departments. Since severe weather usually approaches the county from the west, maintaining close vigilance with our rural emergency management coordinators and first responders from western Douglas County is imperative.
- Over the years, flooding along the Elkhorn and Platte Rivers has required the services of Emergency Management to form a coordinated and unified command for both response and recovery operations. Since multiple departments and organizations are usually involved, DCEMA orchestrates and coordinates the use of resources and personnel from various communities and organizations on site for both day and night activities.
- As the community grows toward the west in Douglas County, resources will be requested from various jurisdictions to respond to fires, flooding, river rescues and other threats. From the Thomas Fitzgerald campus, DCEMA will be able to better engage and acquire these resources.