

# THE PREPAREDNESS POST

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

YEAR 7, ISSUE 2

## Why Should You Care About COOP?

*By Mike Stever, Emergency Manager, Utah Department of Health*



Expert intelligence operators refer to certain facts as “ground truths.” So, for each Utah Department of Health (UDOH) employee, here are two “ground truths.” One, we are living in an area that is overdue for a catastrophic earthquake. Two, when disaster strikes certain health department functions must be restored immediately for public safety and the public good. At the department and division level, UDOH critical functions have been identified and outlined in a document called a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

Under the leadership of Mindy Colling, this plan was created by EMS/Preparedness Bureau staff and committee representatives from each UDOH division.

Critical functions were prioritized by urgency of need. You may have a role in recovery.

And, UDOH is not alone. By Executive Order, Governor Gary Herbert ordered all state government departments and divisions to have a COOP plan on file with his office.

The size and diversity of UDOH make centralized COOP awareness, training, and exercise impractical. It’s up to individuals in bureaus and divisions to know their critical functions and who will be responsible for disaster response and recovery.

What does all this mean to you? First, you must take personal responsibility for your own individual and family preparedness at home, work, school, and on the road. (Look to [www.bereadyutah.gov](http://www.bereadyutah.gov) for “how to” information and ideas.) Second, know your own and your work group’s responsibilities for COOP critical tasks. Third, be aware of the realities and importance of day-to-day safety and disaster and emergency preparedness.

Participate in training and exercises that come your way.

Questions? Contact your bureau COOP committee representative or your bureau director.

| U-TRAIN                                   |      |
|---|------|
| In this issue:                            |      |
| Why Should You Care About COOP?           | 1    |
| Testing our Response                      | 2    |
| The Honor Society                         | 3-4  |
| Utah Gets a Perfect Score on SNS Planning | 5    |
| When Ghosts Attack                        | 6    |
| When Ghosts Attack (continued)            | 7    |
| Calendar                                  | 8-10 |

## Testing Laboratory Evacuation Response

*By Charla Haley*

In early May, the Utah Public Health Laboratory (UPHL) conducted an annual biosafety and incident response drill simulating events that would occur during a fire. This exercise was designed to test the lab's biosafety and incident response plans. The planners were the only employees aware of the test.

Just before 2 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7, representatives from the Unified Fire Authority, the Unified Police Department, several visitors, including the FBI's Weapons of Mass

Destruction (WMD) coordinator, and three local health department emergency response coordinators, arrived for a scheduled laboratory/first responders coordination meeting.

The fire alarm was initiated at 2:00 p.m. All employees (except one who was instructed to remain in the warehouse) evacuated the building in less than five minutes. (That employee was later found and "rescued" by firefighters.)

Since the alarm did not pinpoint the location of the possible fire, firefighters were forced to make a complete sweep of the building, which they did in just over 13 minutes. (In case of a real fire, the alarm panel in the lobby would give a location, directing firefighters where to begin.)

For test purposes, one exit was blocked forcing many employees to find other ways to leave the building.

As often happens with exercises, this drill highlighted some issues that need to be addressed. For example:

- Some supervisors were absent and employees failed to check in once they were out of the building. Section chiefs need to assign a back-up person to check in staff when the supervisor is unavailable.

- Some Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members didn't have their radios with them and many who did had them on the wrong channel.

- Employees were told by a CERT member that they could re-enter the building prior to firefighters giving the "all clear" signal.

- Observers indicated that non-lab staff could have easily tail-gated back into the building and secure areas with lab staff.

- During the exercise, it was discovered that the janitorial staff had never participated in a fire drill at the lab. (Janitorial staffing is provided by an outside company.) As a result, they didn't recognize the fire alarm and didn't know how to evacuate properly.

All of the issues uncovered during the drill were discussed at a mandatory all-hands safety meeting later in May.

After reviewing the biosafety and incident response plans, it was decided that no changes or updates need to be made to the plans.



## The Honor Society

*Congratulations to our award winners*

### Recognition for Great Customer Service

The Association for Utah Community Health (AUCH) has recognized **Dr. Marc Babitz**, Director of the Division of Family Health and Preparedness, for Excellence in Customer Service in connection with another hat he wears. Two days a week, Dr. Babitz volunteers at the Salt Lake Health Clinics of Utah, where he also serves as medical director.

In making the nomination, colleague Steve Ipsen noted that Dr. Babitz volunteered at the clinic for about three years before being approached about becoming the medical director. He agreed and according to the nomination form, "was an immediate hit with the patients, medical providers, and management." Since that time, Dr. Babitz has continued to build on the focus of providing world class customer service to all patients.

Dr. Babitz's medical career has spanned the country and nearly 40 years of service. He's a board certified family medicine physician who has dedicated his career to serving vulnerable populations. He's well known as an educator of physicians, nurses and other medical professionals. As a professor at the University of Utah School of Medicine, Dr. Babitz received a distinguished teaching award for both his passion for teaching and his customer service-related patient care.

The Association for Utah Community Health has been the voice of Utah's community health centers and their patients since 1985. The award was presented during a luncheon at AUCH's 2014 Annual Conference.



### Bureau Member Honored by the National Guard



On June 10, the Bureau of EMS and Preparedness hosted the Utah National Guard for an overview of the capabilities of two National Guard units: the Homeland Response Force (HRF) and the Civil Support Team (CST). The meeting was an opportunity for National Guard officials to explain what services they could provide to Utah's public health departments in case of an emergency. Following the meeting, National Guard representatives announced a special award presentation. All military personnel rose, and **Mindy Colling**, UDOH Emergency Planner, was asked to come forward. Major Rob Dent, Civil Support Team, presented her with a framed certificate and a bronze medal inscribed with "DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY COMMANDER'S AWARD FOR PUBLIC SERVICE." The award is the fourth highest honor the United States Department of the Army can bestow upon a civilian. It is awarded for service or achievements that contribute significantly to the accomplishment of the mission of an Army activity, command or staff agency. Mindy received this award for her support and work with the 97<sup>th</sup> Troop Command during the

Gharb-Utah Joint Rapid Response exercise in Kenitra, Morocco in March 2014. During the two-week functional exercise and training event, Mindy provided training on public health considerations for preparedness planning and response, and participated in a 3-day functional exercise as a participant alongside Moroccan civilian health and medical personnel. The award certificate noted that Mindy's "hard work, dedication and professionalism played an integral part in improving emergency preparedness levels and furthering the relationships that have been built with our military and civilian agencies in Morocco." The purpose of the exchange was to increase interaction with and partnerships between the military and civilians in planning and response activities.

The Bureau's relationship with the National Guard continues to grow, including participation in the upcoming Utah Vigilant Guard earthquake exercise this November, and a civilian and military public health exercise scheduled for January 2015.

## The Honor Society (continued)

### National Honors for a Utah Laboratorian

Each year, the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) accepts nominations for the annual Silver Award, which is presented to someone who has made a significant contribution to the public health laboratory science. The honoree must be someone who is recognized as a leader within their home laboratory and outside their laboratory. For 2014, that honor has been given to Sanwat Chaudhuri, Ph.D., Scientific Advisor, Chemical and Environmental Services, Utah Public Health Laboratory.

Dr. Chaudhuri says the award came as a big surprise, particularly when she discovered the nomination came from peers from other states. "The association indicated there were other nominees, but the selection committee felt my nomination was very convincing and deserved."



As Utah Department of Health, Chemical and Environmental Services Program Director for more than 10 years, and recently assigned as the Scientific Advisor for the same program, Dr. Chaudhuri was the primary author on a publication involving utilizing dried blood spots for screening of lead, mercury and cadmium in newborns, a laboratory method which is now followed or referenced by other states. She also participated in developing and peer reviewing analytical methods in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and chaired the Standard Methods committee for haloacetic acids in water.

Dr. Chaudhuri was formally recognized during the APHL Annual Meeting Awards Breakfast held on June 3, 2014 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

### UDOH Employee of the Month—August 2014



**Curtis Burk** is the UDOH Employee of the Month for August 2014! As the financial manager for the Division of Family Health and Preparedness, Curtis has made important and valuable contributions to the Division and the Department. His expertise, experience and professionalism have made him a valuable member of the executive leadership team for the Division, and have enabled him to make important improvements within his own program and staff. Curtis has played an active role with the Department's Operations Committee, and is an active contributor to efforts to streamline our travel approval and contract approval processes.

In recognition of Curtis's important contributions to his program, the Division, the Department and to the State of Utah, we are proud to honor him as our employee of the month!

#### UDOH Web sites:

[health.utah.gov](http://health.utah.gov) (main)

[health.utah.gov/preparedness](http://health.utah.gov/preparedness)

[health.utah.gov/ems](http://health.utah.gov/ems)

Utah Department of Health  
Public Health Preparedness  
3760 S. Highland Drive  
SLC, UT

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Preparedness Training information:

<https://www.utah.train.org>

## Utah Gets a Perfect Score on SNS Planning

*By Brett Cross, SNS Program Manager*

A year ago, Utah just missed getting a perfect score on the annual Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Technical Assistance Review (TAR), falling short in the area of inventory management. Brett Cross, SNS Program Manager, says UDOH was missing a Controlled Substance Registration Certificate that allows the Utah Department of Health to distribute controlled substances.

Cross says the application process is fairly complicated and took nearly a year from start to final approval. "It's an arduous process, including a long application to the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Once that's completed, they send out DEA Agents to look at the facility. Finally, they issue the certificate," adds Cross. Now that the certificate is in the hands of UDOH officials, the certificate must be maintained at the registered location in a place that is easily accessible and kept available for official inspection.

Additional requirements considered in the evaluation process for the TAR include maintaining quarterly documentation of staff call downs and equipment checks and documentation of completed annual training for staff. These documents, along with the certificate, were provided to the CDC resulting in a perfect score.

### SNS History

In 1999 Congress charged the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with establishing a National Pharmaceutical Stockpile. The SNS is a collection of large quantities of medical materiel, equipment and pharmaceuticals. The purpose of the stockpile is to assist states by delivering critical medical assets to the site of a national emergency once local supplies are exhausted. The states receive, stage and distribute the assets to the local health departments (LHD). The LHDs are responsible for dispensing those assets to the public.



## When Ghosts Attack

*By Christine Warren, MEP, Training and Exercise Program Coordinator*

The overall response during the 2-day, statewide 2014 Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) full-scale exercise was, to quote a movie, "We Ain't Afraid of No Ghosts!" The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Ghost Attack, a statewide effort, was conducted July 14-15.

The exercise scenario involved a bioterrorism attack releasing aerosolized anthrax during a sporting event at a stadium with 60,000 people in attendance. Sunday evening, the exercise began when a local health department (LHD) and some hospitals began reporting to UDOH Bureau of Epidemiology (EPI) a large increase in people exhibiting flu-like symptoms and chest pain.

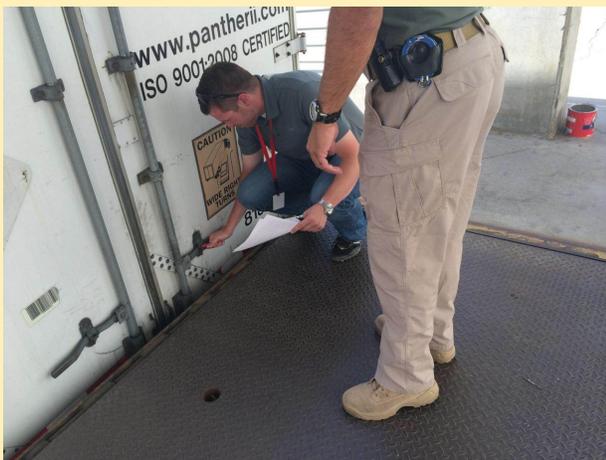
Monday morning, EPI started getting a number of calls from the LHD regarding patients and a number of deaths, the Utah Public Health Laboratory (UPHL) bioterrorism staff received various "samples" for testing of anthrax, UDOH Public Information Office (PIO) received many media calls, and the UDOH Department Operations Center (DOC) response team was activated. DOC staff and the Division of Emergency Management (DEM) coordinated the response efforts with staff from EPI, UPHL, Joint Information Center (JIC), and State Emergency Response Team (SERT) at the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC).



Lance Madigan (UCHD PIO), Cyndi Bemis (UDOH), and Charla Haley (UDOH) staffed the JIC at the Cannon Building. Steve Sautter (SLCo Emergency Planner) observed and evaluated.

The scenario played out at local health departments, the Utah Department of Health Cannon Building (DOC and EPI, and JIC), the Utah Public Health Lab, State EOC, and UDOH's designated receiving, staging, and shipping (RSS) site.

The SNS Ghost Attack exercise was the result of a two-year planning process lead by the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of EMS and Preparedness in response to the federal CDC/SNS Grant requirements. The over-arching mission of the SNS Ghost Attack exercise was to evaluate and assess elements of the UDOH statewide SNS Response Plans, in conjunction with the state's 12 LHD's SNS Response Plans. The SNS Plans incorporate essential elements of protocol, requesting approval from the CDC/SNS authorities for a "push-pack" of medication supplies shipped to Utah, receiving and distributing the SNS push-pack medication supplies statewide to the local health department's receiving sites, and exercising the distribution of the SNS medication at the local level. The full-scale event was held over a 12-hour period beginning on Monday, July 14 with the activation of UDOH EPI bioterrorism team, UPHL bioterrorism team, DOC response team, and the JIC. On Tuesday, July 15, the CDC SNS push-pack medication supplies arrived in Utah at the UDOH SNS receiving,



Brett Cross (UDOH)

### When Ghosts Attack (continued)



Chris Christensen (DABC), Scott Munson (UDOH), Shelley Hood, (Wyoming Department of Public Health), Kevin Perry (DABC)

staging, and shipping site and were distributed statewide to the LHDs.

All told, there were an estimated 250 participating exercise staff and players throughout the 2-day exercise, with 18 participating agencies, including federal, state (Utah and Wyoming), local, and private agencies. The Department Bureau of EMS and Preparedness SNS and Training and Exercise Coordinators led the exercise planning team with representatives from federal partners (CDC/SNS Program, the U.S. Marshals Service, and FBI), state partners (Utah Department of Public Safety, Utah National Guard, Division of Emergency Management, Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control), local law enforcement, LHDs, and

private business partner Old Dominion Trucking.

The full-scale SNS Ghost Attack exercise was a successful endeavor, demonstrating a high level of preparedness statewide, from the LHDs to the UDOH bioterrorism emergency response staff, and the effective preparedness and coordination of the Department’s Bureau of EMS and Preparedness.



And that’s why we say, “We Ain’t Afraid of No Ghosts!”

## Calendar—2014 Training

| <b>Date</b>                    | <b>Event</b>  | <b>Location</b>  | <b>Information</b> |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| <b>Aug. 26</b>                 | Citizen Corps: Why it Matters in Emergency Management   | Webinar<br>(UEMA)  | UTRAIN: #1051190   |
| <b>Sept. 3-4</b>               | Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)                                     | Utah Division of Emergency Management<br>State Office Building<br>Salt Lake City | UTRAIN: #1011178   |
| <b>Sept. 4, 6, 11 &amp; 13</b> | Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Train-the-Trainer                                    | South Davis Metro<br>Bountiful   | UTRAIN: #1033034   |
| <b>Sept. 16, 17</b>            | Local Volunteer and Donations Management  | Utah Division of Emergency Management<br>State Office Building<br>Salt Lake City | UTRAIN: #1026948   |
| <b>Sept. 22-23</b>             | Continuity of Operations (COOP) Devolution Planning Workshop                                  | Utah Division of Emergency Management<br>State Office Building<br>Salt Lake City | UTRAIN: #1051592   |
| <b>Sept. 23-24</b>             | Basic Public Information Officer  | Utah Task Force 1<br>6726 S Navigator Dr.<br>West Jordan, Utah                   | UTRAIN: #1011053   |
| <b>Sept. 24-25</b>             | Continuity of Operations (COOP) Reconstitution Planning Workshop                              | Utah Division of Emergency Management<br>State Office Building<br>Salt Lake City | UTRAIN: #1051582   |
| <b>Sept. 25</b>                | Joint Information System/Joint Information Center (JIS/JIC) for Tribal, State, and Local PIOs | Utah Task Force 1<br>6726 S Navigator Dr.<br>West Jordan, Utah                   | UTRAIN: #1020466   |



## Calendar—2014 Training

| Date                    | Event   | Location  | Information  |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| Sept. 26                | Continuity of Operations (COOP)<br>Resilient Accord<br>Cyber Security<br>Planning | Utah Division of<br>Emergency<br>Management<br>State Office<br>Building<br>Salt Lake City | UTRAIN: #1051590   |
| Sept. 30<br>(tentative) | Governor's Health<br>Summit   | Salt Lake City  |  |
| Sept. 30—Oct. 1         | Statewide Public<br>Information Officer<br>Conference                             | St. George  | Contact: Patrice Thomas (801) 244-0071 or pthomas@utah.gov<br>Register:<br><a href="http://www.emergencyinfoutah.com/external/content/document/2515/2163454/1/RegistrationFinal.pdf">http://www.emergencyinfoutah.com/external/content/document/2515/2163454/1/RegistrationFinal.pdf</a> |
| Oct. 7                  | Situation Planning<br>Unit (UDOH Epi<br>Staff)                                    | Salt Lake City  | By invitation only<br>To request attendance, please email or call Christine Warren<br>christinewarren@utah.gov<br>(801) 273-6663   |
| Oct. 8                  | Training, Exercise<br>Planning Workshop   | Red Lion Hotel<br>Salt Lake City  | UTRAIN #1023945  |
| Oct. 10                 | Spontaneous<br>Volunteer<br>Management  | Logan City<br>Offices   | UTRAIN: #1049904   |
| Oct. 21-22              | Advanced Incident<br>Command System   | Utah Division of<br>Emergency<br>Management<br>State Office<br>Building<br>Salt Lake City | UTRAIN #1011057  |
| Oct. 28-29              | Enhanced Threat<br>and Risk<br>Assessment   | Utah Division of<br>Emergency<br>Management<br>State Office<br>Building<br>Salt Lake City | UTRAIN: #1029991   |
| Nov. 1                  | ARES/RACES<br>Conference  | Davis Conference<br>Center  | UTRAIN: #1011069   |



## Calendar—2014 Training

|                          |   |   |                           |
|--------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|
| <p><b>Nov. 3-5</b></p>   | <p>Vigilant Guard Full Scale National Guard Exercise</p>  | <p>Salt Lake City</p>   | <p>By invitation only</p> |
| <p><b>Nov. 12-14</b></p> | <p>EOC Operations and Planning for All-Hazards Events</p> | <p>Utah Division of Emergency Management<br/>State Office Building<br/>Salt Lake City</p> | <p>UTRAIN: #1031265</p>   |



Visit: [www.bereadyutah.gov](http://www.bereadyutah.gov) for more information.

*Newsletter produced by Charla Haley with editorial assistance by Cyndi Bemis*