

the **checkup**

your pulse on preparedness

A Kansas Healthcare Coalition Publication



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Healthcare Coalitions - Always at the Heart of Response

So much destruction and devastation is hard to imagine unless you were one of the first responders involved in the December 15th storms. The dust storm alone resulted in 51 non-injury crashes, 20 injury crashes, and two deadly crashes causing three deaths on Kansas highways. The high winds tore down homes and buildings, uprooted trees, blew-out car windows, fueled the wildfires and left a mass of destruction. The wild fires were responsible for at least one death, many injuries, homes burned, acres of farmland ruined, animals killed, evacuations, power outages and millions of dollars of damage. "Fires in 11 counties from Russell County West burned just under 400,000 acres, with about 365,850 acres in a fire that stretched across Ellis, Russell, Osborne and Rooks counties," said Shawna Hartman, spokes-woman for the Kansas Forest Service. "The storm system carried winds that reached up to 90 mph in some areas. The winds combined with low humidity and dry vegetation and grasses to fuel fires in parts of western and central Kansas." Russell Co. Administrator John Fletcher said the fires burned between 200 and 250 square miles in Russell County. The Northwest Coordinator, Jonathon Blackburn identified that his region was likely hit the hardest in the state. Fires ripped through 10 homes in Russell County, caused the evacuation of several communities. Both the Southwest and Northwest coordinators used INAAalert extensively to notify their coalitions of possible mass casualties and give updates.



North Central Coordinator, Tami Wood reported that Salina, along with other areas of NCK, was hit pretty hard by the high winds with power outages. Some areas of NCK were without power for four or more days. Michelle Barkley, Saline County Emergency Management opened a shelter at the Webster Conference Center for those who needed to charge medical equipment, phones, etc. and to shelter. Mindi Bremer, Co-Coordinator for the Southwest Region, reports that the HCC assisted with transfer of patients as the transfer process was complicated with the wind and competing emergencies for emergency personnel. The South Central area, reports DeAnn Konkel, had several wildfires in the region and several lost their

homes. Danielle Marten reported that in the Northeast region, mainly property damage was experienced due to the storms. The Southeast region, says Destany Wheeler, basically considered the event to be a normal wind storm. Coordinators across the state assisted in obtaining needed resources, communicating alerts and sending situational updates. "In the KC area we had well north of 100,000 people lose electrical power and some facilities spent a couple days running on generators. We had sporadic grass fires and transformers that exploded, but nothing that got out of control," stated Andrew Conyers, Metro Coordinator.

It was no small task to contain the wildfires. Ellis County Fire Department alone was active for 53 hours straight. Fire fighters were treated for smoke inhalation and patients arrived at hospitals with severe burns. Risking their own safety at times, first responders worked hard to save others, their property and livestock. Despite the tremendous losses, HCC members, area neighbors, response personnel and others were immediately hard at work securing the areas affected and mitigating the disaster. HCC members responding included but are not limited to: hospitals, public health, emergency management, EMS, fire fighters, Coalition Coordinators, City Officials, local and state law enforcement. The Red Cross has been assisting many across the region and FEMA will undoubtedly be involved. The work is not done as help in recovery efforts is needed for months to come.

As predicted, the first three days or more after a major event, Kansans must rely on Kansans to help; such has been the experience especially in North Central, Northwest and Southwest regions. Communities who were spared the brunt of the devastation can now be seen helping those who endured the fires and extreme losses in providing fencing materials, organizing fund raising, giving cattle feed and donations. There is a overwhelming amount of grief, loss and much to be done to recover; but there is hope.

Thank you to each one who faithfully, sacrificially responds not only during this recent emergency, but to the countless other emergencies day in and day out. Your work is not taken for granted!



Coalition Best Practices Around Kansas

A best practice that all members can follow is to keep the kshcc.com website up-to-date with your membership information. If you haven't registered already, please do so. This information is available 24/7/365. If your organization is ever audited by Joint Commission or another regulatory body, and asked for proof of coalition involvement and/or access to education and training, the kshcc.com website would be just the place to go for proof. See if you are registered today by looking at the last column on your coalition's member directory.



The Metro region appreciates the e-ICS site for notification and incident management in a disaster. They also utilize Kansas City Veterans Association alert system as needed. As always, please keep your membership information updated on www.kshcc.com so you won't miss a message.



The North Central Region recognizes that January can be a stressful month for many. Please reach out if you are overwhelmed after the holidays. If you are struggling or are in crisis, please call the Kansas Suicide Prevention Hotline at 785-841-2345 or visit kansasagstress.org.

North East HCC

With an increase in vaccinations, many organizations are seeing an increase in employee needle sticks. The North East Region is recommending that now is a good time to push through some needle safety education to your employees.



If running low on medical supplies for lab, OR, X-Ray or other areas of a facility, the Northwest Executive Committee encourages networking through partners at other facilities to obtain the supplies. Many facilities are experiencing backorders. Working with other partners may help.



The South Central region encourages all HCC members to update their information on the KSHCC.com website. In emergency situations it is crucial to have accurate contact information for HCC members.



The Southeast Kansas HCC recommends taking every opportunity to celebrate. For example, they recently had fun at their December meeting while getting work completed. They like to take any opportunity to get to know each other better and add levity to their meetings.



SHERT
Healthcare Coalition

The Southwest Region regularly uses Incident Command positions and procedures. This practice enables staff to become familiar with terminology and responsibilities of the various positions. Incident Command had a major role in the effective response of the region during the recent wind storm and wildfires.



Kansas City Metro HCC Membership Meeting 2/24/22 at 2:00 pm via TEAMS. Please register for this meeting on KS Train using course number 1092673.

NCK HCC Membership Meeting will be held 1/14/22 at 9:00am via TEAMS. Please register for this meeting on KS Train using course number 1092953.

NEKHCC Membership Meeting will be held 2/1/22 at 9:00 am via TEAMS. Please register for this meeting on KS Train using course number 1071554.

NW HCC Membership Meeting will be held Tuesday, 2/8/22 at 1:30 pm. Please register for this meeting on KS Train using course number 1084798.

SC HCC Membership Meeting will be held 1/19/22 at 10:00 am via TEAMS. Please register for this meeting on KS Train using course number 1098828.

SEKS HCC Membership Meeting will be held 2/22/22 at 10:00 am.

SHERT HCC Membership Meeting will be held on 1/14/22. Please register on KSTrain using course number, 1059096.



State Fire Marshal to Host Monthly Webinars

The Office of the State Fire Marshal has started hosting a monthly webinar for “anyone with a fire alarm” to learn from a subject matter expert. They are starting in January with Jack Poole of Poole Fire Systems. The session will be hosted on Tuesday, January 11 at 10 a.m. and will last approximately an hour and allow time for questions. The information for the session is below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96573476275?pwd=bnNlakgwSWJXb3VTaUxtY0lHbDVNdz09>

Meeting ID: 965 7347 6275

Passcode: 1Bp7aV

If you have questions regarding this webinar, please reach out to the State Fire Marshal's office directly by utilizing the following contact information:

John Sprague, Fire Prevention Public Education, Office of the State Fire Marshal
800 SW Jackson, Suite 104, Topeka, KS 66612-1216
(785) 296-0659 – phone, (785) 289-6620 – mobile, (785) 296-0151 – fax
John.Sprague@ks.gov or <https://www.firemarshal.ks.gov/>



If you want to improve your readiness efforts, check out the following link for lists and tips for readiness: [Resolve to be Ready Social Media Toolkit](#) | [Ready.gov](#).



State of Healthcare in Kansas

Chief Medical Officers from around the state met on January 5th for the first statewide Crisis Communication event on the impact of recent COVID 19 surge. Dr. Lillian Lockwood, MD and Clinical Advisor for the Northeast region, compiled the following key information presented in the meeting to assist in understanding the widespread impact of COVID as well as present mitigation strategies. Thank you Dr. Lockwood for this timely compilation of information.

Virtually all the sixteen Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) reported many of the same challenges: namely, a huge increase in COVID 19 patients with many seeing the highest number of patients since the beginning of the pandemic. Full ICU beds with numerous patients on ventilators. (Those that have not been vaccinated make up the majority of patients, but a number of patients that are up-to-date with COVID vaccinations are in hospitals as well.) High death rates with some dying because transfers could not be made or made in time. Transfers to higher levels of care are very difficult to secure. If a suitable facility is found it may be extremely far away. One facility reported that the number of people dying while waiting for transfer to higher level care has quintupled from the lack of staffing and high volume of patients. Critical access hospitals and other facilities are being forced to care for patients who they do not have the expertise or specialties needed because they cannot get them transferred to already over-full and stressed higher level care facilities. These transfers include cases of cardiac intervention, critical care services, dialysis, pediatric specialty and pediatric trauma.

Many if not most, of the Emergency Departments were full with patients waiting hours to be seen and some, days to get a bed. This is a dire situation, one not easily remedied and is exacerbated by extreme staffing shortages. All CMOs reported staffing shortages and all reported that staff had reached their “max.” It is a situation also compounded by the rise of Influenza A with some patients now getting “Flurona” (both COVID 19 and Influenza A).

Some of the steps to mitigate the crisis are the following:

- Deferring surgeries and / or postponing elective surgeries / procedures.
- Ambulatory care is being deferred to provide inpatient care.
- Reducing or denying accepting transfers because of inability to accept patients.
- Utilization of a Call Center. One center is currently receiving more than 1,000 calls per day regarding testing requests.
- Establishing a drive through testing center. It was noted one facility is receiving their highest positivity rate ever, 35%.
- Hospitals are constantly seeking ways to increase testing capabilities.
- One facility changed their 16 bed ICU to a 24 bed ICU and now use their recovery rooms for non-COVID ICU patients.
- Changed to contingency staffing levels in the ICU.
- Larger facilities are assisting rural partners with patient management since they cannot accept transfers.

This situation will get worse if immediate steps are not taken to slow the spread via vaccinations and boosters, wearing quality masks, social distancing, avoiding large gatherings and staying home if ill.

Thank you for doing everything you are to mitigate this crisis.



HCC Workplan Items Due:

- 1/31 - Work Plan results, project updates and performance measure data is to be gathered for submission along with quarterly fiscal reports to KDHE.
- 1/31 - The Draft 2022-2023 Budget is to be created and approved by the Healthcare Coalition (HCC), sent to KDHE and distributed to HCC membership.
- 1/31 - The Draft 2022-2023 Work Plan is to be created and approved by the HCC, sent to KDHE, uploaded to the Coalition Assessment Tool and distributed to members.



The Kansas System for the Early Registration of Volunteers (K-SERV) is a secure registration system and database for volunteers willing to respond to public health emergencies or other disasters in Kansas or other areas across the country. K-SERV is open to volunteers of all backgrounds, not just healthcare professionals. For more information about K-SERV, please refer to their website: [Kansas System for the Early Registration of Volunteers \(K-SERV\) | KDHE, KS](#). Everyone is welcome to join, regardless of their profession.

NCK HCC Bragging Rights

Emergency Manager Keith Haberer is recognized this month for his effective work in Ellsworth and Russell Counties. Keith has worked as an Emergency Manager for over 20 years and his experience is a great asset to the region. The NCK region greatly appreciates all our Emergency Managers and their untiring work.

Which Region is This?

- The largest ball of sisal twine is in this region.
- The largest toilet is located in this region.
- Dog Races, a former President's museum and home are located in this ____ Kansas city.
- This city in ____ Kansas is the westernmost town on the Smoky Hill Trail. It was known as a trading post for west-bound immigrants bound for Pike's Peak.
- This region has 12 counties, borders Nebraska, and includes the geographic center of the United States.

Answer North Central!

Resource Reminder

Telemed equipment is available on a first come, first served basis. Please use the following link to access the application for the **free equipment**:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=AAkaju_pN0GOSlFE1lrrYmIlkb4FExMv2TrZk4yx3RUNzA3RUNXVIE4QlQyNEFYNDRIMVdUSUsxRy4u



Pulse Oximeter

Electronic Stethoscope



School Violence Day

On December 18, 2021, a TikTok message with regard to School Shooting / Violence Day went viral. Many schools across our state were concerned about this dire warning. Thankfully, no incidents occurred in our schools. A special thanks to everyone for preparing as much as they could by reading pediatric response plans, checking on pediatric supplies and keeping the lines of communication open.

Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man." – Benjamin Franklin



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