



Department of State Health Services  
 Health Service Region 1  
 Public Health Emergency Preparedness  
 (PHEP)

**PHEP-HSR1  
 Newsletter**

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**Volunteers...the lifeblood of the community!**

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 Rick Tull, BS (Armstrong, Carson,  
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**PREMAC Annual Regional Preparedness Conference**

On Tuesday, February 24, 2015, the Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee held their Annual Regional Preparedness Conference in Amarillo, Texas. The theme of the conference was Mass Fatalities Incident Response Planning. Winter weather threatened the event but over 300 attended the conference and participated in a regional tabletop exercise. Attendees included County Judges, Emergency Management, First Responders, Justices of the Peace, Public Health, Hospital representatives, Volunteer Organiza-

tions, Mortuary Services, Faith Based groups and the Student Emergency Response Team (S.E.R.T.) from Dumas High School.

Guest speakers included Arbie Goings and David Patterson from Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT), Danielle Hesse, Texas Department of State Health Services, (DSHS) Austin, TX, Rick Tull, DSHS, Health Service Region 1 and Emily Nolte, Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC). Topics included the nuts and bolts of planning to respond to a mass fatality incident, the handling of the first death in the US from the Ebola virus and real life ex-

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**Rick Tull Presents at the PREMACH Conference**

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periences from the 9-11 Family Assistance Center. The tabletop exercise was a great chance to network with partners to discuss local mass fatality planning, training needs and response resources and gaps. A regional planning template, a mass fatality response tool kit, and a mass fatality assessment guide were provided to all conference attendees to help them with their local jurisdictional planning efforts.

As always, the conference had numerous exhibits for viewing, including LifeStar helicopters, Emergency Response and Incident Command Vehicles, and Citizen Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) response trailers. The City of Amarillo Health Department provided free immunizations to conference attendees and numerous vendors displayed products available to increase emergency response capabilities.

Planning has already begun for the 2016 Preparedness Conference with the theme being *Recovery from Disaster*. Health Service Region 1 will continue to partner with PRPC in the planning and development of the conference and we hope to see all our stakeholders next year at this great event!

If you would like further information on the conference, please contact Rick Tull at 806-477-1140 or at his email [rick.tull@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:rick.tull@dshs.state.tx.us).



## Mass Fatality Management Planning Toolkit Now Available

The Mass Fatality Management Planning Toolkit is now available and can be found at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/layouts/contentpage.aspx?pageid=8589954779&id=8589954919&terms=fnss>. The objective of the toolkit is to provide a planning guide to assist local jurisdictions in the development of an all-hazards mass fatality management plan. The toolkit also provides:

1. Reference material to assist jurisdictional partners in the planning and management of mass fatality incidents (MFI) in a safe, legal, respectful, and resourceful manner.
2. Guidance to local jurisdictions to better their understanding of the agreements, arrangements, and processes needed to identify and enhance coordination between responsible agencies and the medicolegal authority.
3. Sample tools, forms, checklists, and flow charts for use by jurisdictional partners in developing plans for mass fatality management.
4. Examples of the types of religious and cultural accommodations, as well as social expectations, and individuals' preference for final disposition by the victim's next of kin.



Temporary Morgue

If you would like further information on mass fatality or the toolkit, please call Rick Tull at phone number 806-477-1140 or at his email [rick.tull@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:rick.tull@dshs.state.tx.us).

Source: DSHS Website

## Blue Bell Recalls All Products

Blue Bell Creameries has recalled all products due to concerns about illness. Texas urges consumers to follow the recall and not eat any Blue Bell products.

Several cases of listeriosis have been associated with Blue Bell products.

Listeriosis primarily affects older adults, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems. Symptoms usually start within several days, though they can develop up to two months after eating contaminated food. Symptoms may include diarrhea or other gastrointestinal symptoms followed by fever or muscle aches.

For more information please go to CDC web address <http://www.cdc.gov/listeria/outbreaks/ice-cream-03-15/index.html>.

Source: DSHS Website



## Severe Weather Season

It's important that you and your family know what to do before, during, and after an emergency. This means understanding what emergencies are likely in your area and specific ways to respond to each one.

You should also understand the ways you can get information about potential threats, such as through text alerts, emergency sirens in your community, or other methods.



In addition to understanding *how* you will be informed of potential threats, you need to understand the difference between various weather alerts:

- ◇ A **watch** gives advance notice that conditions are favorable for dangerous weather. If a severe storm watch or other type of watch is issued for your area, be alert for changing weather conditions.
- ◇ A **warning** requires immediate action and is only used when severe weather is about to strike.

Follow the links below to learn more about the different types of disasters that may happen and how to respond. You can also find more information on how to sign up for alerts in your area at <http://www.ready.gov/alerts>.



Source: CDC Website

## Training Modules and Presentations Available upon Request

- ◇ Point of Dispensing: POD
- ◇ Family Emergency Preparedness
- ◇ Nutrition in Preparedness
- ◇ PHEP/EPI — Who are we?
- ◇ Shelter-In-Place
- ◇ Mass Fatalities Overview
- ◇ Tuberculosis Best Practices
- ◇ Strategic National Stockpile Security Overview for Law Enforcement

## Welcome to our new Team Member. . . .



**William (Bill) Brown**

In November of 2014, Bill joined the Health Service Region 1, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Section as a Program Specialist III in the Lubbock Office. Bill returns to Lubbock after being gone for 25 years. Bill is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps and a retired Police Commander with the Roswell NM Police Department.

He has a daughter in elementary school and a son in High School.