

# September 2026 Newsletter

Kim Elder, EM Coordinator  
Matt Vogeler, EM Specialist

[kelder@marshallcountytia.gov](mailto:kelder@marshallcountytia.gov)

[mvogeler@marshallcountytia.gov](mailto:mvogeler@marshallcountytia.gov)



## Welcome to Marshall County EMA Newsletter

Monthly updates of everything that has happened in the Marshall County Emergency Management world, locally, and nationally in the past month, along with events that are happening soon!



### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sept. 10** – Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System Interface (Marshall Co)
- Sept. 23-25** – ICS 300 Intermediate (Polk Co)
- Sept 24** – Intro to Continuity of Government Planning for Rural Jurisdictions (Marshall Co)
- Sept. 28-Oct. 2** – All Hazards Incident Management Team (Polk Co)
- Oct. 1** – Business Continuity Planning (Marshall Co)
- Oct. 13-14** – Community Planning for Disaster Recovery (Virtual)
- Oct. 20** – Disaster Recovery in Rural Communities (Johnson Co)
- Oct. 20-21** – Winter Weather Hazards: Science and Preparedness (Virtual)
- Oct. 28-29** – Medical Preparedness & Response for Bombing Incidents (Marion Co)
- Nov. 4-5** – ICS 400 Advanced (Polk Co)

## PLAN UPDATES

Plans for 2027 are starting as EMA works a year ahead of schedule. Looking ahead to 2027 ESF's and RSF's that will be reviewed/updated:

- ESF6 – Mass Care (complete)
- ESF8 – Public Health (complete)
- ESF10 – Hazardous Materials
- RSF – Health and Social Services
- RSF- Housing

## ADDITIONAL PLAN UPDATES

- Family Assistance Center Plan
- Mass Casualty Plan
- Marshall County Hazard Mitigation Plan (FEMA reviewing)

## PROJECTS

- Alert Iowa
- Salamander
- Grants
- City EOPs
- School safety planning meetings
- Multi-County SOG/SOP
- Red Cross Sheltering updates
- Peer Support for First Responders
- Warming/Cooling Shelter Update
- Local Healthcare Coalition



## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

*Technology and Emergency Management* by John C. Pine

*Applied Risk Management in Agriculture* by Dana L. Hoag

## GOALS FOR 2026

- Community engagement/relations
- Improvement of Marshall Co. EMA standards Countywide
- Full implementation of Alert Iowa & Salamander systems countywide
- Training Opportunities for Marshall County first responders and local officials
- Tornado Sirens upgrades

## September is Emergency Preparedness Month

Marshall County – September is Preparedness Month in Iowa. It's a great time for households to come together and plan for emergencies, whether at home, at school, or in the community. Iowa's preparedness efforts align with National Preparedness Month, observed each September in the United States of America.

**Step 1:** Be aware of hazards in your area

**Step 2:** Make an Emergency Plan

**Step 3:** Build an emergency kit

**Step 4:** Get involved

For information on emergency preparedness, visit [ready.iowa.gov](https://ready.iowa.gov)



### NOTES FROM THE COORDINATOR'S DESK

September is National Preparedness Month, making it a great time for families to talk about emergencies and practice what they would do if one occurred.

Tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, flooding, winter storms, fires, and power outages can happen with little warning. Preparing ahead of time helps everyone, including children, feel safer and more confident.

Emergency preparedness does not need to be frightening or complicated. By turning it into a family activity, parents and caregivers can teach important safety skills while having fun together. Talk with your children about the types of emergencies that could affect your family. Keep the conversation calm, honest, and age appropriate. Explain that emergencies do not happen every day, but having a plan helps everyone know what to do.

Ask your children questions such as: Where is the safest place in our home during a tornado? How would we get out if there was a fire? Where would we meet if we could not return home? Who could we call if we could not reach one another? What should we do if the power goes out?

Children often have good questions and creative ideas. Including them in the conversation helps them feel like an important part of the family preparedness team. Create a family emergency plan and practice it together. You can make the activity more engaging by turning it into a scavenger hunt. Ask children to find the smoke alarms, flashlights, first-aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency supply kit, and safest tornado shelter. Hold short family drills and give everyone a job. One child might bring the emergency supply kit, another could help account for family members, and an older child could practice contacting your designated out-of-town emergency contact.

Remember that during an actual emergency, children should never be assigned a task that could put them in danger. Their most important job is to follow the family plan and stay with a trusted adult. Build an emergency kit together. Make a communications plan.

Practice preparedness without creating fear. Preparedness is not about expecting something bad to happen. It is about knowing that your family can work together when something unexpected occurs. Keep preparedness going all year. Review family plans and emergency kits regularly. Check supplies when the clocks change, at the beginning of each school year, or on another date your family will remember. Replace expired food, water, batteries, and medications. Update phone numbers and practice your plan again.

This September, set aside a little time to prepare as a family. Play a preparedness game, build your emergency kit, practice going to your safe place, and talk about how you will stay connected. When children take part in preparedness, they learn useful skills that can last a lifetime. Most importantly, they learn that being prepared means working together—and that is something every family can do.

*Kimberly Elder, Emergency Management Coordinator & Proud Member of the IEMA Peer Support Team*