

History of COAD

In June of 2008, following a number of disastrous floods through the state, Lilly Endowment created a \$50,000,000 fund to assist Hoosiers who have suffered in those events. \$45,000,000 of that fund has been administered by Indiana Association of United Ways (IaUW) in two grant cycles.

Madison County, as one of the counties with a federal disaster declaration, applied for and received \$100,000 in the first grant cycle last fall. I did not know until I began working with my COAD partners that Madison County is among the top three counties in the state in disaster declarations with 14 since 1991.

While we were fortunate in that our county did not have the extent of personal and business loss as many other counties in the state, our work revealed that should such an event occur we had significant areas of vulnerability.

The partners in the grant identified four areas of activity for the grant:

- Asset/gap analysis of local resources
- Public information and educational opportunities and resources
- Organization and agency training and readiness
- Volunteer recruitment, training and coordination

For the first six months of this year, the committee was assisted by intern Jennifer Stansberry Miller, who worked to identify assets and gaps and to coordinate the other components of the activities. The formation of Madison County COAD is one result of this work. Other outcomes have been

- the recruitment and training of nearly 50 disaster assistance volunteers,
- the development of a KIDS Action Team to provide child care for first responders and victims in the event of disaster,
- the development and marketing of volunteermadisoncounty.org – an online volunteer database,
- expansion of the chaplaincy program to communities outside of Anderson,
- distribution of disaster preparedness packets for local organizations and businesses, and
- distribution of siren awareness materials to the general public.

In August, the newly-formed Madison County COAD identified three initial goals, one each for organization, implementation and communication. The objectives will be a process to help us stay focused on our task.

- To develop a working knowledge of and relationship with each other
Objectives under this goal will strengthen our organizational capacity to respond to a disaster and to mitigate damage by growing our membership and meeting regularly.
- To develop a highly effective team approach to disaster preparedness, response & recovery
Objectives under this goal will assure that we maintain sufficient resources to respond by continuing to recruit and train volunteers and organizational and community plans.
- To provide ongoing disaster preparation, response and recovery information to residents and businesses in Madison County
These objectives will expand and strengthen Madison County's ability to withstand and meet disasters and their related challenges by providing vital information to residents, creating a database of resources and providing other information services.

We have already begun the work and have set timelines into 2011. An immediate objective is to address preparedness, prevention and response to the H1N1 Flu Virus.

Before Stephanie Grimes takes over to discuss this objective further, however, I want to thank the IND Fund Committee for their dedication and help with the grant development. Duane Hoak, United Way Board secretary and past president, who chaired the committee; C.R. Brown, John Kinley and Frank Dick, who represent Emergency Management in the county and city; Denny Benson, Kate Ayres and Terri Bruce from the Red Cross; Bev Graddy, senior chaplain for the Anderson Police Department, Stephanie Grimes from the Health Department, and Captain Nathan Harms of The Salvation Army. All of these people are significantly more knowledgeable about the world of disaster preparation and response than I, and I thank them for sharing their gifts and talents with me and all of Madison County.