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**From the  
Executive Director**



Tim Lovell

**Special Ice Storm Issue**

Dear partners and friends,

Happy New Year! The year 2007 began and ended with disastrous ice storms for Oklahoma. With the debris from the December ice storms still visible on our streets, it seems appropriate to take a moment and review what recently transpired in our community and what role Tulsa Partners can play in responding to needs uncovered by this storm.

To provide some background, we have asked our Tulsa City County Emergency Manager Mike McCool to share a report on the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation. I had the privilege of volunteering in the EOC, and this activation was truly a sight to behold. Every room was taken up with the activities of our first responders and policy makers. It demonstrated in small part the kind of major disaster Tulsa and other parts of Oklahoma experienced.

Tulsa Partners' primary functions are in the emergency management areas of disaster preparedness, planning and mitigation. This special issue will share about how our existing educational activities address concerns highlighted by the ice storm and its aftermath. We ask that you share this issue with those who may want to know more about Tulsa Partners, and how our work is relevant to the needs of our community.

The year 2008 is going to be a busy and exciting year for us, ending with the tenth anniversary of our community's Project Impact signing ceremony. We hope you will join us to make this year both fruitful and memorable.

**Tulsa County emergency  
operations center sets  
record for longest activation  
in its history**

*By Mike McCool, Director  
Tulsa Area Emergency Management Agency*



TAEMA began monitoring the ice storm during the midmorning of Sunday, 12/9/07. The Emergency Operations Center was activated at 0529 hrs. on Monday, 12/10/07. The EOC was deactivated at 1700 hrs. on Friday, 12/21/07.

These twelve days are the longest activation of the Tulsa County/City of Tulsa EOC in its history. The longest activation prior to this event was for about five days during the October of '86 Arkansas River Flood.

During the activation, 301 different individuals signed into the EOC. Approximately 50 other people came through the EOC at one time or another without signing in. At its peak, the EOC had as many as 75 people working in it. The Center is designed comfortably for about 50 people at a time. The 5,000 sq. ft. of office space, which was FULLY employed, now houses the new Medical Emergency Response Center, which was also fully activated through the entire event. The Center also housed, for the first few days of the event, Community Service Council's 211. They were driven out of their



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EOC Response continued primary, secondary, and tertiary sites due to power loss and had to be accommodated in the EOC.

At the peak of the event, 246,000 homes in the Tulsa metropolitan statistical area were without power. PSO representative, Clay Hathaway, was in the EOC for almost the entire duration of the activation, working tirelessly, leaving only when it was no longer necessary for him to be here.

The EOC fielded and initiated thousands of calls and coordinated “resources with need” between the field operations (the four Area Commands) and the agencies and entities providing the resources.

For the City, The Mayor led this effort, responded to the public’s need, and authored a unique program, “Operation Power-Up.” The Chairperson of the Board of County Commissioners, Randi Miller, led the County’s effort, featuring the Tulsa County Fairgrounds’ handling the logistics of: 5,000 linemen, vegetative crewmen, and support personnel from fourteen states that PSO quickly acquired. The Fairgrounds turned on a dime and became one 240-acre parking lot/hotel/restaurant thanks to the efforts of Fairgrounds Director Rick Bjorklund and his able staff.

I personally believe this is the most expensive disaster in Oklahoma history. We might or might not succeed in acquiring for our citizens Individual Assistance from FEMA through the current Disaster Declaration FEMA-1735-DR (We have already been granted Public Assistance). But the fact remains that the expense to Oklahoma citizens from this single storm is very significant.

The response effort by all public servants and the private sector make me proud to be an Okie from Tulsa.



## Long-term care facilities' emergency plans put to test

During the ice storm, some of the most potentially vulnerable victims were residents of long-term care facilities in the area, many of whom are oxygen-dependent or rely on medical equipment that requires power to operate. Thanks to direction from the Oklahoma State Dept. of Health and guidance from Tulsa Partners' Disaster Management for Long-Term Care Facilities workshops, many facilities were prepared with emergency plans in place.

“Our facility certainly put its emergency plan to the test during this ice storm,” said Kathy Hinkle, Continuing Education Director at Saint Simeon’s Episcopal Home and chair of the workshop planning committee. “The next step is to incorporate the lessons we learned and continue to focus on how to ensure continuity of service for our residents.”

With the conditions present in this storm, the vast majority of facilities chose not to relocate their residents, a decision emergency management officials supported.

“This event reinforced to us that sheltering-in-place is oftentimes the safest and best alternative for long-term care facilities during a community disaster. Keeping that in mind in the planning process and preparing accordingly with generators and other emergency supplies is crucial to the well-being of facility residents,” said Kelly Deal, Director of Tulsa’s Metropolitan Medical Response System.

The 2008 Long-Term Care Facilities workshop will be offered in both Tulsa and Oklahoma City this year. Tulsa’s workshop will be Thursday, April 10 at Tulsa Technology Center-Lemley Campus. Oklahoma City’s workshop will be April 24, at the Moore Norman Tech Center Conference facility, SW 134th and Pennsylvania in south OKC. Visit [www.tulsapartners.org](http://www.tulsapartners.org) for details.



## Disaster resistance meets green lifestyles

By *Bob Roberts*



Following our recent ice storms and massive power outages, we sent out an inquiry to a couple of “green” web forums, the Oklahoma Sustainability Network and Sustainable Tulsa. The question was whether living green contributed to people’s comfort level and “survivability” during the ice storm and/or their recovery from its effects afterwards.

Some of our initial thoughts:

- Did driving a fuel-efficient or hybrid vehicle help when most of the gas stations shut down;
- Did the use of an alternative energy resource, such as wind or solar, allow for light and heat when one’s neighbors were without;
- Did making a home well-insulated and energy efficient allow people to keep it warmer with less effort (or in some cases, keep it warm at all).

Or did it possibly detract from the ability to handle a widespread area natural disaster. We received some interesting replies back, almost all positive, although, as with any disaster, there were a number of “lessons learned” by folks.

Probably the overlying theme was not so much a specific item, but the fact that adopting an attitude of “simplifying my life” meant that many people were more used to living without some of those items that the rest of us believe are necessities – but really fall into the “luxury” category. One comment was “[we] believe that since we have followed a simple, less-is-more lifestyle the 21 years we’ve been married we handled the potential emotional part of the whole thing quite well.”

As far as staying warm, we heard the following comments:

- “Fortunately, we have a gas stove/oven and a wall furnace that kept us warm.”
- “Our woodstove and gas water heater helped.”

Most of the people who responded were campers; so many of their camping skills (and equipment) came into play.

As far as lessons learned, one person said they were considering adding Solatubes (ceiling fixtures that channel sunlight into a room). “A little more light in the bathroom would have been nice.” Another person said they immediately hit the antique store and bought a washboard and flatiron. Since they normally hang their clothes up to dry instead of using a powered clothes dryer, this will allow them to handle the whole clothes cycle during an outage. And many people are working on beefing up their lantern supply. One individual learned that, as much as they dislike the pollution produced by 2-cycle engines, “... an electric chainsaw is pretty worthless during a power outage. And power outages usually come with lots of downed limbs and lots of reasons to be using a chainsaw.”

And my favorite comment, “...instead of watching hockey games on TV, my husband read a book to me by candlelight. It was so Lincolnesque!”

## Neighborhood hit by ice storm to begin preparedness process

Kendall Whittier Neighborhood Association is participating in a pilot project with Tulsa Partners and Save the Children to prepare as a community for emergencies and disasters, especially as they relate to the children living in the neighborhood. The neighborhood's response to the December ice storm was highlighted in a January 2, 2008 *Tulsa World* article by David Million.

"People in the neighborhood had a bad situation, but they handled it well," [City Councilor and Kendall Whittier Neighborhood Association President Maria] Barnes said.

Tulsa Partners' Kendall Whittier program will be held at College Hill Presbyterian Church, which recently opened its doors as an unofficial warming station for neighborhood residents.

"For several days, [College Hill] provided breakfast, lunch and dinner," said [Rev. Diana] Hartman. "We used food from the Kendall-Whittier [Inc.] pantry then called on our church family for donations of food, blankets, flashlights, batteries, diapers, candles and other useful items," Hartman said. Volunteers took meals to people who couldn't get to the church and went door to door checking on residents to see what was needed."

Through their collaboration with Tulsa Partners, Kendall Whittier neighborhood residents and representatives from agencies and businesses located within the neighborhood will participate in tabletop exercises and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training designed to build bridges with the first response community and teach residents what else they can do to assist one another in an emergency.

### Update – Stacey Ward

As many of you may have already heard, our dear friend Stacey Ward, Tulsa firefighter and CERT Coordinator, was in a serious motorcycle accident on Friday, December 28. He sustained significant injuries, including broken bones throughout his body, and has a long recovery period ahead which will include several surgeries. The great news is, Stacey is progressing well and his family is encouraged by his continued improvement. Please keep Stacey in your thoughts and prayers.

## Change in TPI Board of Directors

Ted Cundiff, President of SpiritBank Business Resource Center, has stepped down from the Tulsa Partners Board of Directors due to other commitments. We are pleased to announce that Stephen Sutton, Vice President at SpiritBank Business Resource Center, has agreed to complete Ted Cundiff's term. We thank Ted for his years of service, and welcome Stephen to our board.

### Tulsa Partners

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### Our Mission:

To create a disaster-resistant community and improve Tulsans' safety and well-being by reducing deaths, injuries, property damage, environmental and other losses from natural or technological hazards. Public-private partners will accomplish this mission in a manner that advances community goals, enhances Tulsans' quality of life, and creates a more livable, viable and sustainable community.

# Keeping Our Children Safe

During the ice storm, child care centers were without power and needed to be closed. Children had to go with their families to emergency shelters, in some cases for several days. These situations highlight the need for various types of training being offered by Save The Children under the local auspices of Tulsa Partners, Inc.

First, we will be providing workshop training to a pilot group of child care facilities in February and March, cosponsored by the Child Care Resource Center. Using materials from the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and the Institute for Business and Home Safety, workshops for child care administrators will focus on hazard assessment, emergency planning, continuity of operations planning. A workshop called Journey of Hope will be offered to all staff at the child care facilities to discuss how to emotionally handle disasters. Other entities involved in this project include Tulsa Partners' Disaster Resistant Business Council, State Farm Insurance, the Oklahoma Chapter of the Association of Contingency

Planners, and Tulsa Human Response Coalition.

Second, Safe Space training is being offered in early February to volunteers of the American Red Cross Tulsa Area Chapter. This training will teach volunteers how to run a safe space for children in an emergency shelter, and will give to the Tulsa Area Chapter two kits for setting up such safe spaces.

Third, we have presented to both the Tulsa Public Schools Superintendent Zolkowski and his area superintendents about our Children's Disaster Preparedness Workshops. Several schools have agreed to allow us to present this at their schools.

We have 300 children's emergency backpacks left from the original 500 provided by Save The Children. The George Kaiser Family Foundation has provided funding for an additional 300 backpacks, meaning we will be able to do outreach to 600 children in 2008.

And finally, we are working with Tulsa Area Emergency Management Agency and other entities on recommendations about how to incorporate the needs of children in our community's Emergency Operations Plan. This year, we hope these endeavors will in some small way make a difference for children and their caregivers in our community's emergency preparedness.



# Disaster Resistant Business Council to survey businesses and non-profits about their contingency plans

The Disaster Resistant Business Council (DRBC) has partnered with the Tulsa Metro Chamber and the Community Service Council's Tulsa Human Response Coalition (THRC) to survey area small businesses and non-profit agencies regarding their contingency plans and how those plans were put into effect during the December ice storm.

In the next month, both the Chamber and THRC will be contacting its membership to complete brief surveys, the results of which will be shared with the Disaster Resistant Business Council. THRC will partner with 2-1-1 Helpline, a sister program of the Community Service Council, which maintains an extensive database of local non-profit and faith-based organizations.

"We want to know who had a contingency plan, how they relied on it during the ice storm, and what

further planning activities they need to go through now to ensure that they are even more prepared to weather the next storm," said David Hall, Innovation and Small Business Solutions Section Manager for State Farm Insurance and Chair of the Disaster-Resistant Business Council. "If an organization did not have a plan, hopefully this storm was the impetus they needed to begin the planning process, and we want them to know we are here to help."

Special thanks are due to Dennis Currington, Small Business Director for the Chamber and Jim Lyall, Coordinator of the THRC and Director of 2-1-1 Helpline, for their assistance and partnership in this project.



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