

President's Message

I'd like to thank everyone who participated in the 2011 SEPA conference which focused on "Expanding our Knowledge".

With forest fires in Alberta and flooding in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, it seems that Emergency Managers in Prairie provinces need to prepare our people to respond to a wide variety of disasters.

In any incident or emergency, the learning opportunities lie in the gaps – what could be done, what needs to be done if there is a next time, what went well that can be used again. The Board of Directors of SEPA has had a chance to pull that together for the conference plans of 2011 in order to improve and close the gaps for 2012.

This newsletter is going to focus on some of the lessons learned and goals and objectives for the coming year.

Until next time, hope for the best, prepare for the worst, never panic just react and do the best you can. 📌

Kathleen Henderson
President, SEPA

This is what you said

According to the on-line and paper evaluations for the conference:

58% of people thought that overall the 2011 conference was good or excellent.

78% of respondents enjoyed Prof. Scot Phelps' presentations and **88%** enjoyed the Yorkton Flooding presentation.

This echoes other written comments from evaluations which requested more presenters who had real-life experience and could break down an incident response step by step and allow conference attendees to visualize the entire process.

53 to 58% enjoyed the panel discussions and ranked them as good or excellent.

But again, the desire for practical tools came through in the evaluations of the Break Out sessions as the approval ratings and comments on most of those sessions was quite a bit higher compared to the panels.

We've heard your comments and we will be implementing suggestions and changes.

Filling the Gaps for 2012

We have had 12 suggestions for themes for 2012 and in October we will begin rolling out information on the conference program for March 2012.

There were a wide variety of logistical comments ranging from the need to have a variety in lunches and providing early morning coffee, to ensuring that there was adequate directional signage and sufficient (working) audio visual equipment in each room.

These items, as well as the other 24 suggestions have already been discussed at our Board of Director's meeting held in May and have been included in our action plan for the coming year. 📌

SEPA Board of Directors:

Following the Annual conference, the SEPA Board of Directors held a wrap-up meeting which included an election of officers. Check out www.sepa.ca to find contact information for any of the following board members:

- Kathleen Henderson, President
- Al Kildaw, Vice President
- Derek Keller, Treasurer
- Janelle Graham, Secretary
- Mike Kaminski
- Len Auger
- George Barker
- Steve Debiegne

What is SEPA (and how can it help me?)

I believe that the comment from Conference 2011 that has stuck with me the longest has been “Does anyone in the province really know what SEPA is? Do they care?”

Those are valid questions—and reveal a gap in our organization that we need to address. I don’t think that we can force people to care about SEPA, but we certainly can do a better job of promoting this organization and by doing so, we can promote the need for emergency preparedness for communities, and perhaps make the sales pitch for local Emergency Managers a little bit easier.

We have some ambitious goals for 2012 in providing support and tools to Emergency Managers in Saskatchewan. Your request for support included information that you could take to your councils. You are all busy, and you do wear a number of hats, and it is difficult to find the time to pull together information.

Based on that request, we have a people on our board who will be developing presentations to be posted on-line and available for members to take to their Councils or EMO committees.

Of course, we are also volunteers with a number of hats and responsibilities so we will be starting small, but we will get some information up on the SEPA website and we will let our members know when that information is available. 📍

Since we last met...

As for your Board of Director’s, we have been busy in the past month, gearing up with tasks for the coming year.

A Director’s meeting was held May 6 and 7 in Regina and we were able to have a meeting with Tom Young, Executive Director Protection and Emergency Services and Duane McKay, Fire Commissioner. SEPA outlined our goals and objectives for the coming year, and as a group we discussed ways that the Province and SEPA could work together to support and promote each other’s mandates without stepping on each other’s toes.

Depending upon emergency operations in the province, we hope to schedule another meeting with the province at the end of June 2011 and after that, we will be able to advise our members of the ways in which we will be working with Corrections, Public Safety and Policing. 📍

Where we have been:

SEPA President, Kathleen Henderson, spoke to over 100 delegates at the April 2011 Saskatchewan Building Officials Conference. Flood watches and road closures prevented her from also attending the Saskatchewan Volunteer Fire Fighters Association meeting in Weyburn.

Board Member Mike Kaminski and Vice-President Al Kildaw represented SEPA at the Saskatchewan Municipal Awards in Regina.

Upcoming events:

SEPA Board of Directors will be meeting in Regina on June 24. The Board will meet with CPSP depending upon their operational status as well as with SUMA’s Protective Services Committee.

SEPA plans to meet with Saskatchewan School Board Association and discuss emergency planning in schools and the ways that we can utilize each other’s strengths and facilities in the event of emergencies.

We have submitted a proposal to present at the upcoming World Indigenous Youth Summit, hosted by the Lands & Resources Secretariat at the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations in July.