

Paul Johnson
Director, Omaha, NE-Douglas County Emergency Mgt. Agency

Speaker Bio:

Paul Johnson has been the Director of the Douglas County Emergency Management Agency in Omaha, Nebraska for thirteen years. He has been integral in reorganizing and establishing new approaches for government entities to successfully respond to, and recover from, community emergencies and natural disasters. By utilizing a scenario-based approach to planning, training and exercising, pre-disaster decision-making has become better defined and response options have been expanded and clarified. Paul was a co-author of the *Emergency Response Planning Guidelines Handbook™* and has managed numerous community emergencies and natural disasters. Paul has served as the IAEM Region VII Vice President and on the International Association of Emergency Managers Standards and Practices Committee. Paul has a Bachelor of Science degree from Iowa State University and Master of Science degree from the University of Central Missouri. He is a retired Colonel, Bioenvironmental Engineer, from the Iowa Air National Guard and a commercial hot-air balloon pilot. More information about his agency can be found at www.ReadyDouglasCounty.org

Presentation:

Stranded in Freezing Waters – If Only We Would Have...

On March 9, 2019, intense and prolonged severe rains fell on frozen lakes, rivers and ice-covered ground in eastern Nebraska causing the largest natural disaster in Nebraska history. Rivers quickly flooded, dams and levees broke free and severe weather challenged all rescue operations. The agricultural economy was devastated due to cropland damage and death to livestock. In Douglas County, the City of Omaha and its rural communities worked tirelessly to provide rescue operations and render assistance to two smaller communities whose 3000 citizens were isolated and stranded. Due to severe weather and swift, ice-laden flood waters, access by car, truck, boat and aircraft was virtually impossible for 2 ½ days. Many lessons were learned from this incident by all involved. This

presentation will provide you with a frank and transparent discussion of why and how a new planning approach to dealing with severe incidents needs to be implemented.