



CSEPP

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CHEMICAL STOCKPILE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

MORROW
COUNTY
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

April 3, 2006

Evacuation Control System Testing Underway

For more information about how to prepare for an emergency, check our website at www.csepp.net.

You are also welcome to contact me, especially if you want to schedule a CSEPP presentation for your community group.

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Hermiston, OR - On Friday, April 7, 2006 the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) plans to test the new evacuation control system. This system would be put into action if there were ever an accident, at the Umatilla Chemical Depot, involving chemical agents. All of the fixed variable message signs, mobile variable message signs, drop arm barricades, remote cameras and control equipment will be tested along with the Hermiston Safety Center Dispatchers who have been tasked with operating this system. "Should the need ever arise; to evacuate people from the Immediate Response Zone (IRZ), this equipment will facilitate efficient and safe movement of people from the threat area," stated Casey Beard, Director of Morrow County Emergency Management and lead on the evacuation project. Funding for this project is being provided through the CSEP Program.

People living and working in the following cities: Echo, Stanfield, Hermiston, Umatilla, Irrigon and Boardman (all within the IRZ) can expect to see personnel at every drop arm barricade and variable message sign on Friday, April 7th. These people will be monitoring the equipment and verifying it is functioning properly, based on the four (4) scenarios that will be tested.

"It's important the public understands there is *no change* to what they would be

advised to do in the event of a chemical emergency. People who are within nine miles of the Umatilla Chemical Depot would still be advised to Shelter in Place," stated Ray Denny, Director of Umatilla County Emergency Management. According to Beard, "This project gets us one step closer to a balanced emergency response plan in the event of a chemical emergency at the Umatilla Chemical Depot. These signs will direct people, who are traveling through the greater Hermiston area (and unable to Shelter in Place), away from the threat area."

The Umatilla CSEPP Community Public Information Officers have started implementing a public education plan to inform residents how the Evacuation Plan will work in the event of an emergency. "We are working on an all-hazards approach in our emergency planning efforts. This evacuation plan is another step towards making our region safer for its residents and visitors. The key thing for our local residents to remember is that we still want them to shelter in place if they are at home. The evacuation plan was designed for those people who are away from their homes, and not able to shelter, or for those just passing through the area," says Maureen Roxbury, Morrow County Emergency Management's Public Information Officer.

For more information on this project, please contact Maureen Roxbury at 541.256.0118 or Casey Beard at 541.256.0117.

People who would like to schedule a speaker or have questions about how to develop a family or business emergency plan, should contact their county CSEPP office. In Umatilla County call (877) 367-2737. In Morrow County call (541) 922-5262.

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