

## Businesses Help Iowa Prepare

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**A coalition of business and government leaders pools resources and expertise to boost Iowa's disaster preparedness. Large companies have signed on, but the push for small biz involvement is around the corner.**

Iowa's business community boasts pockets of expertise in disaster management. The **Safeguard Iowa Partnership** coalesced earlier this year to integrate all of these resources with those of government to improve all phases of disaster management throughout the state. Founding members of the partnership include the Iowa Business Council as well as ABI-member luminaries such as Principal Financial, Rockwell Collins, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Pella Corporation, Vermeer Manufacturing, Deere & Company, Ruan Transportation, MidAmerican Energy, Alliant Energy, Wellmark Blue Cross - Blue Shield, and the state universities.

The Safeguard Iowa Partnership recently announced the hiring of *Jami S. Haberl* as executive director. Under Haberl's leadership, the Partnership will focus on improving communications during crises, developing a database of business resources that could aid in emergency response, and building a permanent, operational relationship between business and government.

"Recent national disasters have demonstrated the importance of planning in advance of a crisis," said Iowa Lieutenant Governor Patty Judge in a press release. "There is enormous capability resident in Iowa's business community that government cannot replicate. We've needed this kind of partnership – and the commitment from both business and government that it represents – to facilitate effective public-private collaboration."

### Among Safeguard Iowa Partnership's initiatives:

- Create an inventory of business resources, equipment, and expertise in the state, recruit businesses to resister resources that may be needed in a public emergency, and create policies for managing resources
- Built a network of business members who can communicate and coordinate with the broader business community, and develop an improved incident alert system, standardized procedures for situational reporting, and emergency contact lists
- Explore the possibility of a Health Alert Network emergency communication system, accelerate collaboration between private and public entities, and exercise models for dispensing medications in the Strategic National Stockpile
- Develop communication and outreach plans and continue to grow strategic partnerships

For more details or information on how your business -- no matter what size -- can contribute to the effort toward safeguarding Iowa, visit <http://www.safeguardiowa.org/>. And watch for the January 2008 issue of IA.biz magazine for a guest essay by Phil Pitzen, Ed.D., Protective Security Advisor with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.