



## OPERATION WEATHER SURVIVAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 21, 2007 – 2:30 p.m.  
Conference Call

On the call:

Dr. Douglas Adams – St. Louis County Health Department  
Lisa Beatty – Mid-East Area Agency on Aging  
Ruth Castellano – BJC Home Care Services  
Valda Croskey – City of St. Louis Department of Health  
Debbie Fagin – United Way of Greater St. Louis  
Robert Hardy – St. Louis Fire Department – EMS  
Chelsie Harmon – Missouri American Water Company  
Jim Kramper – National Weather Service  
Rich Krueger – Community Action Agency of St. Louis County  
Molly Martin – AmerenUE  
Cindy Riordan – Citizens Service Bureau – City of St. Louis  
Ellen Sherman – St. Louis County Office of Family & Community Services –  
CORPS  
Anneliese Stoeber – St. Louis Area Agency on Aging  
Gloria Thirdkill – Laclede Gas Company  
Becky White – American Red Cross

Meeting called to order by Jim Kramper at 2:37 p.m. Jim asked everyone on the call to identify themselves for the minutes. First order of business, to discuss the August “Heat Event”. Jim asked for comments from everyone on the call.

**“Heat Event”** - Everyone

Jim – reported that the heat is back. Humidity levels creating heat indices of 105 degrees or higher. Includes the Illinois Counties of: Madison; St. Clair, and St. Louis City and County.

Overall the coverage provided by the media was good.

Debbie – for the 13 “excessive heat warning” day period (8/5 – 8/9; 8/12 – 8/16; and 8/21 – 8/23) United Way call center handled 4,447 calls. 1,286 calls were for assistance with electric bills; 358 requests for cooling sites; 1,115 requests for air conditioners or fans.

Debbie noted that the City of St. Louis was very pro-active with this heat event. City secured funds to purchase additional air conditioners for those identified as most in need. United Way call center staff provided “screening” for air conditioner requests and faxed qualified requests to St. Louis Department of Human Services for follow-up. City coordinated efforts with John Vincenzo/Home Service, Inc. and city staff to install 330 air conditioners and distribute 250 fans. Began the effort to create a “special needs registry” for City residents. Details pending.

Valda – St. Louis City Health Department reported that there were 6 confirmed deaths. 5 were elderly people not connected in any way to Senior Services or other service providers.

422 reports of weather related illnesses. During the power outages last year, 518 reports were documented.

Valda noted that the OWS website was very helpful.

Anneliese and Lisa – Area Agencies on Aging reported that Cooling Sites were again under utilized. Mid-East offered transportation for the elderly to get to a cooling site but the service was not used.

SLAAA reported calling the known homebound was effective. Home delivered meals staff checked on the clients daily when meals were dropped off. Education is extremely important in preventing illness and death in extreme weather conditions.

Anneliese also expressed thanks to AmerenUE for its efforts in donating AC units, keeping the cost of AC down and not disconnecting during this heat wave.

Bob Hardy – expressed his gratitude to the Health Department for doing a great job of following up on those who were identified as needing special intervention.

Dr. Adams – St. Louis County reported 1 confirmed fatality due to heat and 86 heat related illness reports. Weather related illnesses were half of those experienced last year.

Becky – Red Cross delivered water to agencies and helped with a power outage situation in the Central West End area. Clinic and Senior Citizen residence lost power. Red Cross provided water and dinner for 73 elderly residents. Valda reported that these residents eventually were transported to another location.

### **Energy Report** – Rich, Gloria, Ellen and Molly

HDC and CAASL are pretty much out of funds until November when the LIHEAP dollars for heating assistance are released by the state. Applications will begin being mailed to seniors in mid-October, followed by disabled then remaining households that applied last heating season.

Limited Dollar More funds will be distributed in October, per Molly.

Gloria indicated that she was glad it was hot and not cold.

Ellen reported that there was County Cares funding remaining. Residents of unincorporated St. Louis County should call her offices, 314-615-4516, to request this assistance.

Ellen asked about Cool Down St. Louis. Much discussion followed.

Cool Down was given a donation by AmerenUE to purchase AC units. They also were recipients of City of St. Louis purchased AC units. Well connected to receive good media coverage. Distribution of AC units is through other Health and Human Service Agencies, such as Urban League, St. Vincent de Paul and Salvation Army. Cool Down does NO real direct assistance.

### **What else can we do?**

Valda concurred with Anneliese that educating the public is critical. People need to understand the need to stay hydrated. People with NO ONE are the **MOST** vulnerable. Need to try to focus the media on “social networking”. “Check on your neighbors”. OWS should work to develop cooperative agreements with clergy and the NSO’s to help with this.

Jackie noted that in the 1980’s HDC and the Health Department partnered to go into “high risk homes” and check on the residents.

Media Kits were provided to NSO’s and Block Captains, per Anneliese.

Cindy Riordan with Citizens Service Bureau – City of St. Louis has joined OWS to assist with getting the message out to NSO’s and Block Captains. Her office works with the Mayor’s Office to gather data and provide information to residents of St. Louis City.

**Other Comments** – Ellen, Jackie and Molly

Ellen mentioned an effort by AARP to submit legislation in Jefferson City to revisit the issue of a “Hot Weather Plan”. This is not the first time this has been brought up for discussion. AmerenUE currently has policies in place to assist with cooling issues, such as a policy to postpone shut off during times of excessive heat. What would be in such a plan is unknown but may include: bill deferment. It is not known if this would a funded or unfunded initiative.

**Next meeting: September 18, 2007 at 2:30 p.m.via conference call.**

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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