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IEMA, Grainger Partnership to Enhance State Disaster Response and Recovery

Highlights Importance of Businesses Preparing for Disasters

SPRINGFIELD – Partnerships between government agencies and the private sector are the key to ensuring an effective response by communities and are a growing trend in emergency management across the U.S. These partnerships are important because they help communities respond and recover faster following disasters.

In Illinois, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) is actively engaging businesses in emergency preparedness and response in a variety of ways, including development of a Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) and establishing agreements with companies to share information during disasters and get needed resources to affected communities.

IEMA recently entered into a partnership with Grainger, North America’s leading business-to-business distributor of facilities maintenance products. The agreement will enhance the state’s ability to understand the impact of an emergency, more effectively respond to disasters and speed recovery for affected communities.

Under the agreement, Grainger will assist the state’s emergency preparedness, response and recovery efforts by providing expertise and situational awareness about a disaster’s impact, as well as assisting with logistics management of critical supplies following a disaster.

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“Businesses like Grainger are important partners for emergency management before, during and after a disaster,” said IEMA Director Jonathon Monken. “Grainger has embraced a preparedness culture as a company and has participated in local preparedness efforts in Lake County, where their headquarters is located. Through our engagement, Grainger now will be a strong partner with the state during disaster response and recovery efforts.”

“Grainger is extremely proud to partner so extensively with IEMA. Emergency preparedness is a core component of driving community resilience and we all have a role to play in preparing for disasters,” said Lee Cox, Grainger Vice President, Government and Healthcare Segments. “At Grainger, we know first-hand that a community’s capacity to respond before, during and following a disaster relies heavily on its relationships and resources. Understanding the needs as well as the capabilities and expertise existing within impacted communities helps strengthen those relationships.”

Monken said Grainger sets a good example for business disaster preparedness. In June 2012, Grainger partnered with the U.S. Army Reserve 335 Signal Command (Theater) and the Lake County Emergency Management Agency to host a full-scale disaster exercise. More than 200 people representing businesses along with public partners from federal, state and local jurisdictions participated in the event, which centered around hands-on training to help strengthen the relationships between public and private organizations.

Complementing the exercise, experts from public and private organizations led discussions on topics regarding community resiliency and catastrophic response.

In October 2011, IEMA launched an initiative to increase communications between the public and private sectors during emergencies. The BEOC, located within the State Emergency Operations Center in Springfield, was created to facilitate interaction and information gathering from more than a dozen private sector segments during disasters.

Nearly 50 private sector companies participated in the BEOC during a state earthquake exercise in November 2011. The BEOC can be activated by IEMA during major disasters when expertise and situational awareness from businesses is needed.

About Grainger
W.W. Grainger, Inc. with 2011 sales of $8.1 billion is North America’s leading broad line supplier of maintenance, repair and operating products, with expanding global operations.

Press Release

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