

# THE PREPAREDNESS POST

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
YEAR 4, ISSUE 1

## Farewell from Our Fearless Leader *by Dr. David N. Sundwall*



Dear Friends and Colleagues,  
By now you've probably heard that I've decided to resign my position as Executive Director of the Utah Department of Health. I have held this position for six years, first under the Honorable Jon M. Huntsman, Junior and under Governor Gary Herbert.

These years have been unquestionably the most challenging and rewarding of my long career in public policy and public health, and I'm grateful that I had the opportunity to serve the state of Utah and its citizens in this capacity.

That being said, I want it known that I am not retiring. Throughout the course of my professional life as a practicing physician and public health official, I have identified some areas of interest and projects that merit my attention. I have determined that this is the right time for me to resign so I can focus on these, and concentrate on a recent national appointment.

First of all, I currently have an appointment at the University of Utah's School of Medicine in the Department of Family and Community Medicine as a Professor in the Division of Public Health. I hope to assume a more active role there – to help train students and future doctors for the challenges of our increasingly complex health delivery system, and to promote the integration of public health science and prevention into the practice of medicine. I have also agreed to be co-editor of a comprehensive new public health textbook, which we anticipate will be widely used in the training of all health professionals. Fortunately, my future academic efforts will be strengthened and grounded by the practical, real-world experience I've had at the UDOH.

Second, last year I was appointed as Vice Chairman of the newly established federal Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC), a body that is charged with advising Congress on a myriad of policies related to these public health insurance programs. Now that I've served on this commission for a few months, which meets frequently in Washington, D.C., I realize that it is impossible for me to meet my obligations both as Executive Director of the UDOH and as Vice Chair of this Commission. Furthermore, given the difficulties most states are experiencing with ever-increasing costs related to Medicaid, I believe I can now best help Utah and our nation by providing a voice of moderation,

restraint and simplification of these important but too complex and costly programs.

I have enjoyed my work at UDOH and will miss a lot about seeing many of you often. But, rest assured, I do not intend to be a stranger. I look forward to our continued association and expect great things in the future of the agency.

### To find Preparedness Training information:



<https://www.utah.train.org>

### In this issue:

Farewell to Our Fearless Leader	1
Utah Scores High on Public Health . . .	2
Award Winning Ads	3
UDOH Employee Elected President of UEMA	4
Upcoming Training and Events	5

## Utah Scores High on Public Health Emergency Preparedness by Charla Haley

There's some good news for Utah in the recently released *Ready or Not? Protecting the Public from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism* report from the Trust for America's Health. Utah was one of 11 states to achieve nine out of a possible 10 key indicators of readiness to deal with public health emergencies. In 2009, Utah scored six out of a possible 10. Paul Patrick, EMS and Preparedness Director stated, "This high score acknowledges the great work and cooperation between UDOH and the twelve Local Health Departments."

Almost a decade ago during the September 11, 2001 and anthrax tragedies, it became evident that the nation's public health system was ill-prepared to face modern health threats -- and an historic investment was made to help upgrade the system. Over the years, significant progress has been made to improve how we prevent, identify, and contain new disease outbreaks and bioterrorism threats and respond to the aftermath of natural disasters. And, for the past eight years, the Trust for America's Health (TFAH) has documented the progress and ongoing vulnerabilities in the nation's ability to respond to health emergencies.

In the 2010 report Utah received high marks for:

- the ability to share data electronically with health care providers;
- an electronic syndromic surveillance system that can report and exchange information to rapidly detect disease outbreaks;
- requiring all licensed child care facilities have a multi-hazard written evacuation and relocation plan;
- adequate staffing capacity to work five, 12-hour days for six to eight weeks in response to an infectious disease outbreak, such as novel influenza A H1N1.

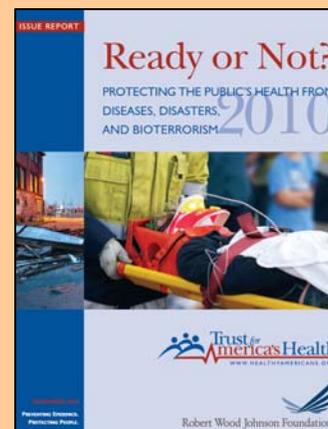
Patrick noted, "The citizens of the state should feel some comfort knowing that the public health preparedness efforts are demonstrating significant improvements." Utah also scored high with regard to findings from a recently released report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) based on activities in 2007-08 that focus on emergency operations and food outbreak identification.

- Utah has pre-identified staff who acknowledged notification of emergency exercises or incidents within 60 minutes a minimum of two times, the target established by the CDC;
- Utah activated its emergency operations center (EOC) a minimum of two times, the target established by the CDC;
- Utah developed at least two After Action Report/Improvement Plans (AAR/IPs) after exercises or real incidents in 2007-08; and
- Utah was able to rapidly identify disease-causing *E.coli* O157:H7 and submit the lab results in 90 percent of cases within four days.

The one weak spot in Utah's progress is shared by many other states . . . funding. Only 17 states met that indicator. Utah did not increase or maintain the level of funding for public health services from fiscal years 2007-08 or 2008-09. In fact, Utah decreased its public health budget and was one of the states that cut funding for two or more years in a row.

Jeff Levi, executive director of TFAH, is worried that the funding problems are eroding the basic capabilities of state and local health departments, which are needed to successfully respond to crises.

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## Utah Scores High on Public Health Emergency Preparedness *(continued)*

"There is an emergency for emergency health preparedness in the United States," said Levi. "This year, the Great Recession is taking its toll on emergency health preparedness. Unfortunately, the recent and continued budget cuts will exacerbate the vulnerable areas in U.S. crisis response capabilities and have the potential to reverse the progress we have made over the last decade."

According to James Marks, Senior Vice President and Director of the Health Group at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the gaps that remain and the risks of loss of our nation's ability to respond during emergencies call out for an ongoing investment to rebuild and modernize our public health system.

The report was supported by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is available on TFAH's website at [www.healthyamericans.org](http://www.healthyamericans.org).

## Award Winning Ads

The Utah Department of Health, Office of Public Information and Marketing, was recently awarded the inaugural Best of Show award at the annual Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Golden Spike Awards Ceremony in Salt Lake City. Penna Powers Brian Haynes (PPBH) created the Utah Flu Fighters Campaign for the department and came away with five awards as a result of the creative effort.

The winning entries included:

Best of Show:

- Utah Flu Fighters Campaign

Gold:

- Utah Flu Fighters TV commercials
- Utah Flu Fighters public education campaign
- Utah Flu Fighter billboards

Finalist:

- Utah Flu Fighters Website

Award entries are judged on the results and impacts achieved from communication campaigns. Additional criteria include research, creativity of ideas and excellence in execution.



Golden Spike Award

**Utah Department of Health  
Public Health Preparedness  
3760 S. Highland Drive SLC, UT  
84106**

**MAILING ADDRESS:  
P.O. Box 142006  
SLC, Utah 84114-2006**

**UDOH Web sites:**

**health.utah.gov (main)**

**health.utah.gov/preparedness**

**health.utah.gov/ems**

**UDOH Employee Elected President of UEMA**

The Utah Emergency Managers Association (UEMA) works to improve and sustain emergency management by providing educational and networking opportunities for the Utah Emergency Management Community. Recently, JoAnna Larsen, a planner in the Bureau of EMS & Preparedness, was elected President of UEMA. JoAnna will begin her term in January 2012 and will spend 2011 serving on the UEMA board as President-elect. This will give her a chance to learn the ropes, support Phil Chaffee in his role as President, and begin adding her voice to UEMA.

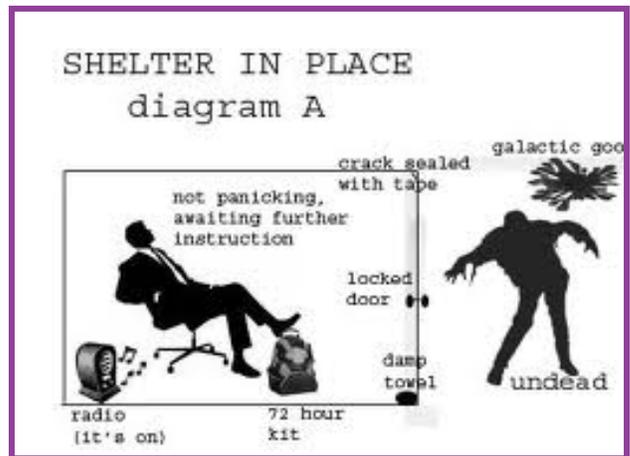
One of JoAnna's goals for the professional organization is to support local and state Emergency Managers by bringing them together to collaborate and share best practices. She also hopes to foster an attitude of growth, professionalism and excellence. JoAnna is grateful for the many teachers, supervisors and colleagues who took the time to teach and mentor her. She is hoping to encourage veteran Emergency Managers to mentor those who are new to the profession. JoAnna believes that by strengthening UEMA as an organization, it can better leverage the talent, experience, wisdom and dedication of its members to enhance Emergency Management in Utah.



JoAnna Larsen

*“One of the true tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency.”*

Arnold H. Glasgow



**Promote business, community and workplace preparedness: [www.BeReadyUtah.com](http://www.BeReadyUtah.com)**

The Preparedness Post

Upcoming Trainings and Events Jan. 2011–June 2011

U-TRAIN [www.utah.train.org](http://www.utah.train.org)

DATE	Conferences / Events	Organization Sponsorship	Location	Registration Information	Contact
Jan 25-26	Criminology- Epi Investigations Workshop	Utah Department of Health FBI	Sheraton Salt Lake City Hotel <a href="http://www.sheratonsaltlakecityhotel.com">http://www.sheratonsaltlakecityhotel.com</a> 150 West 500 South Salt Lake City, UT	By Invitation <b>NO Cost</b>	Christine Warren <a href="mailto:christinewarren@utah.gov">christinewarren@utah.gov</a>
Feb 22-24	ADLS (Advance Disaster Life Support)	Utah Department of Health	Intermountain Training Center (LDS Hospital North Entrance) 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue and "C" Street Salt Lake City, UT	*Must have BDLS Certification <b>NO Cost</b> Register on UTRAIN	Christine Warren <a href="mailto:christinewarren@utah.gov">christinewarren@utah.gov</a>  Riki Rice <a href="mailto:rikirice@utah.gov">rikirice@utah.gov</a>
March 8-9	SNS Mobile Preparation Course	Utah Department of Health		Limited Registration <b>NO Cost</b> Register on UTRAIN	Christine Warren <a href="mailto:christinewarren@utah.gov">christinewarren@utah.gov</a>  Don Wood <a href="mailto:dwood@utah.gov">dwood@utah.gov</a>
April 4-5-6	UPHA 2011 Annual Conference		Cultural Celebration Center West Valley, UT	<b>COST: TBD</b> Register at <a href="http://www.upha.org">www.upha.org</a>	Eric Edwards, Chair <a href="mailto:uchlth.ericse@state.ut.us">uchlth.ericse@state.ut.us</a>  Steve McDonald, Co-Chair <a href="mailto:smcdonald@marchofdimes.com">smcdonald@marchofdimes.com</a>
April 18-20	HPP/ASPR Healthcare Summit 18 <sup>th</sup> – Pre-Conference: Advanced HICS Course BDLS Course	Utah Department of Health	Homestead Resorts 700 Homestead Dr. Midway, UT	<b>NO Cost</b> Register on UTRAIN  For Healthcare Summit and for BDLS Course & Advance HICS Course	Lanette Sorensen <a href="mailto:Lanettesorensen@utah.gov">Lanettesorensen@utah.gov</a>  Christine Warren <a href="mailto:christinewarren@utah.gov">christinewarren@utah.gov</a>

The Preparedness Post

Upcoming Training and Events  
Jan. 2011–June 2011 (continued)

DATE	Conferences / Events	Organization Sponsorship	Location	Registration Information	Contact
May 3-5	Public Safety Governor's Summit		Davis Convention Center 1651 North 700 West  <b>Layton, UT</b>	<b>COST: \$150.00</b>  <a href="http://public-safety.utah.gov/">http://public-safety.utah.gov/</a>	Judy Hamaker-Mann <a href="mailto:jhamaker@utah.gov">jhamaker@utah.gov</a>  Patrice Thomas <a href="mailto:pthomas@utah.gov">pthomas@utah.gov</a>
June 6-7	<b>CDC CASPER TRAINING</b>  (Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response)	<b>Utah Department of Health</b>	SLC Area (TBD)	<b>By Invitation</b>  <b>NO Cost</b>  <b>Register on UTRAIN</b>	Christine Warren <a href="mailto:christinewarren@utah.gov">christinewarren@utah.gov</a>  Jodee Summers <a href="mailto:Jodeesummers@utah.gov">Jodeesummers@utah.gov</a>

