

TOGETHER. HELPING IOWANS.

## Safeguard Iowa Partnership Improves Coordination During Disasters

*When disasters strike, Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) open at the state and county level and provide a control facility responsible for carrying out disaster management functions and resource coordination.*

*Now, the Safeguard Iowa Partnership has a seat at the State EOC and at the Polk, Johnson and Linn County EOCs, which is critical to ensuring accurate and timely information is shared, and that both private and public organizations are working closely to tackle safety and priority missions.*



Our own Jeff McClaran and John Neldeberg led the efforts from the private side while Joyce Flinn, the Readiness and Response Bureau Chief for Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management, helped start the program from the public side. There are now 14 Safeguard Iowa partners from private organizations that have completed the training to be ready to coordinate activity at the State EOC. Training consists of understanding the phases of emergency management, the Incident Command Structure used at the scene of emergencies and the roles and responsibilities of the liaison, as well as being proficient in WebEOC – the software used at the Emergency Operations Centers.

"This was a major step in improving coordination among private and public organizations," stressed McClaran, who works for Wells Fargo. "We now have a much better understanding of the role played by EOCs and how private agencies can plug into that system and help Iowans."

The program started in April 2009, and although not fully activated for an emergency yet, private partners did participate in a full-scale exercise called Vigilant Guard, a major exercise conducted by the National Guard.

"We welcome the chance to engage private partners," stressed Flinn. "Participation and engagement by all partners is critical to ensuring needed resources are available to help Iowans."

Through the efforts of Safeguard Iowa partners, the long-term goal is to have trained private sector representatives that can operate at county EOCs throughout the state. If interested in learning more about becoming an EOC liaison, contact Jeff McClaran at [Jeffrey.m.mcclaran@wellsfargo.com](mailto:Jeffrey.m.mcclaran@wellsfargo.com).