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CASE USE: A GROUP BASED ROLLOUT OF CEMPLANNER

AN INTERVIEW WITH OLMSTED COUNTY'S DEPUTY DIRECTOR MIKE BROMBERG

Previstar visited with Mike Bromberg, Deputy Director of the Olmsted County Homeland Security and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to learn how they use CEMPlanner. Below are interview highlights taken from a web interview and other talks with Mr. Bromberg. Check out the actual interview at: http://goo.gl/vB2zH or with your smart phone QR code reader:

Previstar: Tell us a little about your agency and some of your specific county stakeholders.

Mike Bromberg: Olmstead County is located in Eastern MN, and has numerous agencies within each county department. Olmsted County also has the major city of Rochester with 100,000+ people and 5 smaller cities with about 3000 people within its boundaries. It's an office staffed by 3 people, so we have limited human resources and rely on technology to make our job easier.

Previstar: How long have you been using CEMPlanner?

Mike Bromberg: About 2 yrs.

Previstar: What drew you to CEMPlanner and its capabilities?

Mike Bromberg: We needed to have outside stakeholders, small cities; the Red Cross and other volunteer organizations upload information using the web. We were looking at doing an extranet site because of security concerns in our county intranet. While we had been waiting for a long time for IT to develop the extranet site, someone in IT heard about CEMPlanner at a conference and thought it would work for us. It has worked very effectively.

Previstar: What have you done make CEMPlanner your own?

Mike Bromberg: First we converted the pre-loaded ESF names in CEMPlanner into annexes to meet our county's pre-existing annex based plan structure. We simplified the annex structure using the "Edit Plan Structure" feature. We minimized our 450 page plan to a more concise document and utilized the existing "Standard/Best Practice" sections in accordance with state requirements by selecting and de-selecting only the sections we need. We use the "Reference

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Library" to allow our cities to upload their plans into the county CEMPlanner site helping ensure city plans coincide with the county planning. The county now uses the "Global Contact List" as the city emergency contact roster.

Previstar: That's a lot of work! How did roll this out to the county and get buy in from others?

Mike Bromberg: We took small groups of 2-3 people at a time, trained them in the general functionality of the system, showed them a roadmap of where we wanted to be in 6 months and then in a longer span of time.

Previstar: What are some roadblocks you've encountered with the system & how did you mitigate them?

Mike Bromberg: There was some apprehension on using a web-based system. The biggest problem was users forgetting a small step. We had to train department heads in the system's basic review & approval processes of plan content because of missed small steps. The good part is that the system is very user friendly and easy to navigate, which helps mitigate mistakes some of the non-tech savvy users may run into. There is nothing difficult to use. I recommend good note taking during training.

Previstar: What are longer term goals using the system for continued planning processed?

Mike Bromberg: I plan to start the incident and event annexes and adding SOPs/SOGs. The next big winter project is to identify by kind and type our resource inventory according to FEMA standards using the Resource Plan module. I would like all of our partners/County Departments to use CEMPlanner for all of their day to day and Crisis management information.

Previstar: Would you recommend CEMPlanner to others, why, & what advice do you have to implement?

Mike Bromberg: It's a great, secure way to store your information outside of your system in a non-government agency. When beginning to use CEMPlanner focus on training your stakeholders and keep an open mind. Take an hour to yourself and really go into the system to understand how it can work for you. Figure out how you want CEMPlanner to work for your agency and make it fit the structure you want.

> *"This is the best thing my IT department has done for me in 17 years of working for this county, because it has made my job way easier." Mike Bromberg*