

Annual Hurricane Exercise - Hurricane Tiawana

By Dr. Bruce Akers, NCDA&CS

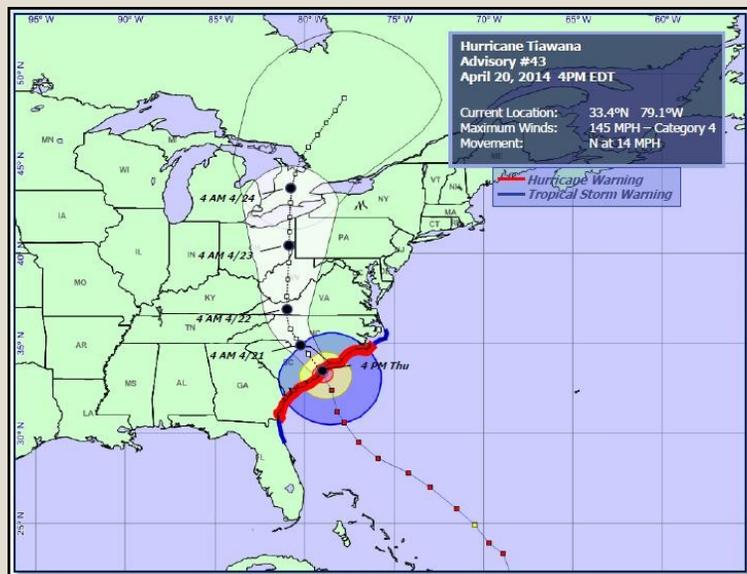
A Hurricane's Coming!!!

Hey all, spring is here, if you hadn't guessed from all the severe weather we recently endured. To top it all off, a hurricane passed through North Carolina just three days before the tornados and flooding. Hurricane Tiawana was NC Emergency Management's state-wide Hurricane Exercise April 22 and 23. The exercise was a little out-of-season to accommodate other big events coming this summer.

At least with a hurricane, there's some advanced warning. Preliminary weather updates were given to all participating agencies, tracking the fictitious Hurricane Tiawana, adding to the realism of a tropical storm developing into a Category 4 hurricane. It passed over Puerto Rico and turned northward up the East Coast before coming ashore in South Carolina. The storm then took aim on Western NC. On April 21st, Tiawana cut a path through the western part of our state, passing through Charlotte and leaving through Alleghany County.

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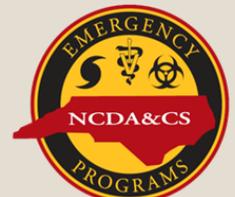


NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE &
CONSUMER SERVICES

Emergency Programs Division

Steve Troxler, Commissioner

Sharron Stewart, Director



Poultry Strike Team Training

By Jen Kendrick, NCDA&CS

Staff from the Veterinary and Emergency Programs divisions spent a recent day on a Moore County poultry farm training U.S. Department of Agriculture contractors how to humanely depopulate a poultry flock using foam. The contractors were from disaster response companies in Wisconsin, Mississippi and Louisiana that are under contract with USDA to go into states at times of disaster when the state lacks the manpower to respond to animal disasters. No birds were used in the training and the poultry houses used have been empty for about a year.

Foam is used only in instances where an entire flock needs to be euthanized because of disease or injury. It is



A Veterinary Division employee shoots foam into the poultry house.

not a way to kill animals before slaughter. Six NCDA&CS employees deployed to Alabama after tornadoes struck that state a few years ago. They helped poultry farmers there in cases where injured flocks were stuck inside collapsed houses and needed to be humanely euthanized. Teams help depopulate flocks in North Carolina a few times each year because of disease outbreaks or injuries related to collapsed houses.

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COMPLETE YOUR VRC REGISTRATION AT WWW.SERVNC.ORG

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Please see our website for future training and activities.
- Check out our sheltering webinars posted on the website!
- <http://www.ncagr.gov/oep/sheltering/>

REQUIREMENTS FOR VRC DEPLOYMENT

- ICS 100, 200, and 700
- Biosecurity/PPE Training
- Knowledge of NC Emergency Management
- Knowledge of Emergency Support Functions
- Attendance at VRC Meetings
- Sign a Code of Conduct

No farmer ever wants to be in the situation where he has to depopulate an entire flock, especially because of a disease outbreak. It is truly an emotional ordeal for everyone involved. Foam is a good option because it is gentle enough to not overly excite the birds and kills them quickly. The foam is also environmentally safe to use and dissipates on its own.

The department has become a national leader in this technique. NCDA&CS staff have taken the equipment and modified several units to improve the design and make them interchangeable. They've also literally written a manual on how to do it. The equipment is available for use by other states if needed. Because of the hands-on training and manual, the contractors said they feel confident in their ability to take a crew onto a farm, operate the equipment and handle the situation confidently.



A veterinary technician explains how the pump and proportioner work to make the proper consistency of foam.

VRC MISSION: Train and prepare professionals in the animal care community to respond to disaster events (all hazards) that affect both production and companion animals. Our members will serve as a resource for our state and the nation.

NOTES: To see recent news and updates, please visit the VRC website at www.ncvrc.org. If you have questions about the VRC or would like to offer suggestions or articles for future newsletters, contact Mandy at mandy.tolson@ncagr.gov.

New Member spotlight

Dr. Christina Lindsey



Christina was raised in metro Atlanta and completed both her bachelor's and veterinary degrees at the University of Georgia. While earning a major in Avian Biology, she developed a chronic fascination with poultry that stuck with her through vet school. She spent the majority of her clinical year of veterinary school outside the teaching hospital, pursuing specialized experience at the CDC, USDA, Georgia Poultry Lab, National Poultry Improvement Program, and the Seremi de Salud (a governmental public health agency) in Chile, to name a few.

She is currently completing her first year of a two-year poultry health residency at NC State University, aspiring to become a leader in poultry health and food safety. Her research during the residency has focused on bacteria of food safety concern in chickens and turkeys, including *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*. She enjoys teaching veterinary students how to handle and examine chickens and turkeys, and makes time to learn from field visits with industry veterinarians. Christina joined NCVRC with the hope that her training as a veterinarian will enable her to make a valid and lasting contribution to society. In her spare time, she enjoys training her two dogs, knitting sweaters for guinea pigs and cats, and baking.

Agriculture Emergency Response Team

The AERT Program Moving Forward

By Mike Mayes, NCDA&CS

The Agriculture Emergency Response Team, also known as AERT, is a program that has been developed by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services Emergency Programs Division. The concept of this team is to help meet the needs of agricultural communities that have been impacted and need assistance after a disaster. The assistance comes in the form of teams that specialize in tasks such as clearing debris, mending fences, tarping buildings and structures, harvesting crops and working chainsaws.

This program was developed in 2012 and has since been presented at several Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings. Duplin and Halifax counties are the latest counties that have seen the presentation given by Dr. Jimmy Tickel of NCDA&CS Emergency Programs Division.

The presentation goes into detail of the program in order to highlight the potential of the teams, and to help county officials understand the purpose of the program. Dr. Tickel lays out the program in a way that allows all to join in the discussion. After lunch, the groups participate in a question and answer session and then move outdoors for a hands-on session with the AERT trailer (pictured below). The trailers are equipped with tools that can be utilized by AERT teams when responding to an incident.



The AERT program is moving forward with another presentation to Lee and surrounding counties in late May. The program will look to engage others, such as the Civil Air Patrol, with a potential training this summer.

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The NCDA&CS Emergency Programs Incident Management Team was engaged early in the event. This team received training and certification in January at a week-long course in Richmond, Va. that prepared them for managing disaster events and working as a cohesive team. This was a challenging, but rewarding training. Fresh off that training, the team was ready to put their skills to work on these spring events. The team has been busy; since the training in January, there have been two ice storms, the state's hurricane exercise, and right after, the two episodes of severe weather and tornados.

You were not omitted. Even though we did not actually activate any resources to respond, NCVRC members were in the discussion daily as we prepared to deal with the sequelae of these events. The Hurricane Exercise was the biggest and broadest reaching of these. The types of missions that you most likely would have been directly engaged in included animal search & rescue, livestock containment/handling, and sheltering assistance for co-located shelters that include companion animals. With a hurricane such as Tiawana, the wind, rain, land slides and flooding produce a vast number of impacts to the residents of our state and they need for us all to try to help. Our IMT operated the AgEOC for 12 hours on the first day of the exercise and then operated for another eight the second day of response and recovery actions, but worked remotely from our field locations. Agriculture was represented on both days of the exercise at the State Emergency Operations Center by our department liaison.

Your first responses should be acting locally, taking care of your own operations/business, and then reach out to your city or county to assist with their needs. Remember, your customers will likely be affected. Any request for NCVRC members would come through ServNC. You should prepare to be deployed for at least five days and potentially longer if you are available. Part of your preparation for a deployment includes having a "To Go" bag ready that will take you through five days or longer. Please take stock in your readiness for your family first and your business/job and continue to take trainings that will help you be prepared. We thank you for your commitment to be prepared to deploy within our state and will always prepare to engage you, but promise to do so only if there is true overwhelming need.

