



Connections

The monthly newsletter for the Capital Area Council of Governments

January 2022

Upcoming Events

10 a.m. January 12
CAPCOG Executive Committee

11 a.m. January 12
**Capital Area Emergency
Communications District Board of
Managers**

1:30-4:30 p.m. January 13
**Solid Waste Grant Workshop
(Online)**

1-4 p.m. January 14
**Law Enforcement Training: Basic Peace
Officer Course Entrance Exam**

1:30 p.m. January 18
Census Meeting and Discussion

1-5 p.m. January 18
**Homeland Security/ARIC Training: Law
Enforcement Threat Liaison Officer**

1:30-4:30 p.m. January 20
**Criminal Justice Grant Workshop
(Online)**

9-10:30 a.m. January 21
**Older Adult Services Training: Your
Partner in Serving Older Adults and
Those with Disabilities
(Online)**

8 a.m.-5 p.m. January 24-26
**Emergency Telecommunicator Training:
Emergency Medical Dispatch**

8 a.m.-5 p.m. January 24-28
**Law Enforcement Training: Mental
Health Officer**

Ongoing
**Older Adult Health & Wellness
Training: Online courses are always
seeking participants**

Go to capcog.org
for more details

Also in this edition:

**CAPCOG Homeland Security participates
in national program's development**

**Burnet County's Barho receives CAPCOG
volunteer honor**

CAPCOG presents TDEM's Kidd with regionalism award

CAPCOG recognized W. Nim Kidd, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) chief, with the Jack Griesenbeck Leadership in Regionalism Award for his commitment to disaster prevention, protection mitigation, response and recovery at a regional level. "When the bell rings, you have a partner you can call on, and many times he will call you first," said Bastrop County Judge and CAPCOG Chair Paul Pape of Kidd before presenting him with the award during the December General Assembly meeting.

"All disasters are local, and our job is to support you," Kidd said thanking —Page 2, Kidd



Bastrop County Judge and CAPCOG Executive Committee Chair, Paul Pape (left), and CAPCOG Executive Director, Betty Voights, present TDEM Chief, W. Nim Kidd, with the regionalism award.

CAPCOG adds cameras for environmental law enforcement

The CAPCOG Solid Waste Program has purchased and is distributing 70 cellular video cameras to Regional Environmental Task Force agencies and other jurisdictions to help prevent and increase enforcement of environmental crimes such as illegal dumping.

CAPCOG has provided law and code enforcement agencies with similar cameras to assist with the investigation and collection of evidence on those committing environment crimes for years; however, the recent purchase more than quadruples its inventory which can be reserved by agencies. The cameras can be placed at illegal dumpsites and have been used to help identify vehicles and individuals entering such areas as well as capture images and video of people committing the crimes. Evidence collected by the cameras has facilitated voluntary site clean up by suspects and has assisted with the prosecution of legal cases.

The new cameras can transmit video in real-time and allow enforcement officers to download information while not in the field. The Llano County Attorney's office is already using the equipment which has assisted in more than a dozen cases for the agency.

Other agencies that have reserved cameras include Travis County Transportation and Natural Resources, Caldwell County Attorney's Office, and Williamson County Constables Office Precinct 1 and 4. Agencies interested in using the cameras can contact Ken May, CAPCOG Regional Programs Coordinator, at kmay@capcog.org to reserve a camera. Participating agencies will need to purchase a cellphone plan for real-time viewing and downloading as well as document and report each camera's use. CAPCOG also requests if a camera isn't being used that it be returned for another agency to use.

U.S. Census Bureau partners with CAPCOG for census talk

CAPCOG is inviting local governments representatives including planners and GIS staff to participate in a January 18 meeting with U.S. Census Bureau representatives to discuss the 2020 Census results and several programs provided by the federal agency that can benefit planners. The meeting will be from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at CAPCOG's offices, 6800 Burleson Road, Building 310, Suite 165, in the Pecan Room in Austin.

The Census Bureau will discuss several topics and programs to include the Participant Statistical Area Program for Census Tracts, which set the 2020 Census statistical boundaries that define areas in the American Community Survey and can be used to prepare grants and plans; the Boundary and Annexation Survey Program, which provides local governments a chance to review and update legal boundaries; and the Census-Designated Places, which defines geographic entities representing closely settled, unincorporated communities that are recognized by name. The bureau also will discuss the comparison of 2020 Census results to 2020 estimates and review the estimate's methodology. It will review the Census Bureau Count Question Resolution Program and Population Estimates Challenge Program; the programs are ways jurisdictions can correct or challenge the 2020 Census and subsequent estimates.

Planners and GIS staff can register at training.capcog.org/by-topic/regional-services.

CAPCOG Homeland Security participates in national program's development

The CAPCOG Homeland Security Division has been participating with FEMA and the Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate, which provides research and development for the federal agency, to develop technology that will help emergency response agencies increase their ability to share information during a disaster. CAPCOG is the only COG participating in the program's development and one of a few local governments, giving it a unique opportunity to shape the future of a deployable technology from FEMA while also strengthening the region's ability to respond to large disasters.

"Emergency response teams in the CAPCOG region do very well at sharing information and assisting each other during a disaster, but data and information sharing has long been recognized as an area with a lot of room for improvement," said Martin Ritchey, CAPCOG Homeland Security Director. "There are many silos that slow decision making and create obstacles for effective planning and response for disasters. By participating in this technology's development, we hope to better connect those silos and decrease the time it takes to

coordinate the most appropriate and effective response."

In November and December, CAPCOG participated in a table-top exercise using FEMA's Information Resource System beta program and a subsequent hot wash that provided CAPCOG and other local, state, and federal governments to provide feedback on the program after its test use. While a completion date for the program hasn't been announced, Ritchey was confident the product would make it to production and will intergrade with applications CAPCOG is already using such as WebEOC, a virtual emergency operations center that allows multiple agencies to track and share disaster information.

Participating in a development, collaborative process on the national level also helps CAPCOG evaluate similar planning and response tools as it has learned different jurisdictions' perspectives on incident response. It also sets the stage for collaboration on future homeland security projects with partners nationwide. Additionally, lessons learned from the project and its process also can be instituted with local governments and other emergency response agencies in the region.

Burnet County's Barho receives CAPCOG volunteer honor

Burnet County Emergency Manager, Jim Barho, the first and long-serving chair of the agency's Long-Term Interoperability Committee under the Homeland Security Task Force (HSTF), received the Phill Parmer Volunteer Service Award during the CAPCOG's annual General Assembly meeting in December. The award recognized his years of service and support to the region's efforts in the areas of homeland security and radio communications planning.



Burnet County Emergency Manager, Jim Barho (middle), accepts the Phill Parmer award.

Barho, who has served on the HSTF since 2007, played a key role when CAPCOG developed a Regional Radio Communications Interoperability Plan which would drive how HSTF directed federal funding to ensure first responders across the region would have connectivity during mutual aid events and chaired the Long-Term Interoperability committee overseeing project review until 2014. He continues to serve on the HSTF representing Burnet County working on mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery and using his experience in communications, health care and emergency management to lead and mentor other homeland security professionals.

The Phill Parmer Volunteer Service Award is named after a long-time Aging Advisory Council member who served into his 90s as a Llano County representative. The award honors those who have gone above and beyond to volunteer their time.

Kidd great regional partner to CAPCOG, local governments

CAPCOG for the honor. The real emergency management work is done locally, and he and TDEM want to work with local jurisdictions as efficiently as possible through disaster planning and recovery efforts. Kidd has served as the TDEM chief for nearly 12 years; he also serves as a Vice Chancellor for Disaster and Emergency Services at Texas A&M University, is a member of the Texas Emergency Management Council, and the Chair of the FEMA National Advisory Council.

"Chief Kidd is a great regional partner and believer in using the COGs to coordinate with city and county officials to plan and train for disasters" commented CAPCOG Executive Director Betty Voights, "this approach has served us well through wildfires, extreme flooding, a winter storm, and the pandemic."

The Jack Griesenbeck Leadership in Regionalism Awards is named a former County Bastrop County Judge who served as CAPCOG's first chair in 1970 and the first president of the Texas Association of Regional Councils. It honors someone who plays a pivotal role in strengthening the Capital Area through their actions and who consistently advocates for a regional and multijurisdictional approach through their work. Previous awardees have included people such as Texas Senator and former Austin Mayor, Kirk Watson; former Texas Department of Transportation Austin District Engineer, Bob Daigh; Senator Gonzalo Barrientos; Travis County Judge Sam Biscoe; and State Representative, Paul Workman.

Grant Alerts

Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program, U.S. Department of Interior

Deadline: Jan. 20, 2022

grants.gov

Good Job Challenge, U.S. EDA

Deadline: Jan. 26, 2022

grants.gov

Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation, U.S. EDA

Deadline: Jan 31, 2022 (Apply ASAP)

grants.gov

REAP Energy Audit and Renewable Energy Development Assistance Program, USDA

Deadline: Feb. 1, 2022

grants.gov

American Rescue Plan Senior Demonstration Program, AmeriCorps Seniors

Deadline: Feb. 3, 2022

grants.gov

Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant, FEMA

Deadline: Feb. 4, 2022

grants.gov

State Homeland Security Program, Texas Office of the Governor

Deadline: Feb. 10, 2022

egrants.gov.texas.gov/fundopp.aspx

Crime Stoppers Assistance Fund, Texas Office of the Governor

Deadline: Feb. 10, 2022

egrants.gov.texas.gov/fundopp.aspx

Criminal Justice Program, Texas Office of the Governor

Deadline: Feb. 10, 2022

egrants.gov.texas.gov/fundopp.aspx