



IARCCOURIER

Winter 2010

GROWING IOWA'S REGIONS
FOR OVER 35 YEARS

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Iowa Association of
Regional Councils

The *IARCCourier* is an electronic publication of the Iowa Association of Regional Councils.

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IARC participates in Business Disaster Case Management Task Force

During the 2010 session, the Iowa Legislature passed House File 2422, which created the Business Disaster Case Management Task Force. Joe Myhre, Director of North Iowa Area Council of Governments, served as IARC's representative on the task force.

The responsibility of the task force was to research disaster recovery case management assistance needed for businesses following a major disaster and to recommend steps for providing such assistance post-disaster.

The task force focused on what Iowa could implement without reliance on federal programs. The task force concluded that the hallmarks of any business disaster assistance must be speed of delivery and simplicity in execution. Funds used to assist business recovery should be free of as many restraints on use as possible. Also, affected businesses should have flexibility to determine how to best utilize capital resources.

The task force recommends the State take the following steps:

- Include business technical service providers and business representatives in the disaster response planning conducted by local Emergency Management Commissions & to include business service providers in the response services provided by these commissions.
- Create a quasi-trust fund financed by surcharges on commercial property and casualty insurance policies to provide immediate financial assistance to business physically impacted by a disaster.
- Develop a permanent program to provide forgivable loans to affected businesses for working capital.
- Task an existing state agency with the responsibility to coordinate all state interactions with federal agencies where federal program funds for business assistance is available.

The full set of task force recommendations were submitted to the Governor and Iowa Legislature on November 15, 2010.

IARC members receive national innovation awards

At the 2010 National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) conference, IARC members Region XII Council of Governments and East Central Intergovernmental Association were recognized with awards for outstanding regional initiatives. Both agencies received a NADO Innovation Award for recent projects undertaken within their organizations. The NADO Innovation Awards program recognizes creative programs and approaches in regional community and economic development.

After the natural disasters in 2008, staff at Region XII Council of Governments developed a template for a business disaster preparedness, recovery and continuity plan. The template provided a model for businesses to use, but can be adapted to meet the needs of individual businesses. Region XII Disaster Recovery Coordinator Barry Branson met with businesses, business organizations, chambers of commerce, and other entities to market the document. Branson also worked directly with numerous businesses to assist them in creating their own disaster plans based on the template. In addition to providing the disaster preparedness template to various businesses and business-related organizations, Branson has shared this template with his counterparts at other COGs, so that the model can be used to assist businesses in their regions. Branson and Region XII were awarded a 2010 NADO Innovation Award for this project.

East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) received a NADO Innovation Award for the agency's Petal Project. The Petal Project is a regional green business certification program. ECIA staff recognized a need in the region: Businesses wanted to become more sustainable, but did not know where to start. The



Rick Hunsaker, Director of Region XII Council of Governments, discusses the agency's business disaster preparedness, recovery and continuity plan with a conference attendee.



Kelley Deutmeyer, Director of ECIA, and ECIA staff attend the Innovation Awards reception at the NADO conference, held in San Diego.

purpose of this program is to alleviate some of these challenges by providing businesses with a simple framework to becoming more sustainable. The Petal Project consists of the following five categories: waste reduction, energy conservation, pollution prevention, staff education, and water conservation. Petal Certified businesses must complete all required criteria and the minimum number of optional criteria for each category. Once one area of the criteria is complete, a business will receive one petal of the Petal Project logo and will continue to work towards full certification.

Both projects demonstrate the ability of Iowa's COGs to develop programs designed for the individual needs of their respective regions. Congratulations to both agencies.

SIMPCO expands services to include sidewalk studies



Sarah LaBrune-Jongeling, SIMPCO community development staff, along with Remsen City Clerk Paige List, inspects a sidewalk near the Remsen Public Library. The city of Remsen will begin a sidewalk study in the spring of 2011.

Cracks, bumps, and faults in sidewalks are just one of many matters Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO) inspects. The city of Remsen recently hired SIMPCO to examine the entire network of sidewalks within the city limits and report back on any damages that may cause trips, falls, or banged up knees. Other communities in the region have approached SIMPCO about completion of a city-wide sidewalk inspection. Completing this project demonstrates a community's commitment to keeping sidewalks safe for foot traffic.

SIMPCO will survey the entire town's sidewalk system in the spring. Photos will be taken of unsafe sidewalk situations and SIMPCO will report issues to the city council. A letter will be sent to the property owner providing a 90-day time frame to make repairs on the sidewalk.

After 90 days, SIMPCO will re-inspect the property. If the sidewalk is not repaired, the city will fix the issues and assess the repair costs to the property owner.

Sidewalks are a main source of transportation in smaller communities and it is important all sidewalks are properly maintained.

In addition to sidewalk inspections, SIMPCO provides other services, including municipal code updates, windshield surveys and nuisance abatement inspections. For more information on these services, contact SIMPCO at 712.279.6286.

Sarah LaBrune-Jongeling, SIMPCO community development staff, inspects a cracked and bulging sidewalk.



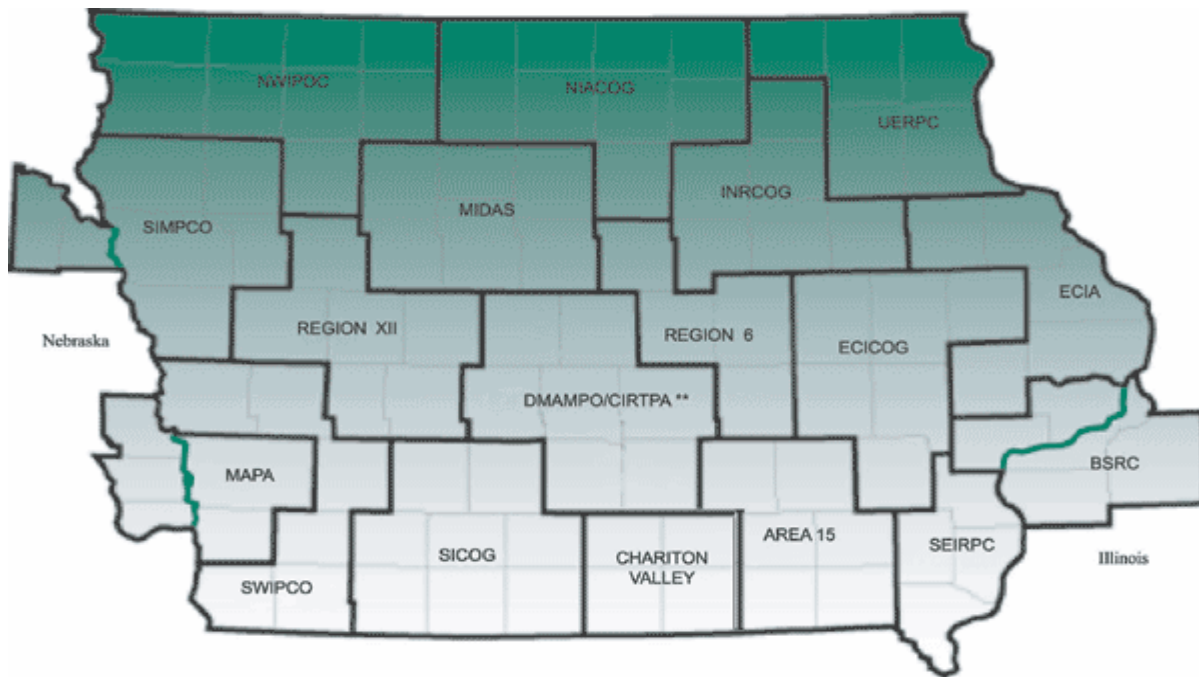
IARC approves code of ethics

Traditionally, one of the distinguishing characteristics of a profession and its professionals has been the existence of a code of professional ethics. Recognizing the need for such a code for its members resulted in the recent development of the IARC Code of Ethics. In October 2010, the following IARC Code of Ethics was adopted:

Preamble: Everyone who enters into public service has the duty and responsibility to maintain the highest standards of integrity and to protect and enhance the public's trust and confidence. IARC and its members are dedicated to the concepts of effective and democratic local government by responsible elected officials and believe that professional general management is essential to the achievement of this objective. IARC members recognize the following ethical principles:

1. Public service is a public trust, requiring those so employed to place loyalty to Federal, State, and local laws and ethical principles above private gain.
2. Members shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty. Even the appearance of a conflict is to be avoided.
3. Members shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic information gained by access to his or her professional position or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.
4. Members shall not, except as permitted by applicable law, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the member's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the member's duties.
5. Members shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.
6. Members shall not use their positions within their agencies for private gain.
7. Members shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
8. Members shall protect and conserve their agency property and funds and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.
9. Members shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official agency duties and responsibilities.
10. Members shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.
11. Members shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation .
12. Members shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating applicable law or these ethical principles.
13. Members shall continuously pursue improvement in their professional competence as well as the development of their peers and subordinates.

This code was provided to each member of the IARC Board and the IARC Executive Director. Each was asked to sign a copy of the code as an indication of that individual's commitment to observing the code and applying it within his or her organization. This serves as an important tool for assisting members in identifying issues and providing guidelines for ethical resolution of those issues. The adoption of this code of ethics further demonstrates the professional integrity of IARC and its member organizations.



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Phone (641) 684-6551
www.area15rpc.com

Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

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Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council

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Bi-State Regional Commission

1504 Third Ave., PO Box 3368
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www.bjstateonline.org

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www.midascog.org

Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission

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Southern Iowa Council of Governments

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Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission

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134 West Greene St., PO Box 219
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Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

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Happy New Year
from the Iowa Association of Regional Councils