



**NEWS RELEASE**

## Department of Public Safety

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### **Office of Emergency Management Implements New Credentialing System**

Pierre, S.D. – A new system designed to help officials better identify resources needed for disasters or special events worked successfully in its first two major operations.

South Dakota's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) introduced the Comprehensive Resource Management and Credentialing System (CRMCS) in January.

"The web-based system is designed to identify qualified personnel and equipment needed for a disaster or emergency," says Laurie Morrison, OEM logistics coordinator and project manager for CRMCS. "Organizations enter their personnel into the system including specific qualifications. Each responder receives a plastic ID card with their picture, organization, rank and qualifications all printed on the card and embedded in a barcode. The system also identifies response equipment by size, type and other characteristics."

During an emergency or planned event, incident management personnel scan the barcode for each responder or piece of equipment that enters the incident scene. That gives the incident commander a real-time look at who and what is working the response.

Since Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>, more than 5,200 first responders and city officials, 1,200 different organizations and 1,400 pieces of equipment have been credentialed statewide. The system was first used for the Delmont tornado in May and then again at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in August.

"At Delmont, we had hundreds of volunteers wanting to help with cleanup and with this system, we got the volunteers credentialed and to the right places," Morrison says. "During the Sturgis Rally, the system told us exactly what state government personnel were working in the operations center at any one time."

Morrison says the system is used in the neighboring states of Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Iowa. That means local and state public safety officials in those states also can use CRMCS to better coordinate the response to an emergency, she says.

“When a responder with South Dakota credentials is deployed to a tornado in Kansas, for example, Kansas officials know exactly where that responder is from and what his or her qualifications are,” Morrison says. The same goes for responders coming to South Dakota from another state that uses CRMCS. We immediately recognize the credential when they check in at the disaster scene, and we can scan the bar code and know exactly what they are qualified to do.”

The Office of Emergency Management is part of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.