



10 East Poplar Street • Suite B1 • Harrisburg, IL 62946
(618) 252-3732 • FAX (618) 252-1686

P R E S S R E L E A S E

News Media Contact:

Allan C. Ninness
Director
(618) 252-3732

ema@salinecounty.illinois.gov

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Western Illinois Professor Speaks about Local EMA Needs

Rozdilsky study highlights resource shortcomings from disaster.

The Saline County EMA hosted Professor Jack Rozdilsky from Western Illinois University to give a presentation on his study concerning the response following the Leap Day Tornado. The presentation was attended by representatives of local county, city, state, and federal governments.

The presentation, given in a PowerPoint format, mainly focused on the lack of a Saline Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The EOC is the structure that forms the basis for planning and directing responses to disasters. Professor Rozdilsky pointed out that though SCEMA had an EOC, it was only a temporary EOC, and that no permanent EOC was available to the agency in times of an emergency, subsisting rather on the generosity of the community in an ad hoc setting. This was a shortcoming that Mr. Rozdilsky advises should be remedied.

There was a discussion session that followed the presentation where questions and comments were raised. Notable points were:

- 1) Regional disparities outside of Saline County.
- 2) Budgetary shortfalls precluding construction.
- 3) Structural concerns in a disaster-prone region.

Professor Rozdilsky, Directors Allan Ninness, Steve Galt, and Regional Coordinator Brian Brackemier were on hand to address concerns and offer some insights.

Also accompanying Prof. Rozdilski was Audra Miller, a WIU student doing a research paper on the farm debris clean-up that followed the Leap Day Tornado. This was seen as a pivotal moment and great insight into rural concerns following a tornado that hit a populated area.