

***For immediate release***

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**Berry Recognized for Emergency Planning Distinction**

McCook – Be Prepared! A motto spoken by many but embraced by Dennis Berry, Principal at McCook Junior High. Berry was recently recognized by Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) for his continuous improvement to the school emergency preparedness plan. Berry received a “Shelter in Place” bucket for McCook Junior High to acknowledge his leadership.



Dennis Berry, Heidi Wheeler and Chad Lyons.

“Dennis has been committed to emergency planning not only for McCook Junior High but for the entire county,” praised Heidi Wheeler, Emergency Response Coordinator for SWNPHD. “He has served on the Red Willow County Community Preparedness Committee since its inception, providing leadership during its beginning and passion for ongoing planning and preparedness. Dennis is constantly seeking ways to improve our emergency plans.”

Dennis is a trained Public Information Officer, Community Emergency Response Volunteer, School district Crisis/Emergency Team Chair; trained in all four levels in the Dr. John Dudley crisis management course and ALICE emergency options instructor. He was the first Recipient of the Nebraska Safe Schools Award in 2005 from the Center for Biopreparedness and the Nebraska Department of Education.

“We felt that it was a perfect choice to donate a “Shelter in Place” bucket in Berry’s honor as he was the first administrator in this area to support the placement of more buckets in more classrooms,” commented Wheeler. These buckets have been used several times for school emergency situations.

For more information on emergency preparedness contact Heidi Wheeler at 308-345-4223 or email her at: [erc@swhealth.ne.gov](mailto:erc@swhealth.ne.gov). SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street (1 block north of Arby’s) in McCook and is also on Facebook and Twitter. The health department serves Chase, Dundy, Hayes, Hitchcock, Frontier, Furnas, Perkins and Red Willow counties.

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