

## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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### **Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department Congratulates McCook Schools on Emergency Preparedness**

McCook–Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) congratulates McCook Public Schools on their commitment to emergency preparedness. Central Elementary and McCook Elementary added 38 shelter-in-place buckets to their schools ensuring that each classroom is prepared for an emergency situation.

“McCook schools received our first shelter-in-place bucket from Heidi Wheeler, SWNPHD Emergency Response Coordinator and it has become our goal to have our schools prepared for emergencies ever since,” explains Dennis Berry, Crisis/Emergency Coordinator for McCook Public Schools. “Our schools have excelled in training staff to handle emergency situations. We are committed to providing a safe environment for our students.”



SWNPHD prepared all of the buckets with items to assist students and teachers when disaster strikes. McCook Optimist Club donated funds towards the purchase of the buckets. “Youth are our focus and this project is an excellent opportunity for the Optimist Club to join with the schools in a positive project,” states Berry.

September is National Preparedness Month and SWNPHD promotes emergency preparedness efforts such as those of McCook Schools. Wheeler recommends that schools, families or businesses develop disaster plans, gather emergency supplies, learn how to shelter in place and get involved through community volunteering and training. “We have excellent volunteers throughout southwest Nebraska but we all need to take care of our families first,” explains Wheeler. “Planning and preparedness is vital for the safety of you and your family during an emergency.” Additional information can be obtained at <http://www.cdc.gov/features/beready> or [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties. For more information call Heidi Wheeler at 308-345-4223. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, McCook – one block north of Arby’s. You can also follow us on [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov), Facebook & Twitter.

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