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STAYING CURRENT

July 16 G-Map Committee Meeting, Wichita Hyatt

July 21 EMP No. 1 meeting, KMEA office

July 22 Executive Committee meeting, Salina Country Club

July 23 EMP No. 2 meeting, Russell

Aug. 18 EMP No. 1 meeting, KMEA office

Aug. 19 Executive Committee meeting, KMEA office, 10:30 a.m.

Aug. 20 EMP No. 2 meeting, Russell

Sept. 7 KMEA office closed for Labor Day

Sept. 15 EMP No. 1 meeting, KMEA office

Sept. 17 EMP No. 2 meeting, Russell

Nov. 3-4 Annual Meeting of the Member Cities, Wichita Hyatt



Enhanced space, security, energy conservation distinguish KMEA's new Overland Park office

On June 26, KMEA staffers were on the move in the true sense of the word. That Friday, they vacated the Agency's office at 6330 Lamar and started settling into new offices at 95th and Lamar.

While the details of organizing, procuring supplies and arranging services is still underway, the office is up and running, with ample space for employee offices and the variety of meetings that are expected to occur there. The Executive Committee will get its first look at the new facility when they meet there on August 19.

"It's been a wild ride, and there are still details to work out, but we are finally getting situated in the new environment, with phones and computers functional," said Diann Burress, who shouldered a significant portion of the responsibility for overseeing the purchase and reconfiguring of offices. An architect and remodeling company were hired to complete the renovation.

The 10,000-square-foot building has windows on all four sides, incorporating natural

light. Plus, the Agency installed energy-conserving lighting with motion detectors and automatic turn-off. When movement is detected, the lights turn on; when motion is absent for a specified amount of time, the lights turn off. The facility also features private offices, ample storage and meeting/conference rooms to accommodate groups of various sizes.

"We're looking forward to having member cities use the facility," Diann said. "We think it will enhance the group's cohesiveness and relieve the overcrowding we've been experiencing."

The new facility will also feature a security system that prepares the Agency for the future. Employees will use a card entry system; visitors will enter a secured area and be required to sign in and wear a name badge.

KMEA's new office address is 6300 West 95th Street. The main voice and fax telephone numbers remain the same, as do direct lines for staff members.

Office photos on page 2

KMEA G-MAP project on track to enhance Mutual Aid responses

Locating the components of the municipal electrical system is a critical first step in responding to any power emergency.

After severe events such as major tornadoes, however, transformers and power lines are often ripped up and transported significant distances. That can pose a serious challenge to rescue workers if component locations are not well-documented and easily accessible.

To address such situations, KMEA formed a committee in early 2009 to develop a comprehensive and uniform agency-wide GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping platform to enhance Mutual Aid responses. Guided by the 12-member committee—and in partnership with Midland GIS Solutions—KMEA's Mutual Aid GIS Mapping Program (G-MAP) is already making progress toward its goal of developing a mapping system available at group rates for any interested member city.

“With this system in place, we will be able to give Mutual Aid responders maps that tell them what power components were there before the event and exactly where they were located,” explained Steve McGie, Interconnected Operations Manager, City of Coffeyville, and G-MAP committee member. “That, in turn, lets them know what kind of equipment they will need to make the necessary repairs. In many situations you still have landmarks, but in some cases, such as the Greensburg tornado of 2007, there's so much destruction that workers don't know where to start.”

By increasing efficiency and information, the system will also help cities address accelerating customer demands and heightened concerns about system vulnerabilities. Accordingly, KMEA is coordinating G-MAP efforts with the GIS Coordinator for the Kansas Office of Homeland Security, who supports the program and has offered to provide existing county mapping data to facilitate KMEA's effort.

Knowing that some communities will have more interest and/or resources to devote to such a project, the G-MAP committee is designing a multi-tiered approach that will allow cities to match their needs with the appropriate levels of GIS service. At the same time, the information at all levels will be standardized to provide uniform style and content to enhance use, city to city.

Geographic information that is collected will be available via a custom web-mapping application and a Windows server on a password-protected page of the KMEA Web site, with backup data stored at KMEA and Midland. Cities who choose to make the software and hardware investment can also have data stored locally on dedicated desktop computers.

“Some of the larger cities may choose to license their own software, purchase dedicated computers and perform their own data updates, which they will then upload to the KMEA server,” explained Diann Burress, KMEA Director of Member Services. “Smaller cities with fewer resources may decide to access their information only through the KMEA Web site. Those cities will collect data and updates on handheld devices we will provide and send it to KMEA, where specially trained staff will input and revise their maps on the server.”

The initial data collection phase is the most time-consuming, according to Steve, who said Midland takes aerial photographs, but also walks the locations in order to put exact points into the system. Then, cities provide the additional information they want to include. All this information is then entered into specialized software programs that organize the data for easy retrieval.

“I wasn't familiar with the quality of mapping available today for utilities,” Steve said. “You can get right down to street addresses and GPS location of poles, transformers and switch gears. You can even enter transformer voltages and wire sizes. To retrieve that information, you just click on a spot, and a window pops open to give you all the data you entered into the system.”

Steve explained that the cost of the G-MAP system each city chooses will be determined by the level of service they choose to provide and the amount of information they include. Once the logistics and levels of service for the project are finalized,

the G-MAP Committee will present the program to member cities, tentatively at the Agency's annual meeting in November.

Prior to that presentation, the committee hopes to implement beta sites at several cities to test the software and the process, according to Diann. Once the project is up and running, interested cities will contact KMEA for a situation assessment, which will explore the size and scope of the electric utility, as well as existing data and the resources available to implement the project. Once the assessment is completed, and level of service determined, the data collection phase begins, coordinated between the cities and Midland GIS Solutions.

At various stages in the process, Midland will offer customized training to city workers to acquaint them with GIS in general and to help them navigate their specific G-MAP applications to assure a smooth transition.

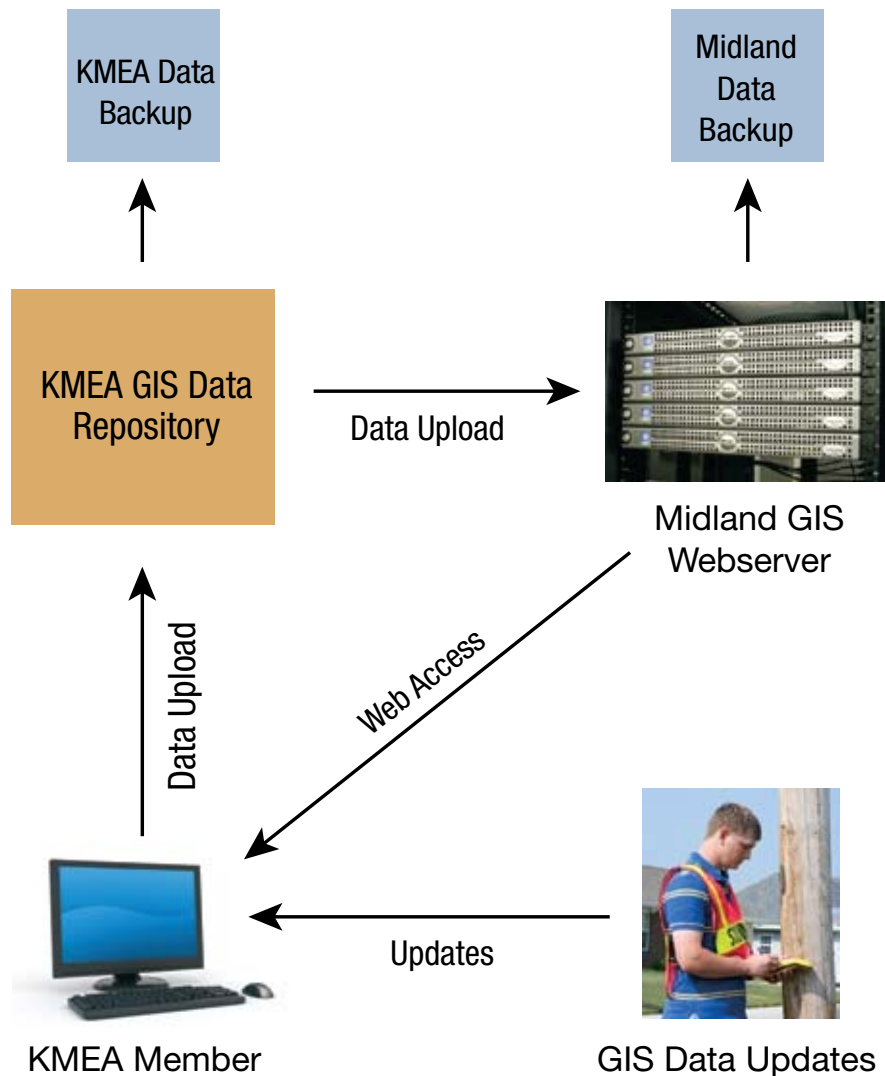
“The response from cities has been very positive so far,” Steve said. “I think it's going to help cities immensely with the Mutual Aid. It's really going to make things a lot easier for people who come from out of town to help out.”

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Steve McGie, Interconnected Operations Manager, Coffeyville

KMEA GIS Data Flow



“Larger cities can license the software, purchase dedicated computers and perform their own data updates; smaller cities can collect data and updates on handheld devices for KMEA to input.”

Diann Burress, KMEA Director of Member Services

KMEA G-MAP committee members

Duane Banks, Electric Utility Director, Russell
 Diann Burress, Director, Member Services, KMEA
 Donita Crutcher, City Clerk, Hoisington
 John Gorentz, Utility Superintendent, Arma
 Barry Finlayson, Utility Superintendent, Washington
 Dave Howard, City Manager, Pratt
 Kirk Larson, Operations Manager, Midland GIS
 Darlene Lister, Mapping Services Coordinator, Ottawa
 Randy Miller, Electric Distribution Superintendent, Hoisington
 Steve McGie, Interconnected Operations Manager, Coffeyville
 Russ Rambat, Public Works Director, Pratt
 Tim Taylor, Business Developer, Midland GIS

KMEA G-MAP partner: Midland GIS Solutions

KMEA has selected Midland GIS Solutions as its consulting partner for G-MAP (Mutual Aid GIS Mapping Program), which is designed to create a uniform, agency-wide mapping system. The objective is to enable member cities to use GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to plan and manage their electric systems, as well as respond during power emergencies.

Midland GIS Solutions, located in Maryville, Mo., is a full-service GIS development firm, which offers a wide range of GIS and GPS services to counties, municipalities, utility companies, and private organizations. Midland is one of the largest, most qualified and diverse companies of its type in the Midwest, having completed more than 35 county-wide conversions from paper parcel tax maps to GIS, and helping numerous utilities become more efficient in the process. The long list of counties they have served includes Buchanan, Warren and Phelps Counties in Missouri, Clarke and Des Moines Counties in Iowa and Doniphan County in Kansas. Midland has also served a number of municipalities such as Monett, Belton and Cameron, Mo.

Midland GIS staffers Kirk Larson, Operations Manager, and Tim Taylor, Business Developer, provide expertise and guidance on the 12-member KMEA G-MAP committee.