

# National Guard Retirees to Assist in Disasters

The Iowa National Guard has instituted a new program called the Initial County Assessment Contact (I-CAC). This program will use retired members of the Iowa Guard to help assess the situation once a disaster has struck in Iowa.

Working with Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the information provided by the retirees will be used to determine if, when, where, and how many Guard members should be deployed to the disaster area and what types of resources may be needed.

One concern of the Guard is the approximately 3,200 Iowa National Guard members deploying to Afghanistan, Iraq, and other areas by the end of 2010. Due to the large deployments, the number of members available to assist with disasters in Iowa will decrease and the need for efficiency in responding will be essential.

Retirees familiar with their local counties and cities are helpful since they can provide critical information about what detours should be taken if a bridge is out or specific directions to a location. That helps the Guard deliver needed assistance more quickly. The expectation is for each retiree to develop relationships with the local county emergency staff, as well as other agencies involved in disaster response.

Approximately 10 people will attend the first I-CAC training in July. At the September session, it is expected that an additional 50 to 100 volunteers will be trained.