



**Iowa Emergency Response and Homeland Security Unit  
uses TIER II MANAGER™ to Safeguard Hazmat Sites  
during Devastating 2008 Floods**

## CaseStudy



*Photos by Iowa DOT*

### Iowa Flood 2008

The Iowa Flood of 2008 was a natural disaster of enormous proportions and an event with an extremely low probability of occurrence. This natural disaster displaced more than 40,000 Iowans and inflicted estimated damages of over 1 billion dollars. The floods resulted from an extended period of heavy rains which started in January and continued through June.

A majority of the damages affected Iowa City and Cedar Rapids, which are the most densely populated areas in the state. Government officials anticipated that 27 levees along the Mississippi River may be at risk of overflowing. The events forced citizen evacuations during the peak of the flooding. Officials estimate that 3,900 homes in Cedar Rapids alone were damaged by the flooding.

There were many concerns about a breach for the Cedar Rapids Water Treatment Plant reducing the water volume to 25% of its normal intake. Citizens were asked to conserve the water for only drinking purposes in fear that the city would be without water for weeks.

Four thousand soldiers and airmen from the Iowa National Guard tried to shore up the levees using millions of sandbags.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Emergency Response and Homeland Security Unit used the TIER II MANAGER™ program to locate Hazardous Material facilities at risk of flooding. The users were able to search for specific extremely hazardous chemicals by location.

“TIER II MANAGER™ was easy to use and gave us quick access to the data which made things easier during the flood.”

-Kathleen Lee,  
Senior Environmental Specialist  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Emergency Response & Homeland Security Unit

The TIER II MANAGER™ is used year round by the DNR Emergency Response and Homeland Security Unit to meet SARA Title III, Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know mandate. The web-based program was used during the 2008 Floods to locate acute airborne chemicals and large petroleum sites. Once the DNR Emergency Response and Homeland Security Unit located the sites at risk, they were able to contact each plant contact stored in the system database to see if the facility had experienced a chemical release. “TIER II MANAGER™ was easy to use and gave us quick access to the data which made things easier during the flood,” said Kathleen Lee, Senior Environmental Specialist at DNR. Chemical sites were assisted by DNR and the EPA for technical assistance and permitting and waste management considerations. Luckily Iowa only encountered a few minor spills.

Governor Chet Culver was pleased to see thousands of State, County, and Municipal employees along with more than 50,000 Iowan volunteers come together during this time of need.



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