

## Make this tool work for you!

*Discuss the concept of an emergency mailbox with landowners in your county – it will help both of you be better prepared for a disaster in rural areas!*



# What is an emergency mailbox ?

An emergency mailbox is simply a regular mailbox designated to hold critical information for emergency first responders – including law enforcement officials, fire fighters and other emergency response personnel. This information comes from EDEN (Extension Disaster Education Network).

It is a good idea to visit with landowners in your county about the importance of having an emergency mailbox. It allows both the landowner, and you as an emergency management official, to be better prepared for a disaster in rural areas.

Encourage landowners to install a weatherproof emergency mailbox in an inconspicuous place near one of the outbuildings on the property. Preferably this location will be located away from toxins, flammables and explosives. It is a good idea to have the location of the mailbox entered into the computer database at your local 911 dispatch center. The mailbox should be clearly marked with the words “Emergency Information”.

Information such as phone lists, maps of the operation, list of building contents, current chemical inventory logs and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) should be included in the mailbox. This information will allow you to respond more quickly to a disaster on rural acreages and on the farm.

## Tips to help protect landowners in your county!

- **Crime and pollution insurance coverage.** Encourage landowners to visit with their insurance agents to ensure they are covered for items such as theft, vandalism, pesticide spills and/or terrorist attacks on the farm. Everything needs to be in writing to help protect the landowner. They should also ask if they can lower premiums by installing security measures on the farm – especially if they have high-value crops and/or animals.
- **County emergency address.** Addresses should be boldly displayed in three-inch reflective numerals on both sides of the mailbox to help emergency response personnel find the acreage or farm in case of emergency.
- **Pesticides in one location.** One way landowners can help you, as an emergency management official, is to store all of their pesticides in one location. This location should be clearly marked on the farm map to help you quickly find the inventory in case of emergency. This building should be secure against theft and acts of vandalism and terrorism.