

Jonathon Monken
Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 10, 2011

IEMA to Seek Input on State's Homeland Security Strategy through Town Hall Meetings

First Meeting Set for Nov. 21 at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville

SPRINGFIELD – Representatives from first responder agencies, the education community, private businesses, the public and other groups and organizations in southwestern Illinois will provide input into development of the state's new homeland security strategy during a town hall meeting Nov. 21 in Belleville. The meeting, which will be held from 1-4 p.m. at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville, is the first of eight meetings that will be held around the state over the next several months.

The town hall meetings are part of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency's (IEMA) 'Illinois Homeland Security Vision 2020,' a statewide, grass-roots initiative to engage Illinois' residents and organizations in the revision of the state's strategy for dealing with current and emerging threats and risks, as well as response to disasters. Input from the series of town hall meetings will be consolidated and presented in a final summit in Springfield in September 2012.

"The face of homeland security has changed since 9/11 and our strategy for ensuring the safety of people in Illinois must evolve to adequately address those changes," said IEMA Director Jonathon Monken. "We need to engage the whole community, including the public and private sectors as well as individual citizens, to craft a policy that will carry us through 2020 and beyond."

Vision 2020 is similar to the process the state of Illinois undertook in 2001, shortly after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. That process resulted in the development of a statewide homeland security program that is recognized as one of the best in the nation.

The Nov. 21 town hall meeting will be held in the Main Complex Garden Room at Southwestern Illinois College, 2500 Carlyle Avenue in Belleville. Anyone interested in participating is encouraged to register at <http://cpsj.uis.edu> or by call toll-free (877) 864-7427.

Other town hall meetings scheduled at this time include: Dec. 15 in Urbana; Jan. 11 in Effingham; and Feb. 2 in Springfield. Dates and times for the remaining four town hall meetings will be announced in the near future.