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News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **Ryan Nicholls Named Director of State Emergency Management Agency**

Ryan Nicholls, Director of the Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has been named Director of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), a division in the Department of Public Safety in Jefferson City. He will begin his new duties on March 25, 2013.

"Ryan Nicholls is the consummate professional and has served the citizens of Greene County with extraordinary leadership and integrity. We will miss him here, but our loss is an incredible gain for the citizens of Missouri," said Greene County Presiding Commissioner Jim Viebrock.

Nicholls has been at OEM for the past seven years. During that time, he directed response efforts for several major incidents including the crippling 2007 ice storm that struck Springfield and Greene County. He also served as part of the management team responding to the catastrophic May, 2011 Joplin tornado. Most recently, Nicholls spearheaded the Region D Incident Support Team on a 12-day deployment in response to Hurricane Sandy.

"Ryan and the team at Springfield-Greene County OEM have built a nationally recognized, world-class disaster planning and preparedness program in Springfield and Greene County," said Mayor Bob Stephens. "Because of this team's focus and attention to detail, I think we are among the best-prepared communities in the country."

In August, 2012, several federal, state, and local officials joined Nicholls cutting the ribbon at the new \$19.6 million dollar Greene County Public Safety Center. At that event, OEM received full accreditation from the Emergency Management Accreditation Program, achieving 100% compliance with all standards on the first field assessment.

"This is truly a bittersweet moment for me and my family. I am very humbled and honored to have been selected for this important position and, at the same time, sad to be leaving behind so many friends and especially my colleagues at OEM. This is a tremendous opportunity for me both personally and professionally – I am eager to begin this new journey," Nicholls said.

Nicholls has a Masters Degree from Oklahoma State University, a Bachelors Degree from Missouri State University, an Associates Degree from Ozarks Technical Community College, and an Associates Degree from Cox College of Nursing Sciences. He was awarded a Doctor of Humanity Letters from Cox College of Nursing; Doctor of Humanities from the National Defense Force Support Command, and Ozarks Technical Community College honored him with their Distinguished Alumni award.

He is a member of the International Association of Emergency Managers and the Missouri Emergency Preparedness Association. His civic involvement includes several board memberships as well as numerous volunteer efforts in the community. He and his wife, Angie, have six children.

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