Biography

ADMINISTRATOR
ED GLEASON

Wisconsin Emergency Management

Governor Jim Doyle reappointed Ed Gleason as administrator of Wisconsin Emergency Management in January 2003, a position held since October 25, 1999. He had previously served under Governors Thompson and McCallum. As administrator, he leads a team of professionals who are responsible for Wisconsin’s disaster preparation, response, recovery and mitigation efforts. During his tenure, he has managed four Presidential Disaster Declarations and one federally declared snow emergency. His team was put to test during the summer of 2001 when 32 counties in Wisconsin received federal disaster assistance following the highest flooding along the Mississippi River in 35 years and, as a result of severe spring storms that hit the state, including the devastating Siren tornado. These storms resulted in the second largest federal disaster declaration in the state’s history. Again, in 2002, Wisconsin felt the devastating effects of nature and received two Presidential Disaster Declarations to recover from the flooding in central Wisconsin and for the Ladysmith tornado.

In October 2001, Governor Scott McCallum appointed Gleason as co-chair of the Governor’s Task Force on Domestic Preparedness in response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks to ensure preparedness measures were in place to protect Wisconsin residents and property from possible attacks. The Task Force’s Final Report identified 31 recommendations to further strengthen Wisconsin’s preparedness levels. In March 2003, Governor Doyle named him to Wisconsin’s Homeland Security Council where he has continued his work in this vital area.

Gleason earned his bachelor’s degree in Biological Sciences from University at Albany, N.Y., and his Master’s of Business Administration from New York University.

He retired as commander of U.S. Coast Guard Group Milwaukee in 1999 after 21 years of commissioned service. As group commander, he directed operations on the western half of Lake Michigan from Chicago to northern Wisconsin. Prior to this assignment, he served as military assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, supporting emergency response operations to our national transportation system as well as working with the major airlines and the National Transportation Safety Board. His work laid the groundwork for the Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996 that strengthened the airline response to the families of aviation disasters.