



ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

July 2012

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

June 29 Derecho Storm

What a storm. What we experienced on June 29 was not a common occurrence in Fairfax County, according to an analysis from the National Weather Service. This storm tested all of us. You as individuals in your homes, many without power. Businesses. Utility companies. Nonprofits. Faith communities. And yes, the government. At the Tuesday, July 10 Board of Supervisors meeting, County Executive Ed Long presented a report about the storm, county government's response, issues with 9-1-1 and more. Both the report and PowerPoint presentation are available online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/reports/june-29-derecho/>. So what can you do? What kind of family or business "report" should you consider? What steps can you take for the next time? Prepare. As many of you experienced the unfortunate combination of no power and a major heat wave, we as one community need to take steps to ensure we're ready for the next storm, flood, terrorism act or whatever may come next. Here are a few things to consider:

- Are you going to the grocery store this week? Pick up some extra water for your family. Stock up on batteries. Get some other basic supplies so you are ready.
- Learn some key digital preparedness tips. Many of us learned how dependent we are on communications during this storm when it was difficult to access the Internet and other tools. Get prepared digitally.
- Please make plans for the most vulnerable in your family or neighborhood. If there are special medical or social needs, register with us so we can contact you directly after an incident.
- Please make plans for your pets. Try to think of places they can go, supplies they need and more. Pets are such an important part of many of our lives, but they need plans, too.
- There are many other ways to prepare and be ready for the next incident. We need you to be ready because we the government at any level (local, state or federal) may not be able to respond and help right away. The general idea is to be self sufficient for 72 hours.

You can also check out these resources to help plan:

- Ready NOVA Emergency Preparedness Planner (<http://readynova.org/>)
- Ready Virginia (<http://www.vaemergency.gov/readyvirginia>)

Reprinted from the Fairfax County emergency information blog: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog

Report Derecho Storm Damage Online with New Disaster Database

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has launched a new Disaster Damage Database reporting tool. The online tool is designed to allow county residents to report damage caused by emergencies like hurricanes, tropical storms, earthquakes, fires, snow or other disasters — even the derecho that struck Fairfax County and the region on Friday evening, June 29. Fairfax County may share the disaster damage reports with the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and/or the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to evaluate whether Fairfax County can be declared a major disaster area, on the state and/or federal level, and what kind of federal disaster assistance should be made available to county residents who have suffered losses. Emergency Management officials encourage residents to begin using this reporting tool by submitting any damage suffered from the June 29 weather event. However, OEM stresses that submission of disaster damages is not a requirement to apply for federal disaster assistance nor is it a promise that federal disaster assistance will be provided to cover damages from the derecho, or any other disaster event when the online tool is used. The online database is at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/disasterreport/. For more information about the Disaster Damage Database, emergency management or how you and your family can better prepare for emergencies, email OEM (oem@fairfaxcounty.gov) or phone 571-350-1000, TTY 711.

Virginia Recovers from Historic Derecho

Recovery efforts in Virginia continue after the June 29-30 derecho caused millions in damages and knocked out power to 1.2 million customers. High temperatures combined with the power outage created a dangerous situation. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner confirmed 13 storm related deaths, including some that were heat related. The Virginia Emergency Operations Center coordinated delivery of more than 74,000 gallons of water and 16 generators to support local government response efforts. Many local governments established cooling centers and at least nine emergency shelters were opened. Volunteer efforts included preparing more than 6,000 meals, donating water and providing equipment and generators. Impact to other states forced power companies to pull in assistance from places as far as the Gulf Coast and Canada.

Reprinted from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management email newsletter, "EM Update," July 11, 2012

Governor McDonnell Requests Federal Disaster Assistance for June 29-July 1 Storms

Request is for Public Assistance to Reimburse Local and State Agencies; Virginia Does Not Meet Criteria for Individual Assistance

Governor Bob McDonnell requested federal disaster assistance to reimburse local and state governments for their costs associated with responding to the widespread severe derecho wind storm that affected Virginia June 29-30 and the heavy thunderstorms with high winds and hail that occurred the evening of June 30 and the afternoon of July 1. "Tragically, we lost 15 lives as a result of the recent storms that impacted the Commonwealth. Many more Virginians suffered property damage and lost power for extended periods of time during a record heat wave. The historic derecho storm and the follow-up thunderstorms required extraordinary response and recovery efforts at the local and state levels," said McDonnell. "Our first responders, state agencies and private partners worked around the clock for an extended period of time during the storm and in its aftermath . . . Our Department of Emergency Management has now received post-storm assessments from local governments and, working hand-in-hand with FEMA Region III, has completed the preliminary damage assessments. We have determined that Virginia should meet all of the requirements for federal public assistance. Federal assistance is vitally important to help our localities recover significant costs associated with responding to the storms and keeping our citizens safe." McDonnell requested federal funds through FEMA's Public Assistance program to aid the counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Arlington, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Buckingham, Campbell, Carroll, Charlotte, Clarke, Craig, Culpeper, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Fauquier, Floyd, Fluvanna, Frederick, Giles, Greene, Halifax, Highland, Louisa, Lunenburg, Madison, Nelson, New Kent, Nottoway, Orange, Page, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Tazewell and Warren and the cities of Bedford, Charlottesville, Covington, Danville, Fairfax, Fredericksburg, Lexington, Lynchburg, Manassas Park, Martinsville, Radford, Roanoke, Salem, Staunton and Winchester. (**Note: Fairfax County did not meet the minimal uninsured damage requirements.**) If a federal disaster declaration is received to help local governments through the public assistance program, additional governments not included in this request can be added at a later time. Emergency management officials continue to compile information about storm damage that occurred throughout Virginia. Among the critical public facilities affected by the storms in Virginia were local communication systems, waterworks, transportation systems, medical and health facilities and electric utilities. A total of 47 jurisdictions declared local emergencies. Many public facilities had to operate on emergency power generators for extended periods of time. Also, eight public and private waterworks affecting more than 8,000 consumers were disrupted, and 15 waterworks implemented boil water notices. As many as 217 roads maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation were closed due to downed trees, power lines and debris. During storm response and recovery, more than 140 cooling centers and 15 shelters were established throughout the state. The June 29-July 1 storms occurred during an extended heat wave, contributing to 15 deaths and causing the third-highest level of power outages ever in Virginia, affecting an estimated 1.3 million customers.

<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/News/viewRelease.cfm?id=1346>

President Declares a Major Disaster for Commonwealth of Virginia

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced on Friday, July 27, that federal aid has been made available for Virginia to supplement the commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and straight-line winds during the period of June 29 to July 1, 2012. Federal funding is available to the commonwealth and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit

organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe storms and straight-line winds. Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures for all counties and independent cities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Donald L. Keldsen has been named Federal Coordinating Officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area. He said that additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the commonwealth and warranted by the results of further damage assessments.

<http://www.fema.gov/news-release/president-declares-major-disaster-commonwealth-virginia-1>

Deadline to Apply for SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans is Aug. 6

The U.S. Small Business Administration is reminding businesses in Virginia that working capital loans are still available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private non-profit organizations affected by the earthquake that occurred from Aug. 23 through Oct. 25, 2011. Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) up to \$2 million are available at 3 percent for private non-profit organizations of all sizes and 4 percent for small businesses, with terms up to 30 years. The loans are intended to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other expenses that could have been paid had the disaster not occurred. To be considered for this assistance, disaster survivors need to apply by the deadline. These EIDLs are available to small businesses and most private non-profit organizations in the following counties: Albemarle, Augusta, Buckingham, Caroline, Chesterfield, Culpeper, Cumberland, Essex, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Goochland, Greene, Hanover, Henrico, King George, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Powhatan, Rappahannock, Rockingham, Spotsylvania, Stafford and Westmoreland and the independent cities of Charlottesville and Fredericksburg.

<http://www.sba.gov/about-sba-services/7368/159951>

Subscribe for Emergency Information

Speaking of the emergency information blog (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog), did you know that you can get every post (article) via email or RSS? Just go to the site and enter your email address in the “subscribe by email” box and you’ll receive an email with the latest news/information. Note: these emails will come from wordpress.com and not fairfaxcounty.gov.

Deadline for SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans in Virginia is Aug. 14

The U.S. Small Business Administration is reminding businesses in Virginia that working capital loans are still available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives and most private non-profit organizations affected by Tropical Storm Lee that occurred on Sept. 8-9, 2011. “Businesses that suffered economic losses as a result of the disaster and want to apply for low-interest loans from the SBA are urged to do so before the Aug. 14, deadline,” said Frank Skaggs, director of SBA Field Operations Center East. Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) up to \$2 million are available at 3 percent for private non-profit organizations of all sizes and 4 percent for small businesses, with terms up to 30 years. The loans are intended to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other expenses that could have been paid had the disaster not occurred. To be considered for this assistance, disaster survivors need to apply by the deadline. These EIDLs are available to small businesses and most private nonprofit organizations in the following: Fairfax and Prince William counties; the neighboring counties of Arlington, Fauquier, Loudoun and Stafford; the independent cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park in Virginia; Charles, Montgomery and Prince George’s counties in Maryland; and the District of Columbia. To obtain disaster loan information and application forms, call the SBA’s Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing) or send an email to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Loan application forms can also be downloaded from www.sba.gov. Completed applications should be mailed to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155. Applicants may also apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via SBA’s secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. The deadline for economic injury applications is August 14, 2012.



Ready Virginia Survey

One of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's key objectives is to increase the public's awareness of threats and their readiness to react to emergencies and disasters. To help assess progress toward that objective, VDEM conducts a public survey every other year. To participate in the online survey, go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2012ReadyVirginia>. Residents are asked to share the survey link so that a true measurement can be captured. The survey will run through July 31.

First Ever ShakeOut in the SouthEast

In just three months, on Thursday, Oct. 18, at 10:18 a.m., individuals and communities throughout five states and the District of Columbia will practice "Drop, Cover, and Hold On," the recommended response in the event of an earthquake. The Great SouthEast ShakeOut earthquake drill comes on the heels of the one year anniversary of the Aug. 23, 2011, 5.8 magnitude earthquake which struck in Mineral, Va. and was felt across more than a dozen U.S. states and in several Canadian provinces. Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia are encouraging their schools, businesses, organizations, government agencies, communities and households to participate in this inaugural earthquake drill. More than 1 million people are expected to participate in the Great SouthEast ShakeOut. This drill is being supported by the Central U.S. Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), FEMA and many other local, state, federal and volunteer partners. CUSEC coordinated a similar drill across nine Central U.S. states, with more than 2.4 million participants in February. The Great SouthEast ShakeOut is your chance to practice what to do during an earthquake and to learn how to be better prepared for a quick recovery. To get started, visit www.shakeout.org/southeast and pledge to have your family, school, business or organization participate in the drill. Once registered, you will receive information on how to plan your drill and how to engage your community to become better prepared for earthquakes and disasters. Prepare to ShakeOut today!

Help Handling Natural Disasters

Natural disasters can come upon our community in the blink of an eye and suddenly your family is faced with a whole new list of challenges that you'd never thought about before. While preparing ahead for such disasters can speed up recovery for your family, some circumstances require help from other people and organizations. The federal government is one place to turn to in times of need, and USA.gov (<http://www.usa.gov>) can help you find all the information you need. On DisasterAssistance.gov (<http://www.disasterassistance.gov/>) you can fill out a questionnaire to find out which disaster relief program would best fit your needs or search programs based on federal agency. You can apply immediately for assistance and later check the status of your application. The site also provides news feeds on specific current disasters and what FEMA and other agencies are doing to help. If you own a business, and need disaster relief assistance, you may qualify for loans from the Small Business Administration. Even if you don't own a business, but you live in a declared disaster area, you may qualify. As a homeowner, renter and/or personal property owner, or military reservist activated for a declared disaster, you may apply to the SBA for a loan to help you recover from a disaster.



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www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov

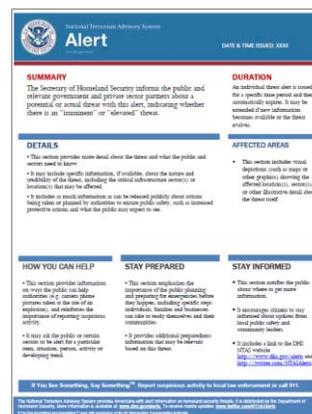
PLANNING / PREPAREDNESS

National Terrorism Advisory System

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) is a robust terrorism advisory system that provides timely information to the public about credible terrorist threats and replaces the former color-coded alert system. Under NTAS, DHS will coordinate with other federal entities to issue detailed alerts to the public when the federal government receives information about a credible terrorist threat. NTAS alerts provide a concise summary of the potential threat including geographic region, mode of transportation, or critical infrastructure potentially affected by the threat, actions being taken to ensure public safety, as well as recommended steps that individuals, communities, business and governments can take to help prevent, mitigate or respond to a threat. NTAS Alerts will include a clear statement on the nature of the threat, which will be defined in one of two ways:

- "Elevated Threat": Warns of a credible terrorist threat against the United States.
- "Imminent Threat": Warns of a credible, specific, and impending terrorist threat against the United States.

Depending on the nature of the threat, alerts may be sent to law enforcement, distributed to affected areas of the private sector, or issued more broadly to the public through both official and social media channels – including a designated DHS webpage (www.dhs.gov/alerts), Facebook and via Twitter @NTASAlerts. NTAS alerts and posters will also be displayed in places such as transit hubs, airports and government buildings. NTAS threat alerts will be issued for a specific time period and will automatically expire. Alerts may be extended if new information becomes available or as a specific threat evolves. For more information on the National Terrorism Advisory System or to receive NTAS alerts, visit www.dhs.gov/alerts.



Many Americans Not Prepared for Disasters: Poll

A new national survey shows that Americans have not learned their lessons from recent disasters. The Adelphi University Center for Health Innovation poll revealed that 44 percent of U.S. adults don't have first-aid kits and 48 percent lack emergency supplies for use in the event of catastrophes. The researchers said that people have a responsibility to boost their emergency preparedness, to make difficult or life-threatening situations safer. The findings suggested that Americans have a false sense of security. Although the researchers found that more than 53 percent of Americans do not have a three-day supply of nonperishable food and water in their home, those surveyed believe they can survive in their homes for an average of 16 days in the event of a disaster.

http://www.philly.com/philly/health/HealthDay666756_20120720_Many_Americans_Not_Prepared_for_Disasters_Poll.html

DNS Malware: Is Your Computer Infected?

DNS - Domain Name System - is an Internet service that converts user-friendly domain names, such as www.fbi.gov, into numerical addresses that allow computers to talk to each other. Without DNS and the DNS servers operated by Internet service providers, computers would not be able to browse websites, send e-mail, or connect to any Internet services. Criminals have infected millions of computers around the world with malware called CNSChanger which allows them to control DNS servers. As a result, the cyber thieves have forced unsuspecting users to visit fraudulent websites and made their computers vulnerable to other kinds of malicious software. Check your computer's DNS settings at <https://forms.fbi.gov/check-to-see-if-your-computer-is-using-rogue-DNS>. If you're a victim of the DNSChanger malware, you can register with the FBI at <https://forms.fbi.gov/dnsmalware>.

Learn about DNSChanger malware and how it can affect your computer:

http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2011/november/malware_110911/DNS-changer-malware.pdf (PDF).

Make an Emergency Supply Kit

Recent derecho storms remind us that we should be ready for emergencies. Nearly everyone in Virginia recently

experienced the historic derecho severe storms and extended power outages. And it's hurricane season. Do you have an emergency supply kit? Every family needs supplies on hand for these situations. Start your emergency kit with these essential items:

- Three days' of food that won't spoil, such as canned goods and packaged foods
- Three days' of water, one gallon per person per day
- A hand crank and/or battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- A written family emergency plan

Once you gather these basics, put them in waterproof containers that you can carry or roll in case you need to leave your home quickly. Old suitcases or backpacks also can hold supplies. Other items are useful in an emergency supply kit, such as flashlights with extra batteries (not candles), a first aid kit, a list of



prescriptions and doctors and a supply of medications, food and water for your pets, and special items for babies, disabled or older family members. Think that's too much to do? At least get started with the essential items, and then add to your kit. For a fill-in or downloadable family emergency plan worksheet, go to www.ReadyVirginia.gov and click on "Make a Plan" or visit www.ReadyNoVa.org. Emergency preparedness is everyone's responsibility. You should be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least the first 72 hours (3 days) and everyone should have a family emergency plan. Visit www.ReadyVirginia.gov and www.ListoVirginia.gov to find out more about how to prepare for hurricane season.

Make a Hurricane Continuity Plan for Your Business

The six-month hurricane season typically peaks between August and October. Now is a good time to put a disaster preparedness plan in place to protect your employees and your business. There are a few things you can do, at no cost, to jump-start your business continuity plan:

- Determine your greatest risk potential.
- Calculate the cost of business interruptions for one week, one month and six months.
- Review your insurance coverage.
- Build a crisis communications plan so you'll be able to make sure your employees, customers, vendors, and contractors know what's going on.
- Consider a Telework Policy.

Download the slides from a recent "Protect Your Business This Hurricane Season" webinar

(http://www2.agilityrecovery.com/assets/slides/SBA_Hurricane_Prep_052912.pdf). You can also view the recorded Webinar (<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/456830896>) at any time.

<http://www.sba.gov/community/blogs/5-tips-starting-your-hurricane-season-business-continuity-plan#>

Hurricane Preparedness: Prepare Your Business in the Event of a Hurricane

When your area is issued a hurricane watch or warning, as a business leader, you often only have a very small amount of time in which to act quickly to protect your employees and your business. Because you do not have long to evacuate your personnel or to protect your company, having and executing a hurricane preparedness plan is imperative to safely recovering from this type of crisis. However, there are numerous aspects to keep in mind when creating, implementing and executing an emergency notification plan in the event of a hurricane – all of which must be considered in order to improve safety levels and communication.

<http://security.itbusinessnet.com/article/Hurricane-Preparedness:-Prepare-Your-Business-in-the-Event-of-a-Hurricane-2101932>

Emergency Preparedness for Federal Employees

FEMA's new Independent Study course IS-450: Emergency Preparedness for Federal Employees, introduces federal



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employees to the basics of personal emergency preparedness – echoing the guidance on Ready.gov, but presenting this information in an online course format and tying it to responsibilities for federal employees. This course is intended for employees who live and work outside the National Capital Region. For federal employees inside the NCR, FEMA is developing a separate course, IS-450.NC: Emergency Preparedness for Federal Employees in the National Capital Region.

<http://training.fema.gov/IS/>

Flat Stanley and Flat Stella

Children and their parents can build their own FEMA Flat Stanley or Flat Stella, and then share with other children and classrooms the steps they have taken to support preparedness throughout their homes, schools and communities. Here are different ways young people can customize and share their “Flats” and what they have learned:

- Flat Stanley app (available on iTunes).
- Flat Stanley website.
- On Twitter using the hashtag #FlatStanley and of course, feel free to post content on other social media channels, too.

This project is a collaboration between the Ready Campaign and Flatter World; the Flat Stanley Project will help educate school-aged children on the need to be prepared for emergencies and disasters, as well as what they can do to help their families and loved ones to build more resilient households. According to Flatter World, 15 percent of all schools in the U.S. use Flat Stanley, and integrate their adventures into classroom lesson plans, so we look forward to hearing from teachers.

<http://www.ready.gov/flatstanley>



DHS Active Shooter Resources

The DHS National Protection and Programs Directorate’s Office of Infrastructure Protection leads the Department’s efforts to strengthen public and private sector operations by securing critical infrastructure and assisting owners and operators to prepare for threats from all hazards, including events like an active shooter. DHS developed an online Independent Study Course titled Active Shooter: What You Can Do. This course provides guidance on how to prevent and prepare for a potential active shooter incident. DHS has also developed a booklet and poster to assist facilities owners and operators to prepare for and respond to an active shooter incident. In September 2011, DHS hosted the Active Shooter Awareness Virtual Roundtable, a Webinar designed to help private and public sector partners understand the importance of developing an emergency response plan and the need to train employees on how to respond if confronted with an active shooter. The Department and its partners host monthly day-long workshop events, including presentations from law enforcement and behavioral subject matter experts, guest speakers, and facilitated discussions. Since the program’s inception in December 2008, nearly 4,000 people have participated in DHS co-sponsored active shooter workshops. Thirty workshops have been scheduled for Fiscal Year 2012 in various cities across the country.

http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/gc_1259859901230.shtm

<http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS907.asp>

Get Emergency Alerts

Fairfax County’s Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN) delivers important emergency alerts, notifications and updates during a major crisis or emergency, in addition to day-to-day notices about weather and traffic. Messages will be delivered to all devices you register:

- email account
- cell phone
- text pager
- satellite phone
- wireless device

The individual registration should be used to sign up for alerts for



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one person, or for multiple members of one household. Multiple devices and e-mail addresses can be included during the registration process. The business registration is specifically designed to allow one business contact to add up to five additional employees (for example, security managers or others involved in that businesses emergency response program). The registrant is the main contact for that business and any alerts he/she signs up for will also be received by the other people registered on the system. Major emergency announcements will be sent to both types of users – individual and businesses – however, targeted messages may be sent to members of the business community based on their type of business, location, etc. Sign up at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean.

MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Power Companies May Be Missing Info from DHS to Protect Assets from Storms

While more than a million people struggled through a loss of power in the Washington, D.C., region in the past week because of a devastating derecho, DHS also has been struggling to share data that could potentially prevent such damaging widespread power outages. Under the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, DHS asks companies that own or operate critical infrastructure to participate in voluntary surveys to determine where weaknesses may exist within those systems, which range from power plants to water facilities to transportation centers and more.

<http://www.hstoday.us/single-article/power-companies-may-be-missing-info-from-dhs-to-protect-assets-from-storms/cf2154f5e95845104a7e48f1857c4167.html>

White House Creates New Critical Comms Management Committee

In an executive order issued on July 6, the White House established a new executive committee aimed at keeping critical communications systems running during a national emergency. The order establishes a high-level committee, with members from DHS, the Department of Defense, State Department, Commerce Department, Federal Communications Commission, General Services Administration and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), who will examine methods to keep government communications operating during times of national crises. Secretaries of DHS and DoD will co-chair the committee. DHS is tasked with developing governmental continuity capabilities and DoD developing military continuity.

<http://www.gsnmagazine.com/node/26716?c=communications>

Homeland Security's BioWatch Still Flawed

The United States' high-tech system for detecting biological attacks has flaws, and it remains to be seen whether upgrades will solve them, experts say. The Department of Homeland Security's BioWatch system of air samplers has experienced numerous false alarms since first being deployed in 2003, the Los Angeles Times reported Saturday. The newspaper said its investigation found the system not only has produced dozens of false alarms in Los Angeles, Detroit, St. Louis, Phoenix, San Diego and the San Francisco area, but that confidential government results and computer modeling determined BioWatch can't be depended upon to detect a real attack. The Times said state and local health officials have exhibited no confidence in BioWatch, having never ordered evacuations or distributed emergency medications when a positive reading has occurred.

http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2012/07/07/Homeland-Securitys-BioWatch-still-flawed/UPI-63691341689883/

USGS to Map Faults in Virginia that Caused 2011 Quake

Scientists with the U.S. Geological Survey plan to map underground faults in Virginia that caused last year's earthquake. Surveys will be conducted in Louisa, Goochland, and Fluvanna counties. The mapping will be done with a low-flying airplane carrying instruments that will measure gravitational and magnetic pull at different sites. The agency says it's the first time that airborne gravity will be used as a tool in the U.S. to map a seismic hazard. The 5.8-magnitude earthquake on Aug. 23, 2011, was centered in Louisa County.

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/V/VA_EARTHQUAKE_MAPPING_VAOL-

Obama Assigns New Responsibilities for Keeping Government Connected in Case of Emergency

In an executive order issued Friday [July 6], President Barack Obama laid out an all-hands-on-deck approach to

developing policies for preserving government communications in the event of a national disaster or emergency. “The federal government must have the ability to communicate at all times and under all circumstances to carry out its most critical and time sensitive missions,” Obama said in the order, which calls for “survivable, resilient, enduring and effective communications” during emergencies. Obama's order creates the Executive Committee on National Security and Emergency Preparedness Communications — or NS/EP communications — to be staffed with high-ranking officials from eight agencies and departments.

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/473/2933910/Board-to-keep-govt-connected-during-emergencies>

FEMA Can't Say Whether Grants Actually Improve State Readiness

The Federal Emergency Management Agency can't say whether or not \$18 billion distributed to state agencies by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the Homeland Security Grants Program actually improved their ability to prevent or recover from emergencies, say auditors. In a report (http://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2012/OIG_12-92_Jun12.pdf) posted online July 9, auditors hired by the Homeland Security Department office of inspector general looked at FEMA practices for grant money distributed to states from fiscal year 2002 through 2011. Key to their oversight are state projects that take more than one year to accomplish, since the agency does require states to assess current capabilities and develop plans based on gaps in those capabilities as part of the grant application process. At the onset of giving a grant, in other words, FEMA knows what states want to accomplish with the grants. Auditors assume that FEMA would want to know more than just plans when it comes to dispersing grants for multi-year projects, however--but it turns out that FEMA has been content with receiving the plans without knowing whether that state accomplished with last year's money what they set out to do. As auditors put it, “FEMA did not require state to report accomplishments or capability enhancements achieved from HSGP funds, or provide progress in achieving milestones in the annual applications for HSGP funds.” Neither did FEMA use other means to determine states' progress, auditors add.

<http://www.fiercehomelandsecurity.com/story/fema-cant-say-whether-grants-actually-improve-state-readiness/2012-07-12>

Congressmen Call on FCC to Prevent Future 9-1-1 Failures

Northern Virginia's three congressmen called on the Federal Communications Commission on Thursday, July 12, to take action that will prevent future outages to the region's 9-1-1 systems. In a letter to FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski, U.S. Representatives Jim Moran, Gerry Connolly and Frank Wolf asked that the commission dust off a post-Hurricane Katrina regulation that would have required all telecommunications companies to provide at least eight hours of backup power for all cell phone towers. The regulation was subsequently struck down on a technicality related to how the commission handled public comments, according to a news release. Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Sharon Bulova has called for a Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments task force to investigate the failure of the 9-1-1 systems. The Prince William Board of County Supervisors has called for a similar investigation. Verizon is conducting its own internal investigation.

<http://9-1-1.com/wordpress/2012/07/13/congressmen-call-on-fcc-to-prevent-future-911-failures/>

New Ways to Tap Old Data Boost Hurricane Forecast Accuracy

Despite advances in weather prediction technology, meteorologists must still qualify any hurricane forecasts with a “cone of uncertainty,” which depicts just how far the center of a storm might deviate from its projected track. This year's hurricane season in the Atlantic Ocean, which began June 1, is expected to be less active than those recent years, but with season's peak less than a month away researchers are exploring new data-driven approaches to better warn those potentially in the path of approaching storms.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=hurricane-forecast-accuracy>

55 Percent Of Americans Believe That The Government Will Take Care Of Them If Disaster Strikes

If a major emergency happened in the United States, do you have faith that the government would take care of you? Amazingly, even after all of the examples to the contrary that we have seen in recent years, a solid majority of all Americans actually believe that the government will be there for them when things hit the fan. According to a new survey conducted by the Adelphi University Center for Health Innovation, 55 percent of Americans believe that the authorities will come to their rescue when disaster strikes. Sadly, most Americans still view the government as a

“nanny state” that has both the capability and the willingness to take care of them from the cradle to the grave. Most Americans still have faith that the government will come through for them when they need it the most.

<http://www.infowars.com/55-percent-of-americans-believe-that-the-government-will-take-care-of-them-if-disaster-strikes/>

BP Missed the Big Hazard Issues in Spill

BP and the drilling contractor that operated the ill-fated Deepwater Horizon were so focused on worker safety they didn't do enough to prevent major hazards, such as the 2010 rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico that killed 11 people, federal investigators said on Tuesday, July 24. The panel listed a litany of problems large and small they had already uncovered even though it has not received all of the records from Transocean, the drilling contractor that has challenged the board's right to investigate the offshore incident.

Among the panel's findings:

- BP and Transocean's "bridging document," designed to align safety procedures between the companies, was generic and addressed only six safety issues, but none of them dealt with major issues.
- The companies didn't have key process limits or controls for safe drilling.
- There were no written instructions for how to conduct a crucial test at the end of the cementing process, one that ultimately was misinterpreted by the crew after it was conducted several times, each time differently.
- Similar concerns about too narrow a focus on personal safety were raised after an explosion in 2005 at BP's Texas City refinery that killed 15 people, but few of the panel's recommendations were implemented on the offshore rig.

<http://www.nbc12.com/story/19094830/board-bp-missed-the-important-safety-issues>

FLU

WHO Offers Standards to Improve Global Flu Surveillance

Largely as a result of gaps in global influenza surveillance that were exposed during the 2009 pandemic, the World Health Organization (WHO) has released a set of standards designed to improve the collection and use of flu data around the world. Historically, flu surveillance has focused chiefly on virologic monitoring and collecting specimens to guide selection of strains for vaccines, the WHO says. In contrast, the new standards focus mainly on the collection, reporting, and analysis of epidemiologic data on seasonal flu. The WHO recently posted the 68-page draft document, titled WHO Interim Global Epidemiologic Surveillance Standards for Influenza, on its website. It is inviting comments on the guidelines until Oct 31, after which they will be revised and published in final form. The report says recent years have brought a growing awareness of the need to gather more epidemiologic data to complement the virologic data collected by the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System through its 130-plus national influenza centers. The 2009 pandemic revealed specific surveillance deficiencies that hindered the assessment and monitoring of the event. In particular, it says:

- The lack of surveillance for severe disease in most countries and the resulting absence of historical data limited governments' ability to gauge the pandemic's severity.
- The lack of an existing international mechanism for sharing epidemiologic data created obstacles to understanding global patterns of transmission and disease.
- Varied approaches to data collection and outbreak investigations early in the pandemic produced findings that were often incompletely understood outside their local context.

During the 2009 pandemic, the WHO was accused of exaggerating the severity of the situation. Critics mainly in Europe argued that pharmaceutical companies looking to profit from the sale of antivirals and vaccines unduly influenced the agency to declare the outbreak a pandemic. That controversy is not specifically mentioned in the new report, however.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/jul1912surveil.html>

Study: H1N1 Flu in Pigs and People at Ohio County Fair Identical

The discovery of identical triple-reassortant H1N1 influenza in pigs and humans at a county fair in Ohio in August 2007 illustrated the importance of coordinating public health and animal health disease investigations, says a report released in "Zoonoses and Public." Clinical signs of a flu-like illness were seen in most of more than 200 pigs within 80 hours of their arrival at the fair; these included anorexia, fever, lethargy, and a "barking" cough. The pig barns were temporarily closed to the public and the animals were treated with antibiotics. Five days after the pigs' arrival at the fair, respiratory symptoms in several exhibitors were reported. Nasal swabs and sera were collected from 10 randomly selected pigs and two ill people and analyzed. The viruses isolated from the animals and the people – A/SwOH/511445/2007, A/Ohio/01/20007, and A/Ohio/02/2007 – were genetically identical and were similar to H1N1 swine flu viruses currently found in US swine. Serologic testing suggested that the pigs had been exposed to swine flu virus by natural pathways or vaccination before coming to the fair. This investigation is described as one of the first documented instances in which direct comparison was possible between samples from infected humans and animals.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1863-2378.2012.01508.x/abstract>

CDC Estimate of Global H1N1 Pandemic Deaths: 284,000

Working with admittedly sparse data, a research team led by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has estimated the global death toll from the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic at more than 284,000, about 15 times the number of laboratory-confirmed cases. The World Health Organization (WHO) has put the number of deaths from confirmed 2009 H1N1 flu at a minimum of 18,449, but that number is regarded as well below the true total, mainly because many people who die of flu-related causes are not tested for the disease. The CDC-led team, which included researchers from several other countries, based its estimates on H1N1 case data from 12 countries and case-fatality ratios (CFRs) reported from five countries. Their report was published online yesterday in the *Lancet Infectious Diseases*. The researchers estimate that the pandemic virus caused 201,200 respiratory deaths and another 83,300 deaths from cardiovascular disease associated with H1N1 infections. They also calculate that Africa and Southeast Asia, which have 38 percent of the world's population, accounted for a disproportionate 51 percent of the deaths. The team estimated that 80 percent of those who died were younger than 65, which is in accord with previous observations that the pandemic H1N1 burden fell heavily on younger people, unlike the pattern for seasonal flu.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/jun2712deaths.html>

Benefits and Risks of Influenza Research: Lessons Learned

Given the yearly challenge of seasonal influenza and the potential catastrophic consequences of future pandemics, the need for intensive basic and clinical influenza research is unquestionable. Although the fruits of decades of research have enabled dramatic improvements in our ability to prevent and treat influenza, many fundamental questions remain, including those related to the complex factors associated with host switching and transmission of influenza viruses. Recent public concern over two H5N1 influenza manuscripts that studied the transmissibility of influenza viruses has triggered intense discussion on dual-use research and the way forward.

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/336/6088/1522.full>

Influenza: Options to Improve Pandemic Preparation

Every year, seasonal influenza causes several hundred million cases and 250,000 to 500,000 deaths, of which 90 million cases and 28,000 to 111,500 deaths occur in children. Pandemic influenza strikes periodically, infecting billions of people and potentially causing millions of deaths. Recently, two studies showing that, in the laboratory, pathogenic H5N1 influenza strains can evolve to be transmissible in ferrets divided the scientific community between those saying that the studies should not have been done and/or should not be published in their entirety and those saying that the studies are useful and should be published in their entirety. Because influenza in ferrets so closely models the disease in humans, the findings of H5N1 transmissibility between ferrets suggest that transmission of such strains between humans also could occur. The controversy continues, and it is evident that the studies have reminded us that a deadly H5N1 pandemic is not impossible. Therefore, it is important to discuss what options are available and whether we are ready to invest to reduce or eliminate the risk.

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/336/6088/1531.full>

Brazil Registers 221 H1N1 Flu Deaths in 2012

The number of deaths caused by the H1N1 flu in Brazil this year rose to 221, according to an official report released this month. Most of the deaths occurred in three states of the southern region – Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Parana, said the Brazilian Health Ministry in the report. It said that there was a reduction in the number of deaths in recent weeks, which indicated that the peak of the disease had already passed. The government reaffirmed that Brazil's hospitals had been supplied with sufficient amounts of Tamiflu, a drug used to treat the H1N1 flu. In addition, the country had launched a large vaccination campaign, which ended in June, targeting more fragile groups, such as pregnant women, elders, children aged six months to two years, and patients with chronic diseases. The death toll registered in 2012 in Brazil represents about 10 percent of the death tally registered in 2009, when 2,060 people died of the disease.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/health/2012-07/27/c_131742804.htm

Experts Condemn Plans to Lift Ban on Research Into Deadly H5N1 Birdflu Virus

Plans to lift a voluntary ban on research into the deadly H5N1 birdflu virus have been denounced by leading scientists who are appalled that the work has already led to flu strains that are potentially infectious between humans. Flu researchers announced the moratorium last January after growing concerns about two experiments funded by the US Government where scientists deliberately mutated H5N1 birdflu to see whether it could be transmitted between ferrets, a standard animal substitute for flu in humans. The moratorium on deliberately creating highly infectious strains of H5N1 was supposed to last 60 days but has continued for six months. This weekend, influenza scientists will meet in New York in the hope of lifting the ban and allowing the work to continue. However, leading experts contacted by "The Independent" said that lifting the moratorium would be wrong given that a highly-transmissible form of H5N1 birdflu – which is known to be extremely lethal to humans – could escape from a research laboratory to cause a deadly flu pandemic.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/experts-condemn-plans-to-lift-ban-on-research-into-deadly-h5n1-birdflu-virus-7982081.html>

Fairfax County Flu Preparedness

Be sure to visit the county's flu Web page for information on upcoming events and other preparedness news.

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/flu>

TRAININGS / EXERCISES / CONFERENCES

Public/Private Situational Awareness Workshop

Aug. 16; McLean, Va.

The All-Hazards Consortium, the Department of Homeland Security Science and the Technology Directorate's Office of First Responder Programs, and MITRE will co-host a multi-state and regional workshop focused on situational awareness and information sharing between public and private sectors during natural and man-made disasters. The workshop will develop recommendations from participants on a "suite of standards and approaches" that support a framework and path forward for the integration of the various situational awareness platforms in order to better support collaborative decision making in both the public and private sectors during disasters

www.ahcusa.org

APCO International 78th Annual Conference and Expo

Aug. 19-22; Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, MN

It's the public safety communications industry's biggest event of the year.

<http://www.apco2012.org/>

IAEM Annual Conference

Oct. 26-Nov. 1; Orlando, Fla.

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) will host the annual IAEM Conference, Oct. 26-Nov. 1, in Orlando, Fla. The theme of this year's conference is "Resilience."

<http://www.iaem.com/>

2013 Mid-Atlantic Expo and Symposium

Feb. 21-24, 2013; Virginia Beach, Va.

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association is calling for presenters for its 2013 Mid-Atlantic Expo and Symposium Feb. 21-24, 2013, at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. Presentation subject matter can include, but is not limited to strategy and tactics; EMS, ICS, leadership; management; safety and health; new initiatives/concepts/trends; case studies; etc.

http://www.vfca.us/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=92&Itemid=108

National Capital Region Homeland Security Events

http://www.mwcog.org/committee/committee/events_homeland.asp?COMMITTEE_ID=134

Virginia Emergency Management Courses

<http://www.vaemergency.com>

FEMA Independent Study Courses

<http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/>

American Red Cross Disaster Services Training

http://www.redcrossnca.org/Online/disaster_registration.php

LINKS

Fairfax County Blogs and Web Resources

- Fairfax County Emergency Information Blog – <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog>
- Fairfax County CERT - <http://fairfaxcountycert.blogspot.com/>
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Web Page - www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Blog - <http://citizencorps.blogspot.com/>
- Virginia Citizen Corps - <http://www.vaemergency.com/citcorps/index.cfm>

DHS Science & Technology Directorate Newsletter

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science & Technology Directorate has a free newsletter, "S&T Snapshots," featuring stories about current research projects and opportunities with laboratories, universities, government agencies, and the private sector. The newsletter is produced monthly by the DHS Science and Technology Directorate in partnership with the Homeland Security Institute, a Studies and Analysis Federally Funded Research and Development Center.

<http://www.homelandsecurity.org/snapshots/>

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report (OSIR)

The Department of Homeland Security provides a Web-based "Daily OSIR," which is posted on the DHS public Web site. Accessing the report via the Web enables readers to retrieve the current Daily Report as well as 10 days of archived DHS Daily Reports. Once you arrive at the Web page you will find the most recent Daily OSIR at the top of the page, under the title "Current Report." This report is posted each morning, except for weekends and holidays.

Simply click on the title “DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report.” This will launch the current days report in PDF format. You can submit content comments or make suggestions by contacting the DHS Daily Report Team by telephone at 202-312-3421 or by e-mail at NICCRports@dhs.gov. You can access the Daily OSIR at: http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/editorial_0542.shtm.

Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Web Page

The county’s emergency information page features easy navigation and a clean look so that residents can easily find emergency information.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/

Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Line

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/infoline.htm

Emergency Management Magazine

<http://www.govtech.com/em/toc.php>

FEMA Private Sector

<http://www.fema.gov/privatesector/>



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To Unsubscribe:

E-mail publicaffairs@fairfaxcounty.gov with “Remove from ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update” in the subject line and you will be immediately removed from the distribution list.

In accordance with NIMS – the National Incident Management System – the Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan states that Emergency Support Function 15 (External Affairs) is led by the Office of Public Affairs. This ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update is part of the county’s outreach efforts for our business and nonprofit partners as a way to provide information about the county’s ESF 15, Homeland Security and emergency management.

Please feel free to forward this ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update to other contacts you have inside or outside your organization. Should someone you know like to be added to our distribution list, have them send an e-mail to jim.person@fairfaxcounty.gov and ask to be subscribed to the ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update.

If you have any suggestions on how to improve this update or other communications between Fairfax County and the business/nonprofit community, please contact Merni Fitzgerald, Director of the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs, at 703-324-3187, TTY 711, or by e-mail at merni.fitzgerald@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update is designed to provide information about Emergency Support Function 15 (External Affairs) along with news articles and informational updates relating to Homeland Security and emergency management to ESF 15 partners. Inclusion of any resource, information or Web link is not an endorsement of the product, service or organization. The ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update is produced by Fairfax County’s Office of Public Affairs – the lead agency for ESF 15.