



ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

April 2009

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

H1N1 (Swine Influenza A) Virus

The H1N1 flu outbreak, also known as swine flu, continues to grow in the United States and internationally—but there are still **no confirmed cases reported in Fairfax County or Virginia**. Internationally, the situation is more serious too, with additional countries reporting confirmed cases of swine flu. The Fairfax County and Virginia health departments continue to monitor the situation, working with hospitals, emergency rooms, the healthcare community, EMS providers and others.

In response to an intensifying outbreak in the United States and internationally caused by a new influenza virus of swine origin, the **World Health Organization raised the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 5** on April 29. A Phase 5 alert is a “strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of the planned mitigation measures is short.”

The **United States Government has declared a public health emergency in the United States**. CDC’s response goals are to reduce transmission and illness severity, and provide information to help health care providers, public health officials and the public address the challenges posed by this emergency. CDC is issuing and updating interim guidance daily in response to the rapidly evolving situation. CDC’s Division of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) continues to send antiviral drugs, personal protective equipment, and respiratory protection devices to all 50 states and U.S. territories to help them respond to the outbreak. The swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is susceptible to the prescription antiviral drugs oseltamivir and zanamivir. In addition, the federal government and manufacturers have begun the process of developing a vaccine against this new virus.

U.S. Human Cases of Swine Flu Infection
(As of April 30, 2009, 10:30 AM ET)

States	# of laboratory confirmed cases	Deaths
Arizona	1	
California	14	
Indiana	1	
Kansas	2	
Massachusetts	2	
Michigan	1	
Nevada	1	
New York	50	
Ohio	1	
South Carolina	10	
Texas	26	1
TOTAL COUNTS	109 cases	1 death

International Human Cases of Swine Flu Infection
See: [World Health Organization](#)

What You Can Do to Stay Healthy

There are everyday actions people can take to stay healthy.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

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 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- **If you feel sick, take these steps** to prevent making others sick:
 - Stay at home, and stay away from others.
 - Call your doctor before you go to their office. In case you have the flu, this will help them take steps to prevent its spread to others.

Sources of Information:

- CDC Fact Sheet: Questions & Answers on Swine Flu may be accessed at:
http://cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu_you.htm
- Swine Flu Questions (PandemicFlu.gov Web site)
<http://pandemicflu.gov/faq/swineflu/>
- CDC – Spanish Web site
<http://www.cdc.gov/Spanish>
- Fairfax County Health Department (swine flu Web page)
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/flu/swineflu.htm>
- Virginia Department of Health
<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/>

Virginia's Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday

The Ready Virginia Web site now offers information about the annual sales tax holiday established by the General Assembly to ease the cost of creating an emergency supply kit. From May 25 through May 31, the purchase of certain items is exempt from the Commonwealth's sales and use taxes. Customers may use manufacturer's coupons to lower the price of an item so that it will qualify for the \$60 or \$1,000 price cap. Items include bottled water, flashlights, battery-powered radios, batteries and first-aid kits. Frequently asked questions, a media kit and links to the Virginia Department of Taxation's complete list of tax-exempt items are available at:

http://www.readyvirginia.gov/stayinformed/sales_tax_holiday.cfm.

National Weather Service Seeks Input

An essential element to the long-term success of any organization is the design and successful implementation of a strategic plan. More than just a document, a strategic plan provides an over-arching vision and related framework that defines the future path for an organization. In 1999, NWS developed a Strategic Plan to guide the organization into the new millennium. The 1999 plan served as a strategic foundation and was a key to progress in several areas. In August 2009, that plan will be 10 years old. Much has changed since that plan was implemented, particularly in the areas of technology and science that ultimately feed into our operations. The time has come to update the plan and set our course for the future. Just as NWS forecasts require input, the strategic planning process depends on high quality input from all NWS stakeholders, including our valued partners and customers. You are invited to be part of the process. And the NWS is seeking ideas on where the organization should be going and what NWS should be doing – vital information in developing a comprehensive and realistic NWS Strategic Plan. The National Weather Services has created a Web page dedicated to collecting public input (<http://www.weather.gov/news/stratplan>). From there, you can enter and submit your comments and suggestions on how we can continue to achieve our mission of providing high-quality weather, water, and climate services to the nation in order to protect lives and property in an ever-changing environment. Provide your input by May 1, 2009.

http://www.weather.gov/news/stratplan/032409_jack.htm

DHS Announces Nearly \$970 Million in Preparedness Grant Final Allocations

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency announced earlier this month final allocations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Preparedness Grants for 10 federal grant programs, totaling nearly \$970 million in federal funding to assist state, local and tribal governments and private industry in strengthening community preparedness. Awards will be made on a rolling basis over the summer. From 2003 through 2009, more than \$26.7 billion will have been provided to strengthen our nation's ability to prevent, protect, respond and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters or other emergencies. Information on preparedness grant programs is available at www.fema.gov/grants.

New Study Focuses on Transportation and Evacuation

The Transportation Research Board has published a new study, "Transportation's Role in Emergency Evacuations and Reentry." The study covers aspects of transportation planning, control and research, as well as highlighting effective and innovative practices. The study compiles a review of existing literature, a survey of practices, field visits and discussions with practitioners. TRB focused on many evacuation-related topics, including the use of

contraflow lanes, phased evacuations, “carless” evacuees and reentry management restrictions. The study is available at http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=10106. Readers should note that the study includes inaccurate information about Virginia’s Hurricane Evacuation Plan and outreach. The current plan is available online at <http://www.vaemergency.com/library/plans/index.cfm>; an updated version will be available by June 1.
Reprinted from the April 8 EM Update newsletter, published by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

President Signs Legislation to Establish 9/11 Anniversary as a National Day of Service and Remembrance

On Tuesday, April 21, President Obama signed into law the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which for the first time includes federal authorization to establish September 11 as an annually recognized National Day of Service and Remembrance. “Today President Barack Obama created a historic, enduring and compassionate legacy that truly honors the 9/11 victims and their families, first responders and rescue and recovery workers, the soldiers who have taken up arms to defend our freedom and safety, and the many volunteers who spontaneously contributed their efforts in the immediate aftermath of 9/11,” said David Paine, founder and president of MyGoodDeed.org, the nonprofit group that led a seven-year campaign to formally establish 9/11 as an annually recognized day of service and remembrance.

<http://tinyurl.com/djt3ya>

2009 Hurricane Season Forecast Updated

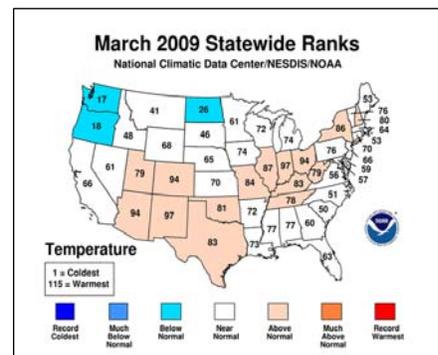
Colorado State University has decreased its 2009 Atlantic Seasonal Hurricane Forecast in the April update. CSU is now calling for a total of 12 named storms for the season, six hurricanes and two intense hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5). The reduction is based on El Niño conditions bringing increased vertical wind shear and decreased Atlantic hurricane activity; also, sea surface temperatures in the tropical Atlantic have cooled. The tropical meteorology research group from CSU’s Department of Atmospheric Science will update its forecast in June, August, September and October. Read the full text of CSU’s forecast: <http://hurricane.atmos.colostate.edu/Forecasts>.

Reprinted from the April 8 EM Update newsletter, published by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

NOAA: March Temperature Near Average for the U.S.

The March 2009 temperature for the contiguous United States was near the long-term average, based on records going back to 1895, according to an analysis by NOAA’s National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C. Heavy precipitation last month also pushed the Red River, along the Minnesota-North Dakota border, to record levels, triggering major floods. The average March temperature of 43.2 degrees F was 0.6 degrees F above the 20th century average. Precipitation across the contiguous United States in March averaged 2.51 inches, which is 0.11 inch above the 1901-2000 average.

http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090410_marchstats.html



Department of Education Launches Guide for Emergency Management at Institutes of Higher Education

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools has released The Action Guide for Emergency Management at Institutions of Higher Education. The Guide offers higher education institutions a useful resource in the field of emergency management. Due to recent emergencies and crises, it is critical for policies regarding campus safety to be adequately modified to meet today’s needs. To access The Action Guide and additional Emergency Planning information from the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, visit

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/index.html>.

PLANNING / PREPAREDNESS

Current Threat Level

- The United States government’s national threat level is Elevated, or Yellow.
- The U.S. threat level is High, or Orange, for all domestic and international flights. Only small amounts of liquids, aerosols and gels are allowed in carry-



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.

on baggage. See the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Web site (<http://www.tsa.gov>) for up-to-date information on items permitted and prohibited on airlines.

- Virginia Threat Level:  ELEVATED

Under an elevated threat lever, businesses should:

- Continue all precautions from lower Threat Conditions.
- Announce Threat Condition ELEVATED to employees.
- Review vulnerability and threat assessments and revise as needed.
- Identify and monitor governmental information sharing sources for warnings and alerts.
- Update and test call down list for emergency response teams and key employees.
- Review and coordinate and update mutual aid agreements with other critical facilities and government agencies.
- Establish and monitor active and passive security measures.
- Review employee training on security precautions (bomb threat procedures, reporting suspicious packages, activities and people).
- Conduct communications checks to ensure radio contact can be established.

At this time there is no credible information warning of an imminent, specific threat to the homeland. All Americans should continue to be vigilant, take notice of their surroundings, and report suspicious items or activities to local authorities immediately. Everyone should establish an emergency preparedness kit and an emergency plan for themselves and their family, and stay informed about what to do during an emergency.

http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/programs/Copy_of_press_release_0046.shtm

<http://vaemergency.com/>

Ready Classroom Teaches Emergency Preparedness Nationwide

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Ad Council have joined with Discovery Education to announce Ready Classroom, an online educational program. Ready Classroom will provide elementary and middle school teachers with resources to integrate natural disaster preparedness information into their curriculum. The program is an extension of Ready Kids, a nationwide effort designed to encourage children and families to take action and prepare for emergencies. The online resource, www.discoveryeducation.com/readyclassroom, provides teachers with activities, lesson plans and multimedia tools that teach students how natural disasters develop and inspires them to build their own emergency preparedness plans with their families. The site features grade-specific lesson plans (K-8), videos, games, puzzles and bulletin board recommendations. To coincide with the launch of the site, Discovery Education is promoting this new resource online at www.discoveryeducation.com and to elementary and middle school educators nationwide through its professional learning community, the Discovery Educator Network. Ready Kids is an extension of the Ready Campaign, which engages Americans in taking three simple steps to be prepared for emergencies: (1) Get an emergency supply kit; (2) Make a family emergency plan; and (3) Be informed about the types of emergencies that can happen in your area and their appropriate responses. By following simple preparedness steps in advance, Americans can reduce the impact of emergencies on themselves, their family and their businesses. Individuals can visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY, to access free materials that will help them prepare their families.

Ready Business

A national survey of businesses with two to 999 employees conducted by The Ad Council in December 2007 found:

- 91 percent of respondents said that it is "very" or "somewhat" important for businesses to take steps to prepare for a catastrophic disaster, such as an earthquake, hurricane or terrorist attack
- 38 percent said their company has an emergency plan in place in the event of a disaster
- 59 percent assessed their own business as "very" or "somewhat" prepared in the event of a disaster
- 55 percent of businesses surveyed said that they had take either significant or small steps to improve emergency preparedness in the past year
- The surveyed businesses said that the most important threats for them to address are fires followed by cyber attacks and then hurricanes, winter storms, tornadoes and terrorist attacks.

<http://www.ready.gov/business/index.html>

Preparedness Information for Institutions of Higher Learning

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools has released "The Action Guide for Emergency Management at Institutions of Higher Education" to help higher education institutions develop all-hazard policies regarding campus safety. The guide is intended for community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, graduate schools, and research institutions associated with higher education entities, both public and private. The guide and more emergency planning resources are available at:

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/index.html>.

National Tornado Experiment to Begin in May

A collaborative nationwide project exploring the origins, structure and evolution of tornadoes will occur from May 10 through June 13 in the central United States. The project, Verification of Rotation in Tornadoes EXperiment2 (VORTEX2 or V2), is the largest and most ambitious attempt to study tornadoes in history and will involve more than 50 scientists and 40 research vehicles, including 10 mobile radars. V2 is a \$10.5 million program funded by NOAA and the National Science Foundation, 10 universities, and three non-profit organizations. The original VORTEX program, operated in the central Great Plains during 1994 and 1995, documented the entire life cycle of a tornado for the first time in history. Recent improvements in National Weather Service severe weather warning statistics may be partly due to the application of VORTEX findings. V2 will build on the progress made during VORTEX and further improve tornado warnings and short-term severe weather forecasts.

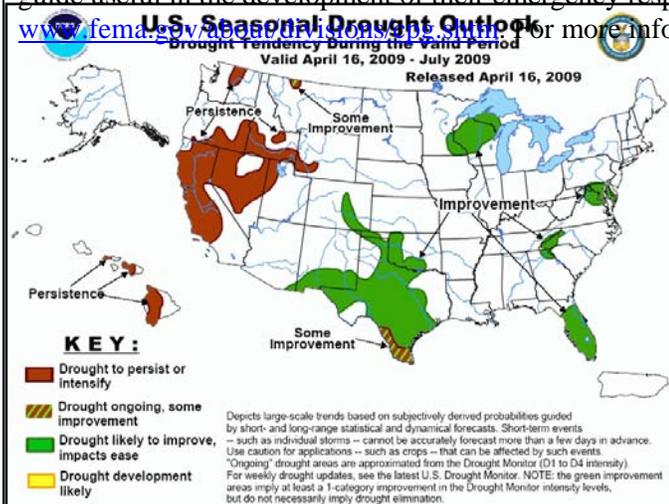


http://www.noaaneews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090406_tornado.html

FEMA Announces Release Of Final Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today the release of the final Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101: "Developing and Maintaining State, Territorial, Tribal, and Local Government Emergency Plans." CPG 101 completes the requirements of HSPD-8, Annex I to develop a "national integrated planning system." Combined with the Integrated Planning System (IPS) guidance provided by the Department, the vision of a vertically integrated planning system providing for a consistent planning process across all levels of government is realized. While IPS focuses on Federal planning, CPG 101 was developed by a team of state, tribal and local officials from across the United States working together to develop guidance that can aid State, tribal, local, and territorial officials in protecting their citizens. CPG 101 is the first in a series of publications developed through the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate's CPG Initiative. Future CPGs will discuss planning considerations for a variety of emergency functions, hazards and special preparedness programs including: special needs planning, household pets and service animals, fusion center / emergency operations center interface, and hazard-specific guidance. CPG 101 serves as the emergency plan foundation for both public and private sector planning in the United States. Planners in all disciplines and organizations may find portions of the guide useful in the development of their emergency response plans. The CPG 101 document can be found online at

www.fema.gov/about/directories/cpgs/cpg101 for more information on FEMA, visit <http://www.fema.gov/>.



U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook

Moderate to heavy rains eased drought impacts across the central Gulf Coast, the Southeast outside the Florida Peninsula, the middle Atlantic region, and parts of the southern Plains over the last few weeks, helping to bring numerous wildfires under control across western Oklahoma and northern Texas. Other drought-affected parts of the country saw conditions persist during this period, with some expansion and deterioration noted in a few areas. The Drought Outlook through the end of July

2009 is generally pessimistic in western sections of the country, with the likelihood of improvement increasing farther east. Mid-April precipitation should reduce impacts of the moderate drought in the mid-Atlantic region and the interior Southeast, and typical seasonal increases in precipitation should bring improvement to the Florida Peninsula and the Great Lakes region later in the forecast period. Across the southern Plains, where the most serious drought conditions are currently entrenched, heavy rainfall in some areas during the last half of April and typically wetter May-July conditions should bring improvement to most areas, though recovery in far southern and southwestern Texas may be less robust. Farther west, odds favor drier than normal May-July conditions and therefore persisting drought across the interior West, and the low precipitation amounts typical of this time of year along the Pacific Coast and in Hawaii should keep drought intact across those areas as well.

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/seasonal_drought.html

Evaluation Shows Significant Improvement in Local Hospitals' Disaster Preparedness

U.S. hospitals are significantly better prepared for disasters and public health emergencies now than they were in 2001, but much work remains to be done, according to a University of Pittsburgh Medical Center study. The study by the university's Center for Biosecurity was released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). The center was charged with conducting an independent evaluation of the HHS Hospital Preparedness Program and the program's impact on health care preparedness for mass casualty disasters. The program was established by the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act of 2006 after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks to improve hospitals' preparedness for all types of disasters. The study evaluated the first five years of the program from 2002 to 2007. It found that the most useful indicators for measuring the preparedness of hospitals are ability to surge to accommodate additional patients during disasters, how well hospitals do in training their staff for disasters and realistic exercises, and how well hospitals perform during actual disasters. Hospital senior leaders now actively support and participate in preparedness activities, hospital emergency operations plans are more comprehensive and better coordinated with community emergency plans and local hazards, and disaster training has become more rigorous, the report said. As additional indicators of improvement, hospitals have stockpiled emergency supplies and medicines, have improved communication systems and conduct more frequent and higher quality disaster exercises than in the past, the study said. To learn more about the Hospital Preparedness Program visit <http://www.hhs.gov/aspr/opeo/hpp/index.html>. The full report is available at www.upmc-biosecurity.org/HPPreport.

MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Hurricane Forecast 2009: Six Expected in "Average" Season

Only six Atlantic hurricanes are likely to form this summer, making the 2009 hurricane season a little less active than recent years, according to forecasters at Colorado State University. Twelve named tropical storms will form in the Atlantic Basin—which includes the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea—during hurricane season (June 1 and November 30), meteorologists Phil Klotzbach and William Gray predicted. That's down from the average of 17 named storms seen in each of the past five summers. Of those dozen storms, six will develop into hurricanes, which have sustained winds of at least 74 miles (119 kilometers) an hour.

<http://projectdisaster.com/?p=13410>

Crisis Communications Inevitable For Most Organizations, Expert Says

You can't avoid crisis communications forever, says one expert. Eventually – much like death and taxes – it will catch up with you. Is your organization ready? In a blog on the Baltimore Examiner Web site, public relations expert Dan Collins discusses the inevitability of crisis communications for any organization. How do you do what's necessary? First, he says, don't just consult the manual – make sure you have one in the first place. And by manual, Collins means a solid PR plan with protocols for you to follow in the event of a crisis. Then you need to learn that plan, he adds. Collins also discusses the pros and cons of using new technology and social media like Facebook, Twitter and MySpace to get the word out in a crisis.

<http://www.examiner.com/x-4258-Baltimore-Public-Relations-Examiner~y2009m4d3-Crisis-Communications>

Virginia Fusion Center Report Draws Misdirected Fire

On the heels of the furor over the February Missouri Information Analysis Center (MIAC) report, “The Modern Militia Movement,” which linked populist rightwing and conservative organizations with violent, extremist militia movements, resulting in Missouri State Highway Patrol Superintendent James Keathley to cease distribution of the controversial report to law enforcement officers, the Virginia Fusion Center’s “[2009 Virginia Terrorism Threat Assessment](#)” has now come under fire by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). As HSToday.us reported, the MIAC analysis provoked considerable legitimate criticism and raised brows among conservative political adherents for what they claimed was the report’s muddled portrait of rightwing groups and individuals. With regard to the new Virginia Fusion Center terror threat assessment, the ACLU declared in a statement this week that the report “says the state’s universities and colleges are ‘nodes for radicalization’ and encourages law enforcement to monitor First Amendment-protected activities of educational and religious foundations as terrorism threats.”

http://www.hstoday.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=8013&Itemid=149

Mason Receives \$7 Million Contract for Research and Development to Counter IEDs

George Mason University has been awarded a contract — valued at more than \$7 million if fully funded over three years — by the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) for research and development to counter improvised explosive devices (IEDs). JIEDDO is a unit of the U.S. Department of Defense. The project will be housed in the Volgenau School of Information Technology and Engineering’s Center of Excellence in Command, Control, Communications, Computing and Intelligence (C4I). The project will use modeling techniques to identify practical ways to defeat IEDs as a weapon of strategic influence. Pentagon data show that approximately 70 percent of combat deaths in Iraq have been caused by roadside bombs, the most common IED, making them the number one killer of U.S. troops there. U.S. Central Command indicates that the number of deaths from roadside bombs in Iraq has fallen, but usage of the devices in Afghanistan is rising. IEDs are expected to be the weapon of choice for insurgents for many years to come. The contract also contains options which, if exercised, would bring the total value of the contract to almost \$10.4 million. Work is expected to be completed in January 2012.

<http://gazette.gmu.edu/articles/13448/>

SAIC wins \$104 Million FEMA contract

Science Applications International Corp. has won a contract worth up to \$104 million from the Department of Homeland Security to provide training and support services to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Center for Domestic Preparedness. The one-year contract has four one-year options to extend the work, bring the contract total to \$104 million if all options are exercised. SAIC has performed work at FEMA’s Center for Domestic Preparedness over the last decade. Under the contract, SAIC will develop curriculum, provide qualified instructors and manage training logistics, administrative support and cost data analysis. Training at the Center includes response to weapons of mass destruction and other hazardous materials incidents. It’s the only federally chartered training center for responses to weapons of mass destruction and supports emergency responders from all 50 states, D.C. and the U.S. territories.

<http://www.bizjournals.com/washington/stories/2009/04/13/daily67.html>

Emergency Workers Share Insight in Va. Tech Shooting Response

Virginia’s emergency management workers are studying their response to the tragic Virginia Tech shootings that took place almost two years ago in an attempt to learn some of those hard lessons. In an article on the Virginian Pilot Web site, Patrick Wilson says the workers were part of the 2009 Virginia Emergency Management Conference, and one of the big topics was how they responded to the tragedy on that day. In the days after the shootings emergency management had a number of responsibilities, including feeding police officers, providing counseling to first responders, working in the shadow of about 160 news trucks and cleaning up the campus.

<http://hamptonroads.com/2009/04/emergency-workers-share-insight-va-tech-shooting-response>

Study Says Britons Growing More Anxious

Britons are becoming more anxious due to worries ranging from terrorism to bird flu -- and the general air of anxiety is adding to the economic crisis, that according to a study “In the Face of Fear” released this month. More than three quarters of people – 77 percent – said they thought the world was a more frightening place than 10 years ago, while

over seven million Britons had anxiety problems, said the report by Mental Health Foundation. Reasons for increased fear include terrorist threats, health scares, warnings by pressure groups, politicians' use of "worst case scenarios" and even 24-hour rolling news, constantly highlighting dangers and risks. Measures aimed at tackling crime and terrorism – such as a rise in the use of CCTV security cameras – were failing to quell fears and could be adding to them, said the report. The global economic crisis was also generating anxiety: 49 percent of people said they were worried about money, and 66 percent were fearful about the current financial situation in general. But the reverse was also true: general anxiety was partly driving the economic crisis because emotion overrode logical thinking, warned the Mental Health Foundation, a charity aimed at helping reduce mental illnesses.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20090414/hl_afp/britainhealthpsychologyfinanceconomy

E-Verify Deadline Postponed Again

The Homeland Security Department has pushed back the deadline for implementing the final rule for contractors to use the E-Verify employment verification system for another six weeks. The new deadline is June 30. It is the third time U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has delayed the controversial rule, which was originally supposed to go into effect Jan. 15, then Feb. 20 and then May 21. DHS and the Social Security Administration jointly run the E-Verify program, which allows employers to electronically submit Social Security numbers for new hires and existing employees. If there is a match, the employee is deemed eligible to work; if not, there are procedures for further assessments. The system has been controversial due to alleged high error rates in the databases used. Under former President George W. Bush's executive order, about 168,000 federal contractors were to begin using E-Verify in January. The order applies to federal contracts worth more than \$100,000 and subcontracts of more than \$3,000. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has filed a lawsuit challenging the rule. The case is pending in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland. Co-plaintiffs are the Society for Human Resource Management, Associated Builders and Contractors, the HR Policy Association, and the American Council on International Personnel.

<http://washingtontechnology.com/Articles/2009/04/20/EVerify-deadline-postponed-again.aspx>

Lack of Emergency Center Hampered Canadian Response to Outbreak

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has released a report that suggests the agency made a mistake when it didn't activate its centralized emergency operations centre during last year's deadly listeriosis outbreak. Canwest News Service's Sarah Schmidt says the agency released the report to detail the lessons it learned during the outbreak. The outbreak occurred at a meat plant in Toronto, Ontario, and resulted in the death of 21 people. The report also found that without a functioning emergency operations center, tracking the outbreak was made more difficult. "As a result, there are information gaps in the agency that can hamper a proactive response to a food-borne illness or hamper the efficiency of a food safety investigation when full information is unavailable," the report said. What other lessons did the agency learn? Schmidt says the agency learned it needs to establish clear protocols for communicating testing results, and the report found it was unclear as to who was the key contact at the agency with respect to laboratory testing and results.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/Health/Lack+emergency+centre+hampered+response+listeriosis+outbreak+Reports/1506721/story.html>

Dead People Can Still Get Passports, GAO Reports

A new report from the Government Accountability Office is warning the State Department that it should check all passport applications against a federal database of deaths. Could terrorists possibly get a U.S. passport simply by using a dead person's name? In an article on the Federal Computer Week Web site, Alice Lipowicz says the report found that passport specialists should check applicants' Social Security numbers against the Social Security Administration's Death Master File database. While the State Department recently purchased access to the Death Master File database, it is not checking it for each applicant, GAO said. The report also found that in its December 2008 investigation, the GAO was able to obtain a U.S. passport using counterfeit documents and the Social Security number of a man who had died in 1965.

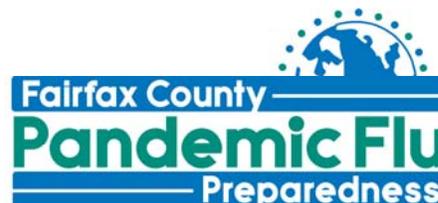
<http://fcw.com/Articles/2009/04/14/State-Still-Issuing-Passports-to-Deceased-People.aspx>

PANDEMIC FLU

Fairfax County Pandemic Flu Preparedness

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

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/pandemicflu/>



FDA Clears Rapid Test for Avian Influenza A Virus in Humans

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today cleared for marketing a new, more rapid test for the detection of influenza A/H5N1, a disease-causing subtype of the avian influenza A virus that can infect humans. The test, called AVantage A/H5N1 Flu Test, detects influenza A/H5N1 in throat or nose swabs collected from patients who have flu-like symptoms. The test identifies in less than 40 minutes a specific protein (NS1) that indicates the presence of the influenza A/H5N1 virus subtype. Previous tests cleared by the FDA to detect this influenza A virus subtype can take three or four hours to produce results. Influenza A infects both humans and animals. H5N1 is a subtype that is found mostly in birds, although infections have also occurred in humans, mostly in people who have come into contact with the virus through infected poultry. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, of the few avian influenza viruses that have infected humans, the H5N1 subtype has caused the largest number of detected cases of serious disease and death. There is a possibility that the influenza A/H5N1 virus subtype could mutate further and spread quickly to humans, causing an influenza pandemic. According to the World Health Organization, there are 412 confirmed human cases of infection from this virus, almost all in Asia and northern Africa. This virus subtype, which can cause life-threatening illness, has not been detected in the Americas. In clinical studies, the test correctly identified the absence of infection in more than 700 specimens. In addition, the test correctly detected the presence of influenza A/H5N1 virus subtype in 24 cultured specimens from infected patients.

<http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2009/NEW01987.html>

U.S. Offers \$7.3 Million to Combat Bird Flu

The U.S. Government will provide 7.3 million USD through the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to Vietnam to implement two projects on preventing and combating bird flu. The documents relating to the projects were signed by Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Diep Kinh Tan and FAO Representative Andrew Speedy, in Hanoi on April 8. The two projects cover the provision of technical assistance for improvement of preparedness in response to HPAI (third phase) and date collection in service of shifting of H5N1 vaccination strategy in Vietnam. US Ambassador to Vietnam Michael W. Michalak said the US Government has since 2005 doled out around 50 million USD for the fight against bird flu in Vietnam. Deputy Minister of Agricultural and Rural Development Diep Kinh Tan said Vietnam has mobilized the entire political system in monitoring the implementation of the bird flu national response program. He also reported that the Vietnamese government has spent almost 130 million USD from the State budget for the prevention and control of bird flu.



<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/social/2009/04/840873/>

TRAININGS / EXERCISES / CONFERENCES

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>

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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

Home Safety Council Webinar

May 6, 2-3 p.m.

The Home Safety Council, a National Citizen Corps Affiliate, is hosting a free webinar to share resources and strategies to help you prevent home injuries. The Home Safety Council is the only national nonprofit organization solely dedicated to preventing home related injuries that result in nearly 20,000 deaths and 21 million medical visits on average each year. The Home Safety Council urges you to take part in their annual Home Safety Month campaign this June and to help get you started, they are offering a free Webinar to share ideas and information. Please join Home Safety Council President, Meri-K Appy, and Director of Education and Outreach, Dr. Angela Mickalide, as they introduce you to new research on off-the-job safety and other resources available to help you implement a Home Safety Month campaign in your community. They'll also share a special preview of the Home Safety Council's new Web site. The Webinar will be held Wednesday, May 6, from 2-3 p.m. EDT. Visit the following link for more details and to register: http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth/hsm_webinar_w001.aspx

For more information on Home Safety Month, visit:

<http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth/homesafetymonth.aspx>.

Campus CERT Train-the-Trainer

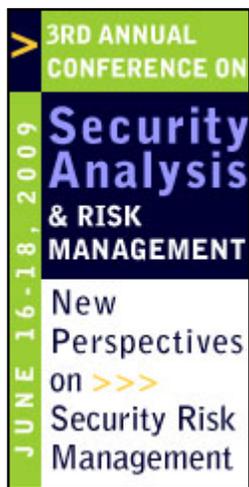
May 19-21; Virginia Commonwealth University

This course is for campus police, public safety, fire service, EMS, emergency management, security officers, faculty or other personnel employed by any public or private college or university, or from any state/local agency or non-governmental organization, who may be called upon to train or lead campus CERT teams, or teach CERT as a college course. Campus CERT Train-the-Trainer Course is designed to build on the standard CERT curriculum adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; this three-day course includes information and guidelines for teaching and implementing CERT in the unique context of the campus community. Organizational topics to be briefly reviewed include: program planning, funding sources, recruiting, training, supervision, team member retention and legal concerns. Topics to be covered from the CERT course will include: disaster preparedness, fire suppression, first aid, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, and terrorism awareness. There will be a variety of hands-on practical exercises.

http://www.vaemergency.com/train/session_register.cfm?ID=709

Security Analysis and Risk Management Association Annual Conference

June 16-18; George Mason University Law School, Arlington, Va.



The Security Analysis and Risk Management Association's Annual Conference is the primary outreach event for the security analysis and risk management community, and is expected to attract approximately 300 participants this year. Held in partnership with the George Mason University School of Law's Center for Infrastructure Protection (CIP), the conference is an exceptional forum for collaboration, information sharing and networking, with a wide array of practitioners from federal, state and local governments, private industry, and academia in attendance.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers include:

- Peter F. Verga, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
- Tina Gabbrielli, Director of the Office of Risk Management and Analysis, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Roger W. Cressey, President of the Good Harbor Consulting Group and former Director for Transnational Threats on the National Security Council.

Breakout session speakers include security and risk management practitioners from organizations such as: Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation,

Department of Health and Human Services, Sandia National Lab, Center for Defense Integrated Data, Homeland Security Institute, National Defense University, University of Southern Mississippi, MITRE, SAIC, Practical Risk LLC, Building Security Council, Congressional Research Service, Department of Defense, Digital Sandbox, Ohio State University, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Brazil, and many more...

<http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=3e77fdff-c905-4b0b-ac79-75ce07f1af7b>

LINKS

Fairfax County Blogs and Web Resources

- Fairfax County CERT - <http://fairfaxcountycert.blogspot.com/>
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Web Page - <http://www.fairfaxcountycitizencorps.org/>
- 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 continue to submit content comments or make suggestions by contacting the DHS Daily Report Team by telephone at 202-312-5389 or by e-mail at NICCRports@dhs.gov. You can access the Daily OSIR at:

http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/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

FAIRFAX COUNTY 703-817-7771
EMERGENCY
INFORMATION LINE

Emergency Management Magazine

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

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Emergency Information: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency

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.

Thanks for your partnership with Fairfax County. We appreciate the opportunity to work with you.

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