



ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

February 2012

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

Plan to Participate in Statewide Tornado Drill on March 20

Registration is now open for the March 20 Statewide Tornado Drill at www.ReadyVirginia.gov. Businesses, schools, organizations, families and individuals are encouraged to take part in this critical safety exercise. 2011 was a tough year in Virginia for tornadoes – here's a look back:

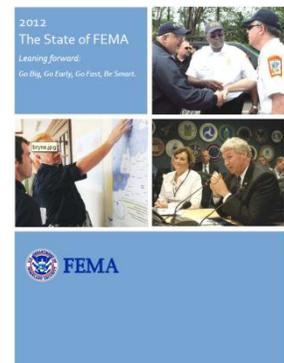
- 51 tornadoes hit, the second highest number on record (87 struck in 2004).
- In April, 10 people died and more than 100 were injured.
- Most tornadoes occurred during April, but tornadoes also were recorded in March, May, August, September, October and November.
- In April, 212 homes and 17 businesses were destroyed; more than 1,050 homes and businesses were damaged.
- Nearly every part of Virginia experienced tornadoes during 2011, including mountainous Southwest Virginia. Other areas hit: Southside Virginia, Roanoke Valley, Shenandoah Valley, Central Virginia, Northern Virginia, Middle Peninsula and Hampton Roads.
- Many of the tornadoes struck at night – the powerful EF3 twister in April hit Washington County shortly after 11 p.m.



The annual Statewide Tornado Drill is sponsored by the National Weather Service and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Learn more about tornado safety and how to hold a drill at www.ReadyVirginia.gov or call the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management at 571-350-1000, TTY 711.

Next-Generation Public Safety Communications

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) announced that the Visiting Committee on Advanced Technology (VCAT) has released a report of its findings regarding the creation of a next-generation public safety communications network. —Public safety communications reach across many geographical, jurisdictional and technological lines, involving federal, state and local agencies, as well as private organizations and even volunteers. All have different procedures, budgets and existing technologies that would need to be coordinated to create a communications solution for the entire country. To meet this challenge, the committee recommends that a non-governmental, nonprofit organization be charged with development of standards that would support creation of the network.” The new network would need to —support voice, video and data transmissions, and ideally be at the disposal of all first responders – the medical, emergency, law enforcement or military personnel who are first on the scene of events that threaten public safety.” The full report, —Desirable Properties of a Nationwide Public Safety Communication System,” can be found at <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=699038>.



2012 State of FEMA Report

For the first time, FEMA has captured the highlights of the agency's accomplishments for the year, laid out who they are and provided a vision for where we the agency is going. The —2012 State of FEMA” report also shows how applying the —whole community” has allowed FEMA to collaborate to better prepare for,

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protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards. Read the report online at http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/state_of_fema/state_of_fema.pdf.

Governor McDonnell Announces Support and Funding for Safe Routes to School

Governor Bob McDonnell has announced that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) awarded \$5.9 million in Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funding to 18 communities across the Commonwealth for the 2012 SRTS grant cycle. The funds will be used for projects that will make bicycling and walking to school safer and more appealing for students at 28 elementary and middle schools. The SRTS program is designed for localities, schools and nonprofit groups seeking to improve walking and bicycling opportunities for children in kindergarten through eighth grades. All local governments are eligible to apply for funding to construct and enhance bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in and around schools. They may also apply for a grant for encouragement, education and law enforcement activities; which schools and non-profit groups are eligible for as well. The statewide program is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. Several local jurisdictions will receive funding for infrastructure projects to benefit the listed schools. These include pedestrian and bicycle crossings, sidewalks, multi-use trails, signing and traffic-calming improvements, including the city of Alexandria (Matthew Maury Elementary School, Mount Vernon Combined School, William Ramsey Elementary School and James Polk Elementary School); the city of Falls Church (Mt. Daniel Elementary School and Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School); city of Manassas Park (Manassas Park Middle School); Fairfax County (Terra Centre Elementary School); and the town of Vienna (Cunningham Park Elementary School).

<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/news/viewRelease.cfm?id=1147>

Over \$39.3 Million in Disaster Aid Approved for Virginia

Since the counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Fluvanna, Goochland, King George, Louisa, Orange, Spotsylvania and the City of Fredericksburg have been eligible for Individual Assistance, significant amounts of federal aid have begun to flow into the affected areas. Families, individuals, business owners, and local governments who suffered damage have been approved to receive over a combined \$39.3 million in Individual Assistance and Public Assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as well as loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). “Virginia’s rebuilding process is well underway because of the financial aid received, and as the weather improves even greater numbers of Virginians will be able to start repairs on their homes and businesses,” said State Coordinating Officer Michael Cline. The rebuilding of Louisa County High School also took a giant step forward with a \$19.1 million FEMA grant. The balance of the anticipated \$42.9 million project will be funded through insurance proceeds, the Commonwealth and local sources.

<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=60916>

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 U.S.

National Terrorism Advisory System
Alert
DATE & TIME ISSUED: 2008

SUMMARY
The Secretary of Homeland Security informs the public and relevant government and private sector partners about a potential or actual threat with this alert, indicating whether there is an "imminent" or "elevated" threat.

DURATION
An elevated threat alert is issued for a specific time period and has a defined expiration. It may be extended if new information becomes available or the threat evolves.

DETAILS
• This section provides more detail about the threat and what the public and relevant sector need to know.
• It may include specific information, if available, about the nature and credibility of the threat, including the critical infrastructure sector(s) at risk (location(s) that may be affected).
• It includes a recall information or can be released publicly when entities being taken or planned by incidents to remain public safety, such as increased protective actions and what the public may expect to see.

AFFECTED AREAS
• This section includes visual depictions (such as maps or other graphics) showing the affected location(s), sector(s), or other distinctive detail about the threat itself.

HOW YOU CAN HELP
• This section provides information on how the public can help, including a list of common phone numbers about the role of all organizations, and addresses the importance of reporting suspicious activity.
• It may call the public or sector entities to be alert for a particular sign, situation, person, activity or developing trend.

STAY PREPARED
• This section emphasizes the importance of the public planning and preparing the appropriate before that happens, including specific individuals, families and businesses can take to make themselves and their communities safer.
• It may provide additional preparedness information that may be relevant based on the threat.

STAY INFORMED
• This section notifies the public about where to get more information.
• It encourages citizens to stay informed about system threat and emergency updates.
• It includes a link to the DHS NTAS website: <http://www.dhs.gov/alerts> and <http://www.dhs.gov/ntas>

If You See Something, Say Something™ Report suspicious activity to local law enforcement or call 911.

The National Terrorism Advisory System provides a means of alerting the public and relevant government partners to a potential or actual threat with this alert. It is issued by the Department of Homeland Security. For more information, visit www.dhs.gov/alerts.

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- —**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.

Start of Virginia Spring Fire Season

As Virginia prepares for the beginning of spring fire season, which started Feb. 15 and runs through April 30, Governor Bob McDonnell is warning Virginians that the threat of wildfires is increased this year due to Virginia’s mild winter. —**Wildfires in the Commonwealth are very weather-dependent,”** McDonnell said. —**When you combine the effects of the 2011 tornadoes and Hurricane Irene with the relatively mild and dry winter we’re experiencing, it adds up to a potentially dangerous spring wildfire season.”** Ninety-five percent of wildfires in the commonwealth are caused by humans, so residents need to help the Department of Forestry to reduce the risk of wildfires. The Department of Forestry offers additional fire safety tips including:

- Even if it’s after 4 p.m., don’t burn if the wind speed is in excess of 20 miles per hour and humidity levels are below 30 percent.
- Burn in small piles rather than one big pile.
- Before igniting your fire, clear the area around the pile down to bare dirt.
- Don’t add to the fire after midnight.
- Keep a fully charged hose and a shovel on hand to extinguish any spot fires that ignite away from the burn pile.
- Dial 9-1-1 as soon as a fire escapes your control.



State Forester of Virginia Carl Garrison says that more than 40 percent of the 1,114 wildfires in Virginia last year were caused by people burning trash or debris.

www.governor.virginia.gov/News/viewRelease.cfm?id=1107

Would You Know What To Do During an Earthquake?

Drop, cover and hold on. You only have seconds to react to an earthquake, so it's important to know what to do when the ground starts shaking. Remember:

- **DROP** to the ground.
- Take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy desk or table.
- **HOLD ON** to it until the shaking stops.

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

Winter Weather Patterns Can Increase Risk for Flooding

Floods are a year-round hazard and do not end when cold weather begins. Although this winter has not yet proven to be as severe as in past years, the coming months can bring about a range of conditions across the country that could affect your community. Areas that receive less snow and rain this winter season may later experience drought-like conditions that, when it does rain, can lead to flash flooding. The onset of seasonal rains and snowmelt can also lead to flooding. FEMA encourages residents to understand the unique flood risks associated with winter weather, and prepare now with an emergency plan, which may include purchasing flood insurance to protect property and possessions from flood damage. The good news is that there are simple steps that residents can take to address these

risks. These include having an emergency supply kit with items such as non-perishable food, water, a flashlight with batteries, and a family emergency plan that considers your insurance coverage, especially flood insurance. Anyone can visit ready.gov for helpful tips on how to prepare for the risks associated with flooding. Many people mistakenly believe that their homeowners insurance covers flood damage. Only flood insurance financially protects properties from flooding, which is the nation's most common and costly natural disaster. However, it typically takes 30 days for a new flood insurance policy to take effect, so residents should not wait for a storm to strike before purchasing coverage. It only takes a few inches of water in a home or business to cause thousands of dollars of damage. The time to get protected is now. Between 2006 and 2010, the average flood claim was nearly \$34,000. That's more than many survivors can afford to pay out of pocket for damages due to flooding. While no one wants a flood to impact them, with federally backed flood insurance, citizens have an important financial safety net to help cover costs to repair or rebuild if a flood should strike. Individuals can learn more about flood risk and their options for insurance coverage by visiting FloodSmart.gov or by calling 1-800-427-2419.

<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=60599>

Burn Awareness Week: Scalding Spotlighted

Joining with the American Burn Association and the U.S. Fire Administration, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department spotlighted National Burn Awareness Week, Feb. 5-11, encouraging parents and caregivers to take action in keeping their loved ones safe from fire and burn hazards. The theme for this year was —Scalds.” Scald injuries are painful and require prolonged treatment. They may result in lifelong scarring and even death. Prevention of scalds is always preferable to treatment and can be prevented through simple changes in behavior and the home environment. Young children and older adults are most vulnerable. Annually, over 500,000 people receive medical treatment for burn injuries. Approximately half of these injuries are scalds. Most burns occur in the home, usually in the kitchen or bathroom. Scalds can be prevented through increased awareness of scald hazards and by making common sense changes in your home life. These include providing a “kid-safe” zone while preparing and serving hot foods and beverages, and lowering the water heater thermostat to deliver water at no more than 120 degrees. Install anti-scald devices; these heat sensitive instruments stop or interrupt the flow of water when the temperature reaches a pre-determined level preventing water that is too hot coming out of the tap. Additionally, parents should cook on back burners when young children are present. Keep all pot handles away from the stove edge. Use non-slip placemats instead of tablecloths if toddlers are present. Never drink or carry hot liquids while carrying or holding a child. For more information on burn safety, visit www.usfa.fema.gov and www.burnprevention.org.

What is Phishing?

Phishing is an attempt by an individual or group to solicit personal information from unsuspecting users by employing social engineering techniques. Phishing emails are crafted to appear as if they have been sent from a legitimate organization or known individual. These emails often attempt to entice users to click on a link that will take the user to a fraudulent web site that appears legitimate. The user then may be asked to provide personal information such as account usernames and passwords that can further expose them to future compromises. Additionally, these fraudulent web sites may contain malicious code. For more information on phishing visit U.S. CERT at <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Cybersecurity Report: All Countries Lag Behind the Bad Guys

The U.S. and U.K. are relatively well prepared for cyberattacks, compared to many other developed nations, but everyone has more work to do, according to a new cybersecurity study from McAfee and Security & Defence Agenda (SDA). The report, which ranks 23 countries on cybersecurity readiness, gives no countries the highest mark, five stars. Israel, Sweden and Finland each get four and a half stars, while eight countries, including the U.S., U.K., France and Germany, receive four stars. India, Brazil and Mexico ranked near the bottom. No country is ahead of cyberattackers, said Phyllis Schneck, CTO of the public sector for McAfee. The bad guys are “faster and swifter” than the good guys, she said. Cybercriminals don't have to wrestle with legal and policy questions and freely share

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information with each other without worrying about competitive issues, she said. —We’re up against an adversary that has no boundaries, and we have to go to meetings and write reports to put data together,” Schneck added. —We’re at a huge disadvantage.”

http://www.cio.com/article/699068/Cybersecurity_Report_All_Countries_Lag_Behind_the_Bad_Guys

Key Internet Operator VeriSign Hit by Hackers

VeriSign Inc., the company in charge of delivering people safely to more than half the world’s websites, was hacked repeatedly by outsiders who accessed undisclosed information from the leading Internet infrastructure company. The previously unreported breaches occurred in 2010 at the company, which is ultimately responsible for the integrity of Web addresses ending in .com, .net, and .gov. VeriSign said its executives —do not believe these attacks breached the servers that support our Domain Name System network,” which ensures people land at the right numeric Internet Protocol address, but it did not rule anything out. VeriSign’s domain-name system processes as many as 50 billion queries daily. Pilfered information from it could let hackers direct people to faked sites and intercept e-mail from federal employees or corporate executives, though classified government data moves through more secure channels. The VeriSign attacks were revealed in a quarterly U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filing in October 2011 that followed new guidelines on reporting security breaches to investors. Even if the name system is safe, VeriSign offers a number of other services where security is paramount. The company defends customers’ websites from attacks and manages their traffic, and it researches international cybercrime groups. VeriSign would possess sensitive information on customers, and its registry services that dispense Web site addresses would also be a natural target. The SEC filing said security staff responded to the attack soon after it happened, but failed to alert top management until September 2011.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/02/us-hacking-verisign-idUSTRE8110Z820120202>

5 U.S. Urban Counties Lead “Terror Hot Spots” List

Nearly a third of all terrorist attacks on American soil from 1970 to 2008 occurred in just five metropolitan U.S. counties, according to a new study which says that 65 of the nation’s 3,143 counties were —hot spots” of terrorism. According to a study by the University of Maryland researchers, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2,600 incidents classified as terrorist acts have occurred nationwide between 1970 and 2008. Though the majority of terrorist attacks in the U.S. during those years -- in five categories depending on political, ethnic or religious origin -- occurred in five metropolitan areas, many other —hot spots,” including Harris County, typically experience a higher number of terrorist attacks than other U.S. areas. The study shows the country’s five major terrorist hot spots were Manhattan with 343 attacks; Los Angeles (156); Miami-Dade (103); San Francisco (99) and Washington, D.C. (79). In all, the researchers identified 65 of 3,143 U.S. counties as hot spots.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/5-US-urban-counties-lead-terror-hot-spots-list/articleshow/11791554.cms>

Twitter Turns on HTTPS by Default

Twitter recently turned HTTPS on by default for all users. The option to always use HTTPS was made available to users in March 2011, but they had to turn it on for themselves by changing their account settings. Twitter’s very nature and the fact that many users are used to tweeting from unsecured Internet connections meant anyone equipped with the Firesheep Firefox add-on can easily steal their log-in credentials sent via unencrypted HTTP sessions.

<http://www.net-security.org/secworld.php?id=12396>

East Coast Quake a “Teachable Moment”

Six months after an earthquake shook the East Coast, its lessons still reverberate through the emergency management, engineering and geological communities. The magnitude-5.8 quake, centered in the tiny town of Mineral, Va., demonstrated that earthquakes aren’t just a West Coast threat. Big quakes had hit the East Coast before but not recently nor with the frequency or ferocity of those in California. But the Aug. 23 quake was felt by more people than any other in American history, said Marcia McNutt, director of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Her agency estimates that one-third of the U.S. population — in 3,400 ZIP codes from Georgia to New York— felt the quake.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/environment/story/2012-02-17/east-coast-quake-preparedness/53211956/1>

FLU

Fairfax County Pandemic 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>

Study Finds Influenza B may be More Severe than Thought

An autopsy study involving influenza B infections revealed how histologically similar the disease is to fatal influenza A and how quickly it can kill, challenging the notion that it is milder than influenza A. The investigators, from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), also found a high level of cardiac injury with fatal influenza B infections, especially in younger patients. The research group said that comprehensive studies of influenza B deaths involving large series of patients and comparing those with and without bacterial pneumonia are lacking. Their findings appeared yesterday in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*. "Scientists know more about influenza A, because they keep close watch for unpredictable antigenic changes and the virus is found in a wide range of birds and mammals. In contrast, only two influenza B lineages circulate in humans. Though influenza B doesn't often dominate during flu seasons, mortality in epidemics involving the strain are typically somewhere in the middle for seasonal strains – more than for H1N1, but less than for H3N2. Influenza B is more fatal in children, though the disease can cause a substantial number of seasonal flu infections in adults, including some deaths, according to the researchers.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/general/news/feb0112influenzab.html>

Vietnam: Cold Winter Causing B2B H5N1 Outbreaks

Prolonged cold weather in Vietnam is causing more outbreaks of bird flu across the country after the disease killed two people last month, authorities warned Monday [Feb. 6]. "The weather this winter is much colder and longer than other winters which has led to outbreaks of the virus," said Hoang Van Nam, director of the government's animal health department. At least four provinces across the country have reported re-occurrences of the H5N1 virus this year. About 4,000 birds have been destroyed, including 1,700 infected ones. Many birds were transported across the country for the lunar new year holiday without undergoing proper controls. The department said that the virus would continue to spread in the cold weather. The government warned against buying poultry of unknown origin, and advised washing hands carefully after handling birds. Last year, the virus killed 151,300 domestic fowl, 50 percent fewer than 2010, authorities said in December. In 2010, seven people were infected, two of whom died.

http://news.monstersandcritics.com/health/news/article_1689187.php/Bird-flu-on-the-rise-as-cold-weather-lingers-in-Vietnam?

Avian Influenza – Situation in Vietnam – WHO Update

Early this month, the Ministry of Health (MoH) has announced a confirmed case of human infection with avian influenza A (H5N1) virus. The case was a 26 year-old pregnant female from Soc Trang province. She developed symptoms on Jan. 23, and was admitted to hospital on Jan. 25. She was treated with Oseltamivir on Jan. 27, she died on Jan. 28. Confirmatory test results for influenza A (H5N1) were obtained on Jan. 30 by Pasteur Institute, the WHO National Influenza Centre in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. Samples from the newborn infant of the fatal case tested negative for H5N1. The case had slaughtered and eaten sick chickens. MoH, the local health sector and Pasteur Institute in Ho Chi Minh City are conducting epidemiological investigation and strengthening surveillance and response activities. Close contacts of the fatal case have received prophylaxis and are being monitored; to date all remain well. The Department of Animal Health is collaborating with the human health sector. The case is the 121st person in Viet Nam to become infected with the H5N1 virus. To date, 61 of these cases have died from complications of the disease.

http://www.who.int/csr/don/2012_02_08/en/index.html

MSU Researcher Finds Link to H5N1 Bird Flu

A Mississippi State University researcher has uncovered the first molecular evidence linking live poultry markets in China to human H5N1 avian influenza. Henry Wan, an assistant professor in systems biology at MSU's College of Veterinary Medicine, collaborated with scientists in the World Health Organization Collaborative Centers for Influenza in China and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital to investigate the connection. —Although conceptually we knew live bird markets posed a risk for human H5N1 infection, there had previously not been any direct evidence, especially molecular evidence, supporting this hypothesis," Wan said. Based on information provided by patients infected with the H5N1 virus during the 2008-2009 season, Wan and his colleagues collected and analyzed 69 environmental samples from the live bird markets visited by six patients before the onset of the disease. —From these 69 samples, we isolated a total of 12 highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza viruses from four of the six live bird markets. The similarity of the genetic sequence of the environmental and corresponding human isolates demonstrates a solid link between human infection and live poultry markets," Wan said. Wan said the goal of his research is to find the sources of human H5N1 infections and provide the foundations for policy-making for protecting public health. While the United States has regulations in place to protect consumers, this is not the case in all countries.

<http://msucare.com/news/print/cvm/cvm12/120202.html>



Henry Wan uses a centrifuge to isolate the flu viruses he researches. Wan and his colleagues discovered the first molecular evidence linking live poultry markets in China to human H5N1 avian influenza. (Photo by MSU College of Veterinary Medicine/Tom Thompson)

Epidemiologists Put Social Media in the Spotlight

Compared to trending Twitter topics, epidemiology is a slow-moving discipline: even during a sudden outbreak of disease, it can take weeks to identify and confirm each case. Now, a growing band of researchers is advocating for greater adoption of tools such as Google News, Twitter or Facebook to help track epidemics and deploy medical aid more quickly. —Social media is here to stay and we have to take advantage of it," says Taha Kass-Hout, Deputy Director for Information Science at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. Kass-Hout argued his case for greater adoption of these tools on Feb. 16 at the International Conference on Digital Disease Detection at Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. The meeting aims to bring together leading figures in technology and epidemiology to discuss how 'informal data' such as tweets and texts can radically change disease surveillance. Not everyone in the public-health community is ready and willing to use the data. Andrea Dugas, a research fellow in emergency medicine at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md., says that practitioners regard informal-data tools with —a degree of healthy skepticism," adding that more research is needed to prove their reliability before they become a core part of public-health planning.

<http://www.nature.com/news/epidemiologists-put-social-media-in-the-spotlight-1.10012>

Norway: H3N2 Flu Outbreak

Health experts warned earlier this month that Norway is facing an outbreak of influenza A, which is caused by a new strain of virus known as H3N2. More and more people were visiting doctors in recent days, with complaints of having flu-like symptoms, said researchers with Norway's Public Health Institute. Among all patients who saw their doctors last week, 1.4 percent was diagnosed with flu, with the cases of the influenza A occupying a dominating position, which indicates the threshold of outbreak is reached, according to Norwegian health experts. The Southern and Western coastal areas of Norway are most affected while reported cases of the infection remain low in other parts of

the country. Since mid-December in 2011, the cases of laboratory confirmed influenza increased markedly, with virus being detected throughout Norway. The Public Health Institute said that it expects a continued increase in the coming weeks.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-02/09/c_131399265.htm

Video: Debating H5N1 and Dual-use Research

On Feb. 2, scientists and public health officials squared off in a panel discussion at the New York Academy of Sciences. Debate raged around the fate of two papers that describe a mutant strain of the avian influenza virus H5N1. The virus is capable of mammal-to-mammal transmission, which has raised concern that it might be transferable to humans. Several panelists sat down with "Nature News" to [discuss their positions](#). The New York Academy of Sciences also has posted the [full video of the 2 hour debate](#). <http://blogs.nature.com/news/2012/02/video-debating-h5n1-and-dual-use-research.html>



Undetected H5N1 Cases Seem Few, but Questions Persist

The fatality rate for officially confirmed human cases of H5N1 avian influenza infection is a stunningly high 59 percent (345 deaths in 584 cases). But the current controversy over publishing data about transmissible H5N1 viruses has revived a debate about whether the virus is as lethal as those numbers say. Some proponents of publishing the full details of two studies involving H5N1 viruses that spread by airborne droplets in ferrets say the true case-fatality proportion is probably much lower, because, they suspect, many mild or asymptomatic cases have gone undetected. If the real number of infections—the denominator—is much higher, the percentage of fatal cases drops. Some have suggested that the real fatality rate is "orders of magnitude" lower. This argument, however, swims against the tide of scientific findings. The primary way to detect asymptomatic or subclinical cases is to conduct seroprevalence studies—to look for H5N1 antibodies in people who weren't sick but may have been exposed to the virus, such as contacts of confirmed case-patients, poultry cullers, or residents of a village where poultry outbreaks occurred. <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/feb0912subclin.html>

Avian Flu Controversy Comes to Roost at WHO

Almost two dozen experts kicked off a two-day international meeting Feb. 16 at the World Health Organization in Geneva, in a bid to find ways to move forward in the controversy over two studies that have created strains of the H5N1 avian flu virus that are transmissible in ferrets. The meeting may reach some consensus on a few immediate issues, such as what parts of the studies should be published, and who might qualify for access to the full papers on a "need-to-know" basis.

<http://blogs.nature.com/news/2012/02/avian-flu-controversy-comes-to-roost-at-who.html#wpn-more-15344>

Public Health, Influenza Experts Agree H5N1 Research Critical, But Extend Delay

A small group of global public health and influenza experts at a WHO-convened meeting reached consensus on two urgent issues related to the newly created H5N1 influenza viruses: extending the temporary moratorium on research with new laboratory-modified H5N1 viruses and recognition that research on naturally-occurring H5N1 influenza virus must continue in order to protect public health. "Given the high death rate associated with this virus – 60 percent of all humans who have been infected have died – all participants at the meeting emphasized the high level of concern with this flu virus in the scientific community and the need to understand it better with additional research," says Dr. Keiji Fukuda, assistant director-general of health security and environment for the World Health Organization. WHO convened the meeting as a first step to facilitate the discussion of differing opinions that have arisen in recent months after two research groups, one in the Netherlands and the other based in the United States, have created versions of the H5N1 influenza virus which are more transmissible in mammals than the H5N1 virus that occurs naturally.

http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2012/h5n1_research_20120217/en/index.html

Mutated H5N1 Virus Research to Remain Under Wraps for Now, Says WHO

The temporary moratorium on research on lab-modified bird flu (H5N1) viruses is to be extended, and the publication of the studies' "entire manuscript" is to be delayed. This was the conclusion of a small group of experts who met to discuss the two issues - the meeting, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland, involved 21 experts, including the leaders of the two research centers, one in the Netherlands and the other in the USA, the research funders, bioethicists and several WHO directors who specialize in influenza. In a written communiqué, WHO (World Health Organization) informed that the experts believe research on other H5N1 influenza viruses - the naturally-occurring ones - should continue "in order to protect public health."

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/241872.php>

Bird Flu in Humans May be More Prevalent but Less Deadly

More people may have been infected by the virus that causes bird flu than previously thought and the number of deaths from H5N1 infection may also have been "overestimated," New York scientists conclude in a study of 12,500 people worldwide. The study, published Thursday, Feb. 23, in the journal "Science," notes that the World Health Organization (WHO) has documented fewer than 600 cases of H5N1 influenza A infection — also called avian infection — in humans. However, the WHO's stringent criteria for confirming bird flu in humans — often based on whether the symptoms are severe enough to result in hospitalization or even death — doesn't account for the majority of infections, according to Dr. Taia T. Wang of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City and his colleagues. The WHO says the primary risk factor for human infection with the avian virus appears to be direct or indirect exposure to infected live or dead animals, or contaminated environments. But experts fear the bird flu virus could mutate into a form easily transmissible between humans, with the potential to kill millions in a pandemic. The study is based on an analysis of 12,500 participants in 20 studies around the world. The data included people who didn't work with poultry, as well as those who did. The researchers found one to two percent of the subjects in the analysis had evidence of prior H5N1 infection, but because their symptoms were so mild, reporting no respiratory illness, for instance, they did not meet the WHO's criteria for confirming infection.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/story/2012/02/23/bird-flu-humans.html>

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>

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



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

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Earthquake Center Stage for March 2012 Symposium

The 2012 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium will cover many diverse subjects, but not surprisingly Virginia's earthquake will be the subject of several sessions. During the general session, Martin Chapman, the state geologist and Scott Keim, Louisa County fire chief and emergency management coordinator will provide an overview of the quake and discuss response efforts. Breakout sessions will cover the quake from several angles including schools and power. Additional breakout sessions will address the Caroline County Bus Accident, Private Sector Support, and Cyber terrorism joining previously highly rated topics such as Legal Concerns for Emergency Managers and Social Media. Register at www.vemaweb.org. All 3-day registrations received and paid for by Friday, March 2, will receive a free VEMA windbreaker.

Joint CBRN Conference and Exhibition

March 12-14; Baltimore, Md.

The Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Conference and Exhibition will provide a forum for the exchange of CBRN defense information among warfighters, CBRN incident responders, technology developers, acquisition professionals, and the supporting industry. This exchange will focus on a better understanding of and increased responsiveness to CBRN defense users' needs. Selected speakers will discuss current issues and future direction. The exhibition will showcase the broad array of CBRN defense equipment and technologies, as well as the latest in training and logistics capabilities. The 2012 theme is —Beyond BRAC ... What's next in CBRN defense?"

<http://www.ndia.org/meetings/2300/Pages/default.aspx>



2012 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium

March 28-30; Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa/Short Pump

The Virginia Emergency Management Symposium is sponsored by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the Virginia Emergency Management Association and will be held March 28-30, at the Hilton Richmond Hotel and Spa/Short Pump (Reservation Group Code: VEMA12). All three-day registrations received and paid for by Friday, March 2, will receive a free VEMA windbreaker.

<http://www.vemaweb.org/content/symposium2012/>

Government Security Conference and Expo

April 2-4; Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

Keynote speaker: Senator George J. Mitchell, former U.S. Special Envoy for

Middle East Peace from January 2009 to May 2011 and Senator Majority Leader from 1989 to 1995.

<http://govsecinfo.com/events/govsec-2012/information/conference/conference-keynotes.aspx>



Infrastructure Risk/Vulnerability Assessment Taking CARVER to the Next Level

April 9-11 and June 25-27, Arlington, Va.

This course, using criticality, accessibility, recuperability, vulnerability, effect and recognizability (CARVER) – an all-hazards assessment tool – emphasizes kinetic threats from small arms (active shooter) and improvised explosive devices; students will learn to identify threats and vulnerabilities of all sorts and apply risk management processes for incident planning. The course is designed for facility security, law enforcement and emergency management professionals charged with planning for and implementing protective measures for personnel, facilities, and infrastructure. Students will conduct an actual on-scene preliminary security vulnerability assessment and develop and deliver a briefing of their findings.

<http://www.governmenttraininginc.com/CARVER-Vulnerability-Assessment-120609.asp>

Emergency Preparedness Conference

April 11-12; Arlington, Va.

The conference will focus on how accreditation standards have provided healthcare organizations with a framework to prepare for and resurrect from disaster. The four phases of emergency management (and the theme of this year's

conference)—mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery—woven together provide a blanket of resilience, giving the individual, the organization, and the community the ability to cope with the stress and adversity of any disaster. The conference agenda will provide to those responsible for emergency management a portfolio of strategies, real-life lessons learned, and tools to implement upon return to their organizations.

<http://www.jcrinc.com/Conferences-and-Seminars/2012-Annual-Emergency-Preparedness-Conference/4560/>

National Security Conference

April 23-25; Westfields Marriott in Chantilly, Va.

The National Security Institute will host its 27th annual national security conference April 23-25, at the Westfields Marriott in Chantilly, Va.

<http://nsi.org/impact-2012.html>

Counter Terror Expo

May 16-17; Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

Counter Terror Expo U.S. is uniquely designed for the nation's law enforcement and counter terror professionals – from both public and private sectors – to collaborate on leading-edge initiatives and technology that will secure our nation from terrorist attacks. Visit <http://www.counterterrorexpous.com/> for more information.



Terrorism & Global Security Conference

May 30-31; Washington, D.C.

The theme of this conference, sponsored by the Ambivium Institute on Security & Cooperation, along with the Center for Terrorism Law of St. Mary's University, is "What Constitutes a Legal War in the 21st Century? An Analysis of the Role of the United Nations, NATO, and Coalitions in War Making in the Era of the War on Terror." The conference will explore the full range of issues associated with the use of armed force to solve international conflicts, along with the history of war, targeted killings, the law of armed conflict, human security, development, humanitarian intervention and globalization.

https://www.stmarytx.edu/ctl/pdf/Annual_Conference.pdf

2012 Chemical Sector Security Summit

July 31-Aug. 2, 2012; Baltimore, Md.

The National Protection & Programs Directorate's Office of Infrastructure Protection and the Chemical Sector Coordinating Council are co-sponsoring the 2012 Chemical Sector Security Summit in Baltimore, Md. The sixth annual Summit will provide a forum for representatives from the chemical community to exchange information and network with other security professionals, share best practices, learn more about chemical security regulations, and gain insight into the roles of state, local and federal agencies and departments involved in chemical security.

http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/gc_1176736485793.shtm

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/>



LINKS

Fairfax County Blogs and Web Resources

- 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 NICCCReports@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/>

FAIRFAX COUNTY 703-817-7771
EMERGENCY
INFORMATION LINE

ESF 15 Contact Information

Merni Fitzgerald, Director
Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 551 ♦ Fairfax, Va. 22035-0065
Tel: 703-324-3187 ♦ Direct: 703-324-3189
E-mail: Merni.Fitzgerald@fairfaxcounty.gov
Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov
Emergency Information: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency

To Unsubscribe:

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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.

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