



ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

June 2009

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

Homeland Security Grants Awarded to the National Capital Region

Homeland security officials said on June 16 that the National Capital Region will receive \$58,006,500 in federal homeland security funds from the Urban Areas Security Initiative Program (UASI) for fiscal year 2009. The announcement came from local and state officials in the National Capital Region (NCR), representing the District of Columbia Mayor Adrian M. Fenty, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and Virginia Governor Timothy M. Kaine. The money was awarded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. This year the department targeted an amount of funding that would be available to each urban area through the UASI program, and the NCR received the targeted amount of \$58 million.



Officials also noted that the region will get \$3,617,000 from the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program. These grants are intended to help high-risk urban areas across the country plan for catastrophic emergencies like the detonation of a nuclear bomb. In addition, the region received \$572,409 for target hardening activities by nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of terrorist attack. As in the past, this year's UASI funds will be used to improve the region's readiness for disasters. The funds will be focused in several key areas, including law enforcement; critical infrastructure protection; information technology integration; and health and medical readiness. Later this summer, officials will announce the specific projects to be funded.

“The goal of these programs is to help our states, our communities, our tribes, our territories, to achieve a constant state of preparedness, the constant state we need to be in – in order to be as secure as we can be,” said Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security. “These grant programs are a key part of how the Department of Homeland Security helps to prepare and strengthen our country against terrorism and against disasters.”

The National Capital Region — which is comprised of 11 local jurisdictions, two states and the District of Columbia — prepares for disasters collaboratively. This unique regional structure, in the area that is home to the nation's capital with the associated elevated risks, requires an equally complex system to determine how to best and most equitably allocate scarce resources such as UASI funds. The NCR's elected officials, emergency management, law enforcement, fire and public health personnel, along with the nonprofit and private sectors, work together across the region's jurisdictional boundaries to identify and prioritize projects to improve the region's emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

Past UASI grants have been used to prepare, train, and equip law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, transportation, public health and other first responders, improving their capabilities to prevent and respond to a wide range of potential hazards in the NCR. The funding has also been used to assist public safety officials to communicate across jurisdictional boundaries by enhancing interoperable communications; offer emergency alerts and notifications to the public; educate the public on disaster preparedness; assist special needs populations to prepare for major emergencies; increase medical readiness; and equip first responders to respond to all types of hazardous situations.

The NCR encompasses the District of Columbia and parts of Maryland and Virginia, including the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William in Virginia and Montgomery and Prince George's in Maryland, which include the municipalities of Bowie, College Park, Gaithersburg, Greenbelt, Rockville and Takoma Park.

Handling Online Crises

Online reputation management should be high on the “to do” list for savvy business continuity managers, says Jonathan Hemus. “The Dominos crisis experience has demonstrated that companies can no longer count on the stone tablets of traditional media to alert them to reputational risk. The critical lesson for corporations is not to evaluate Domino’s reaction as a bystander, but to change their online digital strategy, and do it now,” Business Week, April 2009.

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature0668.html>

Report Addresses Special Needs Populations During Evacuations

More than 40 percent of Hurricane Katrina victims who did not evacuate were either physically unable to leave or were caring for a person with a disability, according to a 2005 survey. The Transportation Research Board has released the most recent in a series of primers that report transportation management and operations advancements that can improve evacuation planning and operations. “Evacuating Populations with Special Needs” seeks to integrate more fully special needs issues into emergency planning. The primer offers best practices and tools to accommodate people with special needs in an evacuation and helps emergency managers and transportation personnel develop an evacuation plan that coordinates transportation resources to meet special needs. The report is online at

<http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop09022/fhwahop09022.pdf>.

Meanwhile, Fairfax County has established both a Special Needs Registry, including both a medical needs and social needs registries. The Special Needs Registry allows residents with medical needs and organizations assisting those with social needs an opportunity to provide information to Fairfax County so that agencies can communicate emergency preparedness, response and recovery resources to our vulnerable, at risk and hard-to-reach residents. The information collected will only be shared with Fairfax County agencies and partner agencies and organizations to improve their ability to serve and will not be available to the public. More details can be found online at

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

DHS’s Five Responsibilities

Department of Homeland Security Secretary [Janet Napolitano writes in a in a recent article on the DHS Leadership Journal](#), “When President-elect Obama nominated me to become our country’s third Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, I was warned that the vast Department was too cumbersome to lead; that the 225,000-strong workforce was too big to manage; that the 22 agencies with 22 corresponding missions that were brought together in 2003 were too disparate to meld into a coherent structure with a clear vision. Yet, nearly five months into my tenure, the purpose of our Department is unambiguous: we must guard against terrorism; we must secure our borders; we must enforce our immigration laws; we must improve our readiness for, response to, and recovery from disasters; and we must unify the Department so that we can even more effectively carry out our mission.

<http://www.dhs.gov/journal/leadership/2009/06/departments-five-responsibilities.html>

Hand Washing Video – American Sign Language

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made available a hand washing video in American Sign Language, useful for any employer of employees who are deaf or hard of hearing.

<http://www.healthinfotranslations.org/video.php?id=817085>

U.S. Fire Administration Participates in Social Media Roundtable

Earlier this month, the U.S. Fire Administration, in support of the IAFC Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week, conducted its first ever roundtable discussion covered exclusively by blog and twitters in real time. Joining USFA Acting Administrator Glenn A. Gaines were Phil Stittleburg President of the NVFC; Chief Billy Goldfeder, Chief Robert Dube of the IAFC; Rich Duffy and James Brinkley of the IAFF; Ron Siarnicki, Executive Director of the National Fallen Firefighters’ Foundation; Dr. Burt Clark and Bill Troup, USFA. For one hour, these nationally recognized fire service leaders discussed the importance of firefighter safety efforts underway in this nation and took questions from the fire service members joining them on line. The podcast is also available on www.firehouse.com.

DHS Launches “The Blog @ Homeland Security”

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has launched “The Blog @ Homeland Security,” a new addition to the Department’s Web presence designed to increase transparency and facilitate the dialogue between DHS and the American public. The blog will include frequent updates on the Department’s activities, including breaking news, public events and new initiatives. The inaugural post, found at <http://www.dhs.gov/theblog>, features a video message from Secretary Napolitano outlining the Department’s five overarching responsibilities and an invitation for visitors to comment on and provide suggestions for the blog.

http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/pr_1245098052907.shtm



DHS Conducts Continuity of Operations Exercise

On June 17, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) conducted an exercise to test the readiness and capabilities of federal departments and agencies – coordinating with the White House – to execute their Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans. The exercise, known as Eagle Horizon, is a mandatory annual exercise for all executive branch departments and agencies coordinated by DHS through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its National Continuity Programs (NCP) Directorate. In a national emergency, federal departments and agencies may be required to relocate to alternate sites. Eagle Horizon simulates such an event – and triggers the cohesive, overlapping national continuity plan vital to the continued performance of essential government functions. The exercise focused on coordination between federal agencies and tested Federal Executive Branch Continuity alert, notification and deployment procedures as well as interagency continuity communications. Emergency Relocation Group members were sent by their respective agencies to pre-planned alternate locations and asked to implement COOP procedures.

http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/pr_1245258718688.shtm

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-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: 



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.

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.

http://www.dhs.gov/xinfo/share/programs/Copy_of_press_release_0046.shtm
<http://vaemergency.com/>

NOAA and National Park Service Urge Beach-Goers to Break the Grip of the Rip

With summer vacation on the horizon, NOAA and the National Park Service are alerting beach-goers to the threat of [rip currents](#) and how to prevent drowning from their strong and potentially fatal grip. Rip currents are the leading surf hazard, claiming more than 100 lives per year nationally. For that reason, NOAA and NPS teamed up to sponsor Rip Current Awareness Week, June 7-13, with the theme Break the Grip of the Rip®. Rip currents are narrow channels of fast-moving water that pull swimmers away from the shore. Moving at speeds of up to eight feet per second, rip currents are surprisingly strong and swift. They account for more than 80 percent of the tens of thousands of rescues performed by beach lifeguards in the United States annually. Rip currents can form at all surf beaches so keep these safety tips in mind:

- Check for surf zone forecasts [online](#);
- Look for signs and flags posted to warn about rip currents;
- Do not swim against a rip current;
- Escape rip currents by swimming in a direction following the shoreline until you are free of the rip current;
- Never swim alone.

http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090603_ripcurrent.html

Small Businesses Not Fully Equipped to Handle Disasters, Report Says

A new survey has found that most small- and medium-size businesses are unprepared for disasters and wrongly assume that having a data backup plan will help them recover after a disaster. In an article on the TMCnet Web site, Vivek Naik says the findings were part of the “2009 Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity Survey” by Agility Recovery Solutions and Hughes Marketing Group. Officials at Agility say they surveyed more than 700 SMB owners and executives over the length and breadth of North America and found that existing data plans have induced a false sense of security. The survey found that 94 percent of respondents have formal data backup plans; 75 percent of respondents genuinely believe that they can have their employees back to work within days of a disaster, of which only 28 percent have access to alternative office space, 41 percent have access to mobile office space, 57 percent have access to power generators, and 54 percent could acquire temporary office equipment but allegedly have no ready or pipeline contingency contract ready.

<http://disaster-resource.com/newsletter/2009/subpages/v288/newsclip5.htm>

Pandemic Phase Six: What Do Business Continuity Managers Do Next?

Many pandemic plans have build in escalation steps which are meant to kick in when a phase six pandemic alert is reached, however given the relatively low virulence of the virus and the current status of infection levels should BC managers reconsider their plans? Continuity Central asked various business continuity experts to give their views.

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature0678.html>

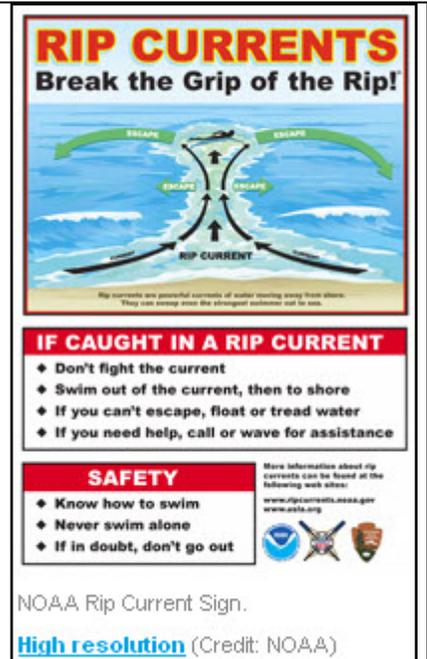
Fugate Meets with U.S. Chamber Of Commerce National Security Task Force

FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate met on June 10 with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce National Security Task Force, to discuss public-private partnerships in emergency management. During the meeting, Fugate emphasized to attendees the importance of private sector engagement and how it plays a critical role in public awareness, preparedness and disaster response.

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/news04610.html>

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

Red Cross, CDC Ready Country for Emergency Threats



Last year in the Americas, more people were affected by disaster than any year in the previous decade, according to the “2009 World Disasters Report.” Over the next six months, as the United States and the Caribbean face the prospect of simultaneous responses to hurricanes and the H1N1 flu, response organizations are preparing for the possibility of an even higher number. The official hurricane season started on June 1. Experts predict that there will be between four and seven hurricanes in the Atlantic this year, of which one to three will likely have a major impact. Earlier this month, the World Health Organization raised its pandemic alert level to phase 6, indicating the widespread nature of the H1N1 flu in advance of the traditional flu season. American Red Cross and CDC officials call upon communities to take basic preparedness steps, which can have as much impact as national and regional planning. On June 23, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies released the “2009 World Disasters Report,” which emphasizes the importance of community preparation and early disaster warning in order to minimize damage. The American Red Cross offers information at www.redcross.org on assembling a supply kit, creating a family plan, and dealing with the challenges of various disasters. The CDC offers advice on flu preparedness at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu.
<http://tinyurl.com/lmahcx>

CDC Hurricane Health and Safety Tips

Sign up to receive free weekly hurricane health and safety tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by e-mail, mobile phone text message, RSS or Twitter. In addition to the weekly tips, CDC will also provide you important, timely tips relevant to storms making landfall throughout the season.
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/reminders.asp>

Five Security Holes at the Office

If you’re beefing up network security and you think you’re trying to protect data from the biggest threat, you might be missing a huge area. In fact, the biggest threat is the person who simply walks right through your front door. In an article on the ComputerWorld Web site, Joan Goodchild says companies also need to look at their building’s security, to figure out how easy it is for people to get inside and then use social engineering tactics to steal sensitive data. Goodchild spent an afternoon with social engineering expert Chris Nickerson, founder of Lares, a security consultancy based in Colorado, to get an idea of some of the key vulnerabilities a criminal looks for in building security. The pair then chose a building at random to see how easy it would be to get in. What security holes did they find? Those holes included:

- No cameras on the outside of the building.
- No protection for the generator (which indicates a data center inside and hackers can easily cut off power).
- No security near smoking areas.
- Unlocked cars in the parking lot (making it easy to steal badges and ID from parked cars).
- An unsecured trash compactor (which brings sensitive information outside).

<http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9134085>

NOAA’s National Weather Service says “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors”



Our love of outdoor activities and the frequency of thunderstorms make summer the most likely time to be injured or killed by lightning, according to statistics compiled by NOAA’s National Weather Service. In order to reduce lightning injuries and fatalities, the National Weather Service promoted Lightning Safety Awareness Week the last week of June. More than 70 percent of lightning fatalities occur between June and August, says John Jensenius, the National Weather Service lightning expert who tracks and evaluates lightning deaths for the agency. Annually lightning strikes more than 400 people in the United States. About 60 of those die, and many more are left with devastating and permanent disabilities. The National Weather Service studies lightning fatalities in order to know where to best

target its lightning education efforts. For example, men are struck far more often than women, sustaining about 85

percent of lightning deaths. And men under 40 account for 60 percent of all lightning fatalities.

Video: http://www.weather.gov/os/lightning/multimedia/new-bryan/EllenBryan_Lightning_v1.wmv

http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090617_lightning.html

Photo credit: NOAA

Foundation Finds States and Institutions Giving Children Short-shrift in Emergency Plans

In the years since 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina the United States has concentrated enormous resources and expertise to improving its capacity to respond to and mitigate disasters. While many areas, such as interoperable communications for public safety, have clearly improved, however, glaring gaps remain. A new report by the Save the Children foundation titled “The Disaster Decade: Lessons Unlearned for the United States,” highlights one such gap, the failure to adequately address the needs of children in disaster preparedness. The report reviewed the current status of implementation of emergency preparedness standards in the development of evacuation plans, parental notification and accommodation of children with special needs. Surveying all 50 states and the District of Columbia it found that only seven states – Arkansas, Maryland, Hawaii, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Alabama and Vermont – are meeting key standards. Of all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Save the Children found that:

- Only 14 percent of states meet all four basic emergency preparedness standards for licensed child care facilities and K – 12 schools.
- 41 percent require all licensed child care facilities to have a written evacuation and relocation plan.
- 29 percent require all licensed child care facilities to have a written plan to notify parents during an emergency.
- 22 percent require a written plan for accommodating all children with special needs during an emergency evacuation and relocation.

http://www.hstoday.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9011&Itemid=128

Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps Encourage Participation in the National Preparedness Month Coalition

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) says that more than 1,200 national, regional, tribal, state and local businesses and organizations have pledged their support and joined the 2009 National Preparedness Month (NPM) Coalition. Non-member organizations are strongly encouraged to join before the start of NPM. Led by FEMA’s Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps, NPM is held each September and is designed to raise awareness and promote action surrounding emergency preparedness among citizens, businesses and communities. NPM 2009 is focused on helping Americans understand what it truly means to be Ready, which includes specific items to include in kits, making a plan, being informed and getting involved. This will also be the focus of Ready’s new public service advertisements (PSAs) that are being produced by the Advertising Council and are slated to launch during NPM this September. All National Preparedness Month Coalition members have agreed to distribute emergency preparedness information and sponsor activities across the country that will promote emergency preparedness. Membership is open to all public and private sector organizations. Groups and individuals can register to become members by visiting <http://www.ready.gov/>, and clicking on the National Preparedness Month banner.

New Citizen Corps Reports Provide Data on Personal Preparedness

Two reports produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Personal Preparedness in America: Findings from the Citizen Corps National Survey and the Citizen Corps Urban Area Survey, offer comprehensive data on the public’s thoughts, perceptions, and behaviors related to preparedness and community safety for multiple types of hazards. The results, which come from household surveys fielded in the fall of 2007, provide insight on preparedness in the U.S. Both reports are available from the Citizen Corps Web site (http://www.citizencorps.gov/news/press/2009/personal_preparedness_research_jun09.shtm). One of the conclusions drawn from the findings of the personal preparedness report was, “While the Federal government and national leaders must continue to emphasize the importance of preparedness from a national platform, it is clear that effective strategies for preparedness must be implemented at the community level and through social networks.” A similar theme is found in the urban area report, “While individuals in all the urban areas had similar perceived impediments to preparedness, important differences need to be taken into account when planning local communication and outreach activities. Realistic expectations of emergency response capabilities must be communicated.” FEMA is fielding the survey again this year with more in-depth sampling across the U.S.; top line results for the 2009 survey will be available later this summer.

MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Poll Finds Florida Public Still Not Ready for Hurricanes

Despite busy hurricane seasons over the past few years and five hurricanes of Category 3 or stronger, most coastal residents are more apathetic than ever when it comes to preparing for storms. In an article on the Jacksonville.com Web site, Carole Fader says the Mason-Dixon poll found that 66 percent of coastal residents have no hurricane survival kit, and 55 percent don't have a family disaster plan. And despite the increase in storms over the last 10 years, 62 percent now say they feel no threat from storms, which is up from 54 percent in 2008. The poll also found that 16 percent think the government will provide food, water and shelter immediately after a storm.

Other results include:

- 83 percent have taken no steps to make their homes stronger.
- 48 percent have no flood insurance
- 15 percent are not sure if their policy covers flood damage.
- 21 percent did not know their home insurance policy number or how to reach their agent or carrier.
- 13 percent said they would not evacuate even if ordered to do so.

http://www.jacksonville.com/news/metro/2009-05-29/story/poll_finds_public_not_ready_for_hurricane

Swine Flu: A Wake-up Call for Emergency Planners

The world went into panic mode over Swine Flu when it began spreading like wildfire early last month, first in Mexico, then the United States and beyond. Then it became evident that most cases were mild – no worse than garden-variety seasonal flu. People moved on in search of something else to worry about. And so went another textbook example of how we panic too much when a threat is in the news and plan too little when the headlines dissipate. The reality, at least in the case of Swine Flu, is that the threat was low in spring but could morph into something more sinister in the fall and winter. Emergency preparedness experts say there's no cause for panic, but that this is a reminder that organizations should always be thinking about how to keep the machinery moving in the event something big and unexpected happens. For emergency planners, there are both physical and cyber security challenges to think about regarding Swine Flu and other potential pandemic viruses.

<http://www.itworld.com/security/68925/swine-flu-wake-call-emergency-planners>

FEMA to Turn Foreclosures Into Hurricane Shelters

Are foreclosures the answer to solving the problem of finding housing for displaced hurricane victims? According to a new report, that's exactly the type of plan Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) director Craig Fugate is hoping to put in place. In an article on the Chicago Tribune's Web site, Mark Silva says the agency is looking at placing displaced Floridians in foreclosed homes should a Katrina-like storm strike the hurricane-prone state. Of course, Silva says the idea is still under development. If it did go through, it would involve FEMA contacting banks, other mortgage holders and representatives to compile a list of available homes. If a disaster struck, the evacuees would be assigned homes close to their own and FEMA would use a contractor, acting as its agent, to pay rent directly to the home's owner.

http://www.swamppolitics.com/news/politics/blog/2009/06/fema_foreclosures_storm_shelte.html

W.H.O. Raises Alert Level as Flu Spreads to 74 Countries

The World Health Organization told its member nations (on June 11) it is declaring a swine flu pandemic – the first global flu epidemic in 41 years, news services reported. The move came after an emergency meeting with flu experts that was convened after a sharp rise in cases in Australia, which reported 1,224 cases on Wednesday (June 10), and rising numbers in Britain, Japan, Chile and elsewhere. In a statement sent to member countries, the W.H.O. said it decided to raise the pandemic alert level from phase 5 to 6, indicating a global pandemic outbreak. The Associated Press said, attributing the information to health officials from Scotland, Indonesia and Thailand. An official announcement of the change was due at 6 p.m. Geneva time on Thursday (noon in New York). In an effort to avoid triggering panic with such an announcement, W.H.O. officials are expected to include a caveat that the flu, which has resulted in mostly mild cases, is not more deadly now that it has been declared a pandemic. Rather, the

announcement reflects the global spread of the disease, not an increase in its severity. According to W.H.O. rules, the organization should declare a pandemic once it finds evidence of widespread “community transmission” – meaning beyond travelers, schools and immediate contacts – on two continents. The declaration of a pandemic will trigger drug makers to speed up production of a swine flu vaccine and prompt governments to devote more money to containing the virus.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/12/world/12who.html?em>

Forecasters Say El Nino May be Developing

A new El Nino could be approaching. Sea-surface temperatures have been warming in the tropical Pacific Ocean, suggesting the potential for the development of the El Nino climate phenomenon this summer, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. El Nino conditions are associated with increased rainfall across the east-central and eastern Pacific and with drier than normal conditions over northern Australia, Indonesia and the Philippines. A summer El Nino can lead to wetter than normal conditions in the intermountain regions of the United States and over central Chile. In an El Nino year there tend to be more Eastern Pacific hurricanes and fewer Atlantic hurricanes.

<http://www.homeland1.com/disaster-preparedness/articles/501779-Forecasters-say-El-Nino-may-be-developing/>

Pentagon and FEMA Set Up Plans for Disaster Response

The military needs to work with local and state governments to develop a detailed plan for when to begin evacuating patients from medical facilities, including nursing homes, in a major disaster such as powerful hurricane, a top Pentagon general said earlier this month. Major Gen. Frank Grass, director of operations for the United States Northern Command, said the key is to develop a plan that is based on sound estimates of how much time will be needed to remove vulnerable people at medical facilities before conditions worsen to the point that evacuation flights can't operate. Craig Fugate, completing his second week as administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, told subcommittee Chairwoman Mary Landrieu, D-La., that his top three priorities for hurricane preparedness are:

- Doing a better job persuading people to be prepared with a plan on what family members will do in emergency, adequate supplies of canned food and water, and a commitment to check on neighbors' safety.
- Refocusing FEMA on goals rather than process.
- Getting a better focus on helping a community recover.

<http://www.homeland1.com/disaster-preparedness/articles/501071-Pentagon-and-FEMA-set-up-plans-for-disaster-response/>

Hospital Surge Preparedness Still a Problem, Report Says

The several hundred page Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, Assessing Medical Preparedness to Respond to a Terrorist Nuclear Event: Workshop Report, released by IOM earlier this month, “provides a frightening but candid look into our level of preparedness today.” At the request of the Department of Homeland Security, IOM held a two-part workshop last year to evaluate the ability of emergency services, health care organizations, and federal, state and local authorities to respond to the detonation of an Improvised Nuclear Device (IND) in a large US metropolitan area. The report's introduction summarized the workshop's findings. “Under any scenario envisioned from the release of an IND, we will have a significant medical disaster with thousands of casualties,” the report stated.

Report: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12578

http://www.hstoday.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=8961&Itemid=150

Profile: The Kid at the State Department Who Figured Out the Iranians Should Be Allowed to Keep Tweeting

When BayNewsier heard that someone from the State Department had e-mailed Twitter to ask them to delay maintenance to allow Iranians to continue tweeting, “we pictured some fusty old guy at Foggy Bottom in a rumpled Brooks Brothers suit and wayward spectacles. Imagine our surprise, then, when we learned that, instead, it was a 27-year-old whiz kid whose job is to advise the State Department on how to use social media to promote U.S. interests the Middle East. And imagine our further surprise when we learned this young gentleman wasn't one of Barack Obama's social media geniuses, but instead was a Condi Rice pick hired specifically to advise the State Department on young people in the Middle East and how to ‘counter-radicalize’ them.” According to the New York Times, it was

Jared Cohen, a member of the Policy Planning Staff, who contacted Twitter on Monday [June 15], inquiring about their plan to perform maintenance in what would be the middle of the day, Iran time. Following that contact, Twitter decided to postpone their maintenance so that it would take place in the middle of the night Iran-time, even though that meant it would be the middle of the day U.S. time.

<http://tinyurl.com/lesr6a>

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/>

The World Health Organization

(WHO) reported on June 11 that 74 countries had officially reported 28,774 cases of influenza A (H1N1) infection, including 144 deaths. On the basis of available evidence and expert assessments of the evidence, the scientific criteria for an influenza pandemic were met. The Director-General of WHO therefore decided to **raise the level of influenza pandemic alert from Phase 5 to Phase 6.**

“The world is now at the start of the 2009 influenza pandemic,” said Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, at a press conference on June 11.

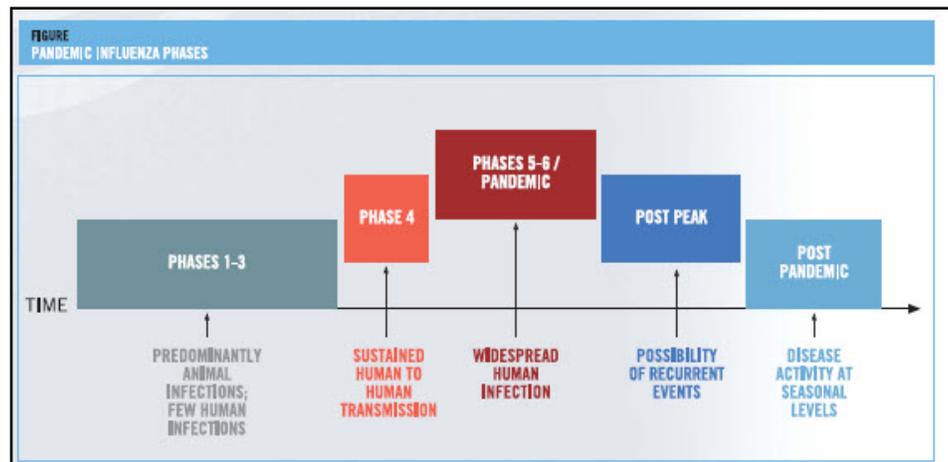
“The virus is contagious, spreading easily from one person to another, and from one country to another. As of today, nearly 30,000 confirmed cases have been reported in 74 countries,” said Chan. “We are in the earliest days of the pandemic. The virus is spreading under a close and careful watch. No previous pandemic has been detected so early or watched so closely, in real-time, right at the very beginning.”

http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2009/h1n1_pandemic_phase6_20090611/en/index.html

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the WHO designation of a pandemic alert Phase 6 reflects the fact that there are now ongoing community level outbreaks in multiple parts of world. **WHO's decision to raise the pandemic alert level to Phase 6 is a reflection of the spread of the virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus.**

“Today's decision by the WHO was expected and doesn't change what we have been doing here in the United States to prepare for and respond to this public health challenge,” said U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. “Once we saw how fast this virus was spreading, we activated our pandemic plans and started doing all the things we needed to do to keep the public as safe and secure as possible. What this declaration does do is remind the world that flu viruses like H1N1 need to be taken seriously.”

“We responded to the H1N1 outbreak from the outset with the presumption that a pandemic was likely, so **this decision comes as no surprise,**” said U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. “We acted aggressively to stay ahead of the virus as it spread across the country. Now our challenge is to prepare for a possible



return in the fall.”

Background

Influenza A (H1N1) is a new flu virus of swine origin that was first detected in Mexico and the United States in March and April. The first novel H1N1 patient in the United States was confirmed by laboratory testing at the CDC on April 15. The second patient was confirmed on April 17. It was quickly determined that the virus was spreading from person-to-person. On April 22, CDC activated its Emergency Operations Center to better coordinate the public health response. On April 26, the United States Government declared a public health emergency.

It's thought that novel influenza A (H1N1) flu spreads in the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread; mainly through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with the virus. Since the outbreak began in the United States, an increasing number of U.S. states have reported cases of novel H1N1 influenza with associated hospitalizations and deaths. By June 3, all 50 states in the United States and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were reporting cases of novel H1N1 infection. While nationwide U.S. influenza surveillance systems indicate that overall influenza activity is decreasing in the country at this time, H1N1 outbreaks are ongoing in parts of the U.S., in some cases with intense activity.

It's uncertain at this time how serious or severe this novel H1N1 virus will be in terms of how many people infected will develop serious complications or die or how this new virus may affect the U.S. during its upcoming influenza season in the fall and winter. Because this is a new virus, most people will have little or no immunity against it, and illness may be more severe and widespread as a result. In addition, currently there is no vaccine to protect against this novel H1N1 virus. **CDC anticipates that there will be more cases, more hospitalizations and more deaths associated with this new virus.**

At this time, most people who have become ill with novel H1N1 in the United States have recovered without requiring medical treatment and have experienced typical flu symptoms. CDC is continuing to watch the situation carefully, to support the public health response and to gather information about this virus and its characteristics.

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

PAHO Urges Measured but Alert Response to Flu Pandemic

For the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the declaration of a full-fledged A (H1N1) influenza pandemic means they should be on the alert for new cases but should not necessarily expect a dramatic increase in severe illnesses or deaths, that according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) a spokesman said on June 12. The comments were part of a press briefing held at PAHO headquarters a day after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the spread of influenza A (H1N1) was now at the level of a pandemic. The change in the WHO alert level, from phase 5 to phase 6, was made because evidence points to sustained community transmission of the virus in at least two WHO regions. The phase change indicates global spread, but it does not reflect any change in the severity of illness or impact of the disease, Andrus noted. It does mean that countries that have not yet had cases should expect to begin seeing them. WHO continues to recommend no restrictions on travel and no border closures, saying that these would be highly disruptive of social and economic life but would do little to slow the spread of A (H1N1).

http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1502&Itemid=1

Australia: Rugby Schedule in “Swine Flu Chaos”

Brisbane has admitted it might not be able to field a team for Friday night's (June 12) blockbuster against the Bulldogs at Suncorp Stadium because of the swine flu threat, as the NRL moved to quell growing panic over the illness. The Broncos were anxiously awaiting results last night after having their six Origin representatives tested. There are concerns that Queensland reserve back Karmichael Hunt was beginning to show symptoms of swine flu. The H1N1 virus has already floored Hunt's Maroons teammate, Bulldogs prop Ben Hannant, and prompted the league to recommend all players and officials involved in State of Origin I in Melbourne be placed into quarantine as a precaution.

<http://crofsblogs.typepad.com/h5n1/2009/06/australia-rugby-schedule-in-swine-flu-chaos.html>

Mexico Will Host International H1N1 Conference

Health ministers from 40 nations and senior officials from the World Health Organization (WHO) will gather in Mexico's Caribbean resort of Cancun early next month to discuss influenza A/H1N1, the health ministry announced earlier this month. The meeting, slated for July 1-3, aims to share the best practice in tackling the disease, which has infected 26,563 people across 73 nations, including 140 deaths, the ministry said in a statement. WHO Director-General Margaret Chan and Pan-American Health Organization Director Mirta Roses are expected to attend the gathering. Participating countries will be those which have been suffering from A/H1N1 flu in recent weeks, though the meeting is also open to other nations that are interested in the outbreak, the ministry said.

<http://crofsblogs.typepad.com/h5n1/2009/06/mexico-will-host-international-h1n1-conference.html>

How a Mild Virus Might Turn Vicious

The swine flu virus is rapidly making its way around the world, but it has been relatively mild so far, causing only 139 confirmed deaths. Could it mutate into something more lethal? Scientists looking at its genetic structure say there is no obvious pressure for it to do so – no reason for this virus to “want,” in the Darwinian sense, to kill more of its hosts. It is already doing a near-perfect job of keeping itself alive by invading human noses and inducing humans to cough it from one to another, said Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, director of the Center for Infection and Immunity at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. “A really aggressive flu that quickly kills its host” – like SARS and H5N1 avian flu – “gives itself a problem,” Lipkin said. But flu viruses are highly mutable, and anything could happen in the next two years, the time a new strain normally takes to circle the globe. After all, Spanish influenza began as a mild strain, then turned horrifically virulent, killing 20 million to 100 million people in 1918-19. But Dr. Peter Palese, head of microbiology at Mount Sinai Medical School and part of the team that rebuilt that virus in 2005 from fragments found in old lung tissue, said that strain was a “once-a-millennium or once-every-10-millennia event – things like it don't happen very often.” Nor is it clear, he added, that viruses really “want” a particular outcome.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/09/health/09flu.html>

How to Protect Yourself in the Workplace During a Pandemic

The best strategy to reduce the risk of becoming ill with pandemic influenza is to avoid crowded settings and other situations that increase the risk of exposure to someone who may be infected. If you must be in a crowded setting, minimize your time there. Some basic hygiene and social distancing precautions that can be used in every workplace include the following:



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- Stay home if you are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or with a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, or cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve. Dispose of tissues in no-touch trash receptacles.
- Wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with coworkers and customers.
- Avoid shaking hands and always wash your hands after physical contact with others.
- If wearing gloves, always wash your hands after removing them.
- Keep frequently touched common surfaces (for example, telephones, computer equipment, etc.) clean.
- Try not to use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment.
- Minimize group meetings; use e-mails, phones and text messaging. If meetings are unavoidable, avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with others and ensure that the meeting room is properly ventilated.
- Limit unnecessary visitors to the workplace.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle; attention to rest, diet, exercise and relaxation helps maintain physical and emotional health.

For more information, see *Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Pandemic*, OSHA Publication No. 3327, which can be accessed at www.osha.gov.

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<http://www.osha.gov/Publications/protect-yourself-pandemic.html>

HHS Announces Advanced Development Contract for New Way to Make Flu Vaccine

HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced this month that the department will pursue advanced development of new way to make influenza vaccine. The work will be done by Protein Sciences Corporation, Inc., of Meriden, Conn., under a new \$35 million contract. The contract could be extended up to five years at a total cost of approximately \$147 million. With this new technology, known as recombinant influenza vaccine, a gene would be extracted from a flu virus and placed into an insect virus called baculovirus, which does not affect people and can multiply quickly to high levels in insect cells. The cells are purified to become a basic part of a human vaccine. Using this method, vaccine candidates, clinical investigational lots, and commercial-scale vaccine production may be available faster than by using traditional vaccine production methods. Because the basic cells can be frozen and stored indefinitely, manufacturing large quantities of a vaccine is also faster using this recombinant technology. The new contract will be administered by the Office of Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) within HHS and will support Protein Sciences Corporation, Inc., in advanced development activities needed for potential Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval to use this new technology for producing flu vaccines. The award aligns with the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan, which calls on HHS to develop and procure medical countermeasures for pandemic influenza or for potentially pandemic strains, such as the recent novel H1N1 flu virus.

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/06/20090623c.html>

Pandemic Blog

Here's a blog resource about pandemic flu with a particular focus on business continuity that may be a helpful resource for our readers.

<http://blogs.gartner.com/business-continuity/>

WHO says H1N1 virus is stable, not yet mutating

The World Health Organization said on Thursday, June 25, that the H1N1 virus was stable and there was no sign yet of it mixing with other influenza viruses. Some health officials have raised concerns that if H1N1, known by many as swine flu, combined with the much deadlier H5N1 bird flu virus then the pandemic could claim many more lives.

"The virus is still very stable," WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan told reporters at a news briefing in Moscow when asked if there were any signs of the virus mixing with other strains such as avian flu. "But as we all know the influenza virus is highly unpredictable and has great potential for mutation," Chan said after meeting Russian Health Minister Tatyana Golikova. Chan's remarks are some of the first comments by the WHO leadership since the United Nations agency declared an influenza pandemic on June 11.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20090625/hl_nm/us_flu_who

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

DHS Announces Release of New No Cost Infrastructure Protection Training Course

The Department of Homeland Security has announced the release of a revised version of IS-860.a National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP). This online course was jointly developed by the DHS Office of Infrastructure Protection and FEMA's Emergency Management Institute. The NIPP, originally released in 2006, was revised and updated early this year to reflect experience and changes in the threat environment. The free course is available on FEMA's Emergency Management Institute learning site (<http://training.fema.gov/>).

http://www.dhs.gov/xprevprot/programs/editorial_0827.shtm

International Association of Emergency Manager's Annual Conference: "Emergency Management: United We Stand"

Oct. 31-Nov. 5; Orlando, Fla.

IAEM, a non-profit organization representing more than 4,500 emergency management and homeland security professionals and others involved in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from all types of disasters including acts of terrorism, has announced this year's conference and exhibit to be held in Orlando.

<http://www.iaem.com/events/annual/intro.htm>

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 NICCReports@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.

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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/>



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

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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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