



# ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

March 2010

## ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

### Fairfax County Snow Summit

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' Transportation Committee hosted a "Snow Summit" on Tuesday, March 16. The summit reviewed what worked well and what did not, at both the state level and the county level during this winter's massive snowstorms. The summit included presentations from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the county and Fairfax County Public Schools. Replays are available at:

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable/channel16/asx/snow\\_summit\\_2010.asx](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cable/channel16/asx/snow_summit_2010.asx)

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/2010/county-snow-summit-2010.htm>



Meanwhile, Fairfax County officials are encouraging residents to help remove dirt and sod left on the roads by snowplows. Residents and business owners also are asked to replace any missing grass on their properties.

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/2010/remove-dirt-and-sod-from-roads.htm>

### New U.S. Military Policy Opens Up Social Media to the Troops

A new policy by the Pentagon has reversed multiple bans on social media Web sites and tools, effective immediately. This policy includes YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Google Apps and other social tools. Certain branches of the military, such as the U.S. Marines, banned the use of social media because they are a "proven haven for malicious actors and content and are particularly high risk due to information exposure." This recent decision, handed down by the Office of Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn, will reverse that ban and others, such as the one the U.S. Army has had on YouTube since 2007. According to the Department of Defense Social Media Hub (<http://socialmedia.defense.gov>), the new policy states that "the default for the DoD non-classified network is for open access so that all of DoD can use new media. Prior ... the Services and other DoD components developed and implemented their own ad hoc policies – some banning it altogether."

<http://mashable.com/2010/02/26/military-social-media/>

<http://www.socialmediatoday.com/SMC/179279>

<http://socialmedia.defense.gov/index.php/2010/02/26/dod-official-policy-on-newsocial-media/>

New policy: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-09-026.pdf>

### Social Media Sites Provide Morale Boost, Official Says

A newly introduced Defense Department social media policy opens doors that can provide a morale boost for families and troops serving in a war zone, a senior official who helped to design the policy said earlier this month. Speaking on National Public Radio's "Talk of the Nation," Price B. Floyd said the families he's talked to describe Web sites such as Facebook and Skype as "invaluable" for keeping in touch with their deployed family members. Floyd was appointed as the principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for public affairs last year, when the department had no social media policy in place, and he worked to design a policy that balances openness with the department's security needs. The new policy, issued last month, authorizes access to Web 2.0 platforms from nonclassified government computers, as long as it doesn't compromise operational security or involve prohibited activities or Web sites. Access also is subject to local bandwidth availability.

<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=58357>

### UK Snow: Work from Home Plans Failed

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.

In a survey, 94 percent of UK SMEs polled admitted that work from home strategies did not go smoothly during the UK's December – January snow events. The survey, conducted by the IT solutions consultancy ramsac, also shows that while 60 percent of businesses had at least half their staff absent during the snow in January, only 33 percent actually had an effective business continuity plan in place. Robert May, managing director of ramsac said, "The estimates of the cost to the UK economy caused by lost working days over the first two weeks of 2010 vary wildly (our survey suggested an average of around £13,800 for each business that responded), but it's very clear that a huge proportion of businesses in the UK had large numbers of staff unable to get in to their normal place of work. Unfortunately it wasn't an isolated case. Severe weather in December and also back in February of 2009, demonstrated that it's not just a one off occurrence." Despite the recent snow-bound reminders, bad weather isn't the only thing that can render whole offices (or vital members of staff) out of action. As May comments, "Pandemic illness, child care problems, power failures, floods, fires – the list of possible interruptions to the modus operandi are countless – so it is essential to plan for these potential problems."

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/news05025.html>

### **U.S. Senators Criticise FEMA's Proposed Disaster Recovery Plan**

FEMA's proposed national disaster recovery plan still has significant gaps, four leading senators have told Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Chairman Joe Lieberman, ID-Conn., and Ranking Member Susan Collins, R-Me., along with Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery Chairman Mary Landrieu, D-La., and Ranking Member Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., have submitted formal comments to the Secretary on the draft National Disaster Recovery Framework in a letter, available at:

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/news05019.html>

### **Prepare for Disasters Using Social Media**

Earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes — lately, it seems like there's a new natural disaster wreaking havoc on poor planet Earth every week. From our television sets to our Twitter streams, it's impossible to ignore the devastation these disasters leave behind. And, no matter where you're watching from, it's hard not to feel just a little bit helpless in the face of such colossal catastrophes. But when it comes to natural disasters, modern technology is making it easier than ever to take control by creating your own emergency response system — no high pitched beeping required. There are tons of tools to help you create emergency preparedness plans, keep in touch during a disaster, and get your life back after one strikes. Nothing will keep you safer or saner during a natural disaster than having a good plan in advance. Here's a good article with all sorts of emergency preparedness resources utilizing social media.

<http://mashable.com/2010/03/09/prepare-disaster-social-media/>

### **FEMA Personnel And Rescue Teams Honored By President Obama For Support Of Haiti Response**

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel and members of FEMA-trained Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams from California, Florida, New York and Virginia joined other personnel and teams involved in the United States response to Haiti for a Rose Garden ceremony with President Obama on Wednesday, March 10. The President thanked all who participated in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-led effort. Under the direction of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), FEMA communications personnel from Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT), and a Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) team, as well as support from FEMA external affairs, were activated to support the Haiti response. In addition, USAR teams totaling more than 500 personnel deployed to the country. These teams included Virginia Task Force 1 from the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=50602>



### **Virginia Task Force One Recognized by Fairfax County Board of Supervisors**

At its meeting on Tuesday, March 9, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recognized Virginia Task Force 1 (VATF-1), which deployed to Haiti on behalf of the federal government to assist with the rescue of victims after the recent earthquake. VATF-1 rescued 16 people.

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/vataskforce1/>

## December Snowstorm SBA Disaster Assistance Available

The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering low-interest rate disaster loans to certain private nonprofit organizations the severe winter weather that occurred on Dec. 18-20. Eligible organizations include, among others, food kitchens, homeless shelters, museums, libraries, community centers, schools and colleges. Private nonprofit (PNP) organizations in Fairfax County and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park are eligible. PNP organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets. Disaster loan information and application forms are available by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for the hearing-impaired) or by sending an e-mail to [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). Applications can also be downloaded from [www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance](http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance) or PNP's may visit SBA's secure Web site at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/> to apply for disaster loans online. The filing deadline to return applications for physical property damage is April 19, 2010. The deadline to return economic injury applications is Nov. 16, 2010. **A Joint Field Office has been established.** Because JFO staff will be dealing mostly with reimbursement paperwork for disaster costs and because of the widespread nature of the snowstorm (four of the six FEMA Region III states and Washington D.C. received a declaration), the JFO will be virtual, with most business conducted online.



*Reprinted from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management e-mail newsletter, EM Update, March 10.*

## Governor McDonnell Requests Federal Disaster Assistance for State and Local Governments

*Two February storms brought a total of nearly 4 feet of snow to parts of Virginia*

Governor Bob McDonnell has requested federal disaster assistance to reimburse state and local governments for costs associated with the severe winter storms that occurred Feb. 5-6 and Feb. 9-10. The Governor has requested assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reimburse state agencies and 26 localities for damage to public infrastructure, debris removal, related emergency services and snow removal costs.

[http://www.vaemergency.com/newsroom/releases/2010/misc/gov\\_requests\\_federal\\_disaster\\_feb2010.cfm](http://www.vaemergency.com/newsroom/releases/2010/misc/gov_requests_federal_disaster_feb2010.cfm)

## 60th Anniversary of the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" Program

On March 10, FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III announced the FBI's commemoration of its famous "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" program, created 60 years ago. In 1949, a reporter for the International News Service (the predecessor to United Press International) approached the FBI and asked about writing a story about the "toughest guys" being sought by the FBI at the time. The Bureau provided the names and descriptions of 10 fugitives to the reporter. The resulting feature became a major story and gained national attention. As a consequence of overwhelming public interest, on March 14, 1950, then-Director J. Edgar Hoover inaugurated the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitives program. Since then, the FBI, through the "Top Ten" list, has been asking for help from the public to locate America's most dangerous fugitives. The response has been impressive. Since 1950, 494 fugitives have appeared on the list; 463 have been apprehended or located, with 152 of those fugitives located as a direct result of citizen cooperation.

[http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel10/toptenanniversary\\_031010.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel10/toptenanniversary_031010.htm)

## Census Scams

The U.S. Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov>) uses a workforce of trained federal employees to conduct a variety of household and business surveys by telephone, in-person interviews, through the mail, and in limited cases through the Internet. Here are some tips to help you recognize fraudulent activity or unofficial data collections.

- The Census Bureau does NOT conduct the 2010 Census via the Internet.
- The Census Bureau does not send e-mails about participating in the 2010 Census.
  - The Census Bureau never asks for your full social security number; ssk's for money or a donation; sends requests on behalf of a political party; or requests PIN codes, passwords or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts.

<http://l.pr/a4c0q/Census>

United States<sup>®</sup>  
**Census**  
**2010**

### **Census Bureau Rolls Out New Interactive Maps Showing 2010 Census Mail Participation Rates**

U.S. Census Bureau Director Robert Groves on March 24 released the initial 2010 Census mail participation rates for the nation, showing that 16 percent of households have mailed back their census forms so far. The announcement came a week after 120 million households received their 2010 Census forms in the mail. Groves also announced a new mapping tool, developed in collaboration with Google, to track and map response rates. The new maps on the 2010 Census Web site allow anyone to track how well their area is responding to the once-a-decade count on a day-by-day basis. This same daily data is also available as a layer for Google Earth, both as a downloadable file to open in the application, as well as an easy-to-embed local rate tracker (widget) that can be embedded in any web site. More details are available at <http://google-latlong.blogspot.com>. The new tools, part of the Census Bureau's "Take 10" program, are an effort to make data more visually accessible and searchable.

[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/2010\\_census/014638.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/2010_census/014638.html)

### **NOAA Holds First Tsunami Awareness Week**

*NOAA and coastal states to test tsunami warning communication system*

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program designated March 21-27 as Tsunami Awareness Week. This designation comes in the wake of last month's tsunami in Chile and less than six months after a tsunami hit American Samoa, both events resulting in loss of life and property. As part of tsunami awareness week, NOAA's National Weather Service hosted open houses at its tsunami warning centers in Alaska and Hawaii, and many coastal states hosted community tsunami awareness activities.

[http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2010/20100319\\_tsunami.html](http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2010/20100319_tsunami.html)

### **\$4.9 Million in Grant Funds Awarded to Virginia Police and Sheriffs' Departments**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has awarded \$4.9 million in State Homeland Security Program grants to 45 local police and sheriffs' departments all across Virginia to acquire equipment crucial to fight crime and deter terrorist acts. The State Homeland Security Program provides funds to help build capabilities at the state and local levels through planning, training, exercise activities and purchase of needed equipment. Equipment scheduled for purchase with these grants includes incident response vehicles, personal protective equipment, automatic license plate readers and bomb squad gear. Potential recipients and equipment needs were identified through an analysis conducted annually by local law enforcement leaders, the Virginia Sheriffs' Association, and the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police. Based on the needs analysis, project proposals were developed and submitted through the Governor's Office to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for review and approval. Once DHS approved, the grants were issued by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the administrative agency in Virginia for law enforcement grants under the SHSP program. More information regarding grant opportunities with DCJS can be found at <http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/grants>.

### **FEMA Finalizes New Flood Maps For Washington, Dc**

On Friday, March 26, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began a six-month process to develop revised flood maps for Washington, D.C., designed to help local officials and residents identify known flood risks, and assist in making insurance and development decisions. FEMA continues to update its flood hazard maps nationwide under Congressional guidance and direction in order to provide communities with solid information for making decisions on how to mitigate and insure against the risks posed by floods. In revising flood maps, FEMA works closely with local communities to ensure that any verifiable data and additional input that will strengthen the flood maps is included and incorporated—along with detailed ground elevation data, decades of rainfall and storm gauge information, and engineering models. Home and business owners who purchase flood insurance prior to the effective date of the new maps may be able to obtain a preferred risk policy or be grandfathered into the current flood zone, thereby saving money on flood insurance, and should talk with their local insurance agent to discuss their options. Once the revised flood maps are finalized and effective, some flood insurance policy holders may see changes in their policies. All policyholders are encouraged to contact their insurance agent or company to ensure that they have adequate coverage and that policies account for new flood risk information. More information on flood insurance is available at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

## MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

### **Homeland Security Survey Shows Similar Structures Across States, Evolving Priorities, Funding Concerns**

Results of an annual survey of governors homeland security advisors, released during the National Governors Association (NGA) Winter Meeting in February, showed similar homeland security governance structures across states, evolving priorities as a result of current events like the H1N1 pandemic and concerns about sustaining security capabilities under current funding mechanisms. The 2009 State Homeland Security Advisors Survey, which is in its sixth year, provides an overview of states' homeland security governance structures, strategies and priorities, as well as an examination of the evolving relationship between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and states in the areas of communications, intelligence sharing and coordination of efforts. Key findings of the survey include:

- Pandemic influenza preparedness, which had fallen from the list of priorities in 2008, reemerged as a priority for the states as the H1N1 pandemic played out.
- More than half of states have placed their homeland security operations within a broader cabinet-level department.
- More than half of respondents have positioned their state's primary fusion center under the command of the homeland security director.
- Communications from DHS to the states continued to improve in 2009.
- A strong majority of respondents believe DHS should improve the grant allocation process and work with Congress to permanently restore allowable management and administration funding to 5 percent.
- States are struggling to sustain their capabilities with the amount of grant funding that is available to them and are hoping for some relief from the administrative burdens that come with that funding.

<http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.6c9a8a9ebc6ae07eee28aca9501010a0/>

### **Virginia State Police launch Facebook Page**

The Virginia State Police agency is hoping people who become fans of its new page on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/VirginiaStatePolice>) will help the department solve crimes and find missing people and fugitives. The agency launched its page on the social-networking Web site on March 1. Superintendent Col. W. Steven Flaherty said that incorporating social media into communications and outreach efforts is a natural progression for the agency.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/02/AR2010030200995.html>

### **When Is a State of Emergency Over?**

Elected officials declare emergencies with relative ease. But declaring them over is another matter. Some 880 emergencies remain "open" on government books — 61 of them more than a decade old — as federal government workers attempt to reconcile money allocated for the disaster with money actually spent. In some instances, the accounting books remain open because it takes years to rebuild roads, bridges and buildings destroyed by fires, floods and earthquakes. But in other cases, disasters remain open because of unyielding bureaucratic rules, according to a report by Department of Homeland Security Inspector General. Auditors found 45 "open" disasters in which the amount of money to be reconciled was less than \$10. Blame for needless delays in closing disasters resides with virtually every level of government and with organizations that receive emergency agency grants, the report says. Regional officials said it was "politically unacceptable" to remove programs established in the wake of disasters. Staff shortages at various levels of government contribute to delays, as do new disasters, which get priority attention. The report looks at a snapshot in time: September 30, 2008. At that time, there were 880 "open" disasters. Of that number, 744 were open because of obligations that had not yet been paid totaling \$16 billion. The remaining 136 disasters were delayed for other reasons, such as appeals or because of other priority work.

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/POLITICS/03/01/fema.disasters/>

### **Federal Emergency Communications Center Struggling**

A GAO report outlines challenges facing the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center, including a lack of authority, and an inability to prove its value to stakeholders. Members of the Emergency Communications

Preparedness Center said they are having difficulty getting agencies to comply with its recommendations, mainly because they have no authority to force them to do so. This and other concerns were raised in a report released by the Government Accountability Office, which reviewed the ECPC's charter and interviewed officials from member agencies. The ECPC was formed in 2007 in the wake of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina to serve as a clearinghouse for the sharing of emergency communications information during a national crisis. Its charter was approved last October. The group is required to submit an annual assessment to Congress regarding the preparedness of government agencies to communicate effectively in a crisis.

<http://www.informationweek.com/news/government/security/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=223200083>

### **El Niño Could Whip Up More Active Tornado Season**

Weather forecasters say the wetter-than-usual El Niño winter that has blasted much of the United States could be followed by an active tornado season. Greg Forbes, severe weather expert at The Weather Channel, said earlier this month that comparable past winters suggest there could be an above-average number of tornadoes this year. "The average was 9 percent more tornadoes than a typical year," he said. El Niño is a seasonal weather pattern in which warm equatorial winds that periodically push toward the West Coast send moist air to the nation's interior. Tornadoes can happen at any time, but they are most common in the first half of the year in the USA. The 2010 tornado season has had a slow start, with 44 tornadoes reported through Monday, March 8, according to the National Weather Service. The average number for this time is 162, according to the weather service.

[http://www.usatoday.com/weather/storms/tornadoes/2010-03-09-tornado\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/weather/storms/tornadoes/2010-03-09-tornado_N.htm)

### **Absence of U.S. Flag in Haiti Sparks Controversy**

According to "USA Today," the many nations helping Haiti recover from the devastating earthquake that struck there have set up their own military compounds and fly their flags at the entrances. France's tricolor, Britain's Union Jack and even Croatia's coat of arms flap in the breeze. But the country whose contributions dwarf the rest of the world's — the United States — has no flag at its main installation near the Port-au-Prince airport. The lack of the Stars and Stripes does not sit well with some veterans and servicemembers who say the U.S. government should be proud to fly the flag in Haiti, given the amount of money and manpower the U.S. is donating to help the country recover from the Jan. 12 quake.

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2010-03-14-haiti-flag-flap\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2010-03-14-haiti-flag-flap_N.htm)



### **Michael Chertoff on the Lessons from Cyber ShockWave**

In February, the BiPartisan Policy Center hosted a mock cyber wargame called "Cyber ShockWave," which examined how the U.S. would respond to a cyber attack. Former DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff served as the head of the mock NSC during the wargame. He wrote a column for Government Computer News (GCN) on the lessons he feels should be taken from the event. Chertoff views cybersecurity as an integral part of national security and should be treated as such. From his viewpoint, Chertoff sees a number of valuable lessons from the event.

<http://www.thenewnewinternet.com/2010/03/11/michael-chertoff-on-the-lessons-from-cyber-shockwave/>

GCN article: <http://gcn.com/articles/2010/03/15/commentary-chertoff-cyber-shockwave.aspx>

### **Snowstorm Response Examined**

*Emergency response managers critique performance during recent snowstorms*

The December and February snowstorms in the National Capital Region (NCR) severely challenged critical emergency response resources according to testimony by experts this week before the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management at a hearing (<http://transportation.house.gov/hearings/hearingDetail.aspx?NewsID=1132>) titled Snow Disasters for Local, State, and Federal Governments in the National Capitol Region. The hearing, chaired by subcommittee chair Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN), focused on how the federal government, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, local governments in the region and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) responded to these storms and how they are working to prepare for the next disaster in the region.

<http://www.hstoday.us/content/view/12659/149/>

## 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. 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 level, businesses should:

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

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

[http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/programs/Copy\\_of\\_press\\_release\\_0046.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/programs/Copy_of_press_release_0046.shtm)

<http://vaemergency.com/>

### Is the Private Sector Prepared?

On Thursday, March 4, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs' ad hoc subcommittee on state, local, and private sector preparedness held a hearing on private sector preparedness. According to the Homeland Security Watch blog, three distinguished experts on homeland security and disaster preparedness appeared before committee chairman, Senator Mark L. Pryor (D-Ark.). Stephen Jordan, executive director of the Business Civic Leadership Center of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, lead off the testimony by highlighting the business community's commitment to investments in resilience. Dr. Jack Harrald, chairman of the National Academies Disaster Roundtable, who emphasized the opportunity presented by heightened awareness of our vulnerability to catastrophic events. And Dr. Stephen Flynn, president of the Center for National Policy, remarked on the importance of community resilience to national security.

<http://www.hlswatch.com/2010/03/10/is-the-private-sector-prepared/>

### Flooding Safety Rules

- Monitor the NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, or your favorite news source for vital weather related information.
  - If flooding occurs, get to higher ground. Get out of areas subject to flooding. This includes dips, low spots, canyons, washes etc.
  - Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams.
- Turn Around Don't Drown!**
- Road beds may be washed out under flood waters. NEVER drive through flooded roadways. **Turn Around**

**Don't Drown!** If your vehicle is suddenly caught in rising water, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.

- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

[http://www.noaa.gov/features/03\\_protecting/index.html](http://www.noaa.gov/features/03_protecting/index.html)

### **Spring Flooding Season Approaches**

Flooding is the most common natural disaster in Virginia, and it is costly. Just one inch of water in a home or office leads to about \$8,000 in cleanup, including replacing drywall, baseboards, floor coverings, furniture, and some utilities and heating equipment. Homeowner's and business insurance policies typically do not cover flooding. As spring flooding season approaches, Fairfax

County residents and businesses are encouraged to talk with their agents now about flood insurance because there is normally a 30-day waiting period before coverage begins. Flood insurance is available to all types of property owners and tenants, including renters. Go to [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) or call 1-800-427-2419 for information about flood insurance. To learn about preparing in advance for disasters and emergencies including flooding, visit [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov) for more information.



*Photo courtesy of USGS*

### **Flood Safety Tips for Your Organization**

Prepare your organization for flash floods with a flood evacuation plan, off-site data servers and remote work plans. [www.fema.gov/hazard/flood/index.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/hazard/flood/index.shtm).

### **Dominion Virginia Power Establishes New Toll-free Telephone Number**

Dominion Virginia Power has created an easy-to-remember customer service telephone number, 1-866-DOM-HELP, so that customers will not need to look up the number during a power outage. Dominion received more than 268,000 calls during the recent historic winter storm, and encourages customers to program the number into their phones. Customers should ensure that their home phone number is registered with the company. Dominion's automated phone system links incoming calls to the customer's service address to speed outage reporting and customer service. Customers can register their phone numbers online at [www.dom.com/](http://www.dom.com/) (keyword: *manage your account*) or by calling the company and speaking with a customer care associate. Only one phone number per customer can be registered. The new, easier-to-remember number follows other improvements the company has made to improve customer service. These include providing more information about power outages, energy efficiency and individual customer usage patterns online.

*Reprinted from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management e-mail newsletter, EM Update, March 10.*

### **10 Easy Ways to Improve Your Business Continuity Plan**

Kevin Howells has audited and reviewed hundreds of business continuity and DR plans. In this article he summarizes the errors most frequently found during this process. Among the tips is media training. According to Howells, "A good business continuity plan should clearly assign personnel to liaise with the media, train them, and specifically prohibit anyone else from talking to a media organization. Dealing with a damaging incident is bad enough without having also to deal with criticism from the media, and thereafter the local community and other stakeholders."

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature0759.html>

### **Survey: Disaster Recovery a Bigger Priority than Data Security**

Despite the ever increasing threat of cyber attacks and hackers, business leaders who recently took part in a Honeywell-sponsored survey say that disaster recovery planning and preparedness are a bigger priority than securing their networks. Of the more than 400 corporate executives who took part in the survey entitled, "2009-2010 Preparedness, Security and Crisis Communications," 55 percent said a pandemic was the biggest threat to their organization. Natural disaster was ranked second by executives with 52 percent, followed by data security and

telecom failure/power outages, which received 35 and 45 percent respectively. Both data security and telecom failure/power outages were ranked as top threats in 2008.

<http://www.securityinfowatch.com/survey-disaster-recovery-a-bigger-priority-data-security>

### FEMA Administrator Addresses Tech Companies on Preparedness and Disaster Response

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Administrator Craig Fugate earlier this month (March 19) addressed representatives from some of the leading technology and communications companies, discussing the growing role technology plays in preparedness and disaster response, particularly in engaging the public. “The tech sector is one of the most important members of the nation’s emergency management team,” said Fugate. “Just as technology is constantly changing our daily lives, it’s changing the way we manage disasters. Today’s event provided an opportunity to talk about ways FEMA and the private sector can work together to further engage the public and strengthen our nation’s

preparedness.” As Administrator, Fugate has made a concerted effort to engage the private sector as part of the nation’s emergency management team. He also has made the use of

social networking sites and other new media a central component of the agency’s public outreach, and has met previously with representatives from Google, Microsoft, TechNet and other industry leaders.

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



FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate.

*Photo from FEMA/Bill Koplitz*

### Drills Tested Regional Response to Metro-related Incidents

Metro and its regional partners participated in two emergency response exercises involving simulated explosions on Metrorail and Metrobus on Sunday, March 28, and Monday, March 29, to test and practice the multi-jurisdictional coordination and response needed to mitigate such incidents. The first exercise simulated an explosion on a rail car in the tunnel between the Rosslyn and Foggy Bottom Metrorail stations. As part of the drill, emergency personnel responding to the incident found a scene representative of hundreds of injured passengers and multiple fatalities. The exercise took place after midnight when ridership is lighter and fewer passengers were impacted by the emergency response activity. The Rosslyn Metrorail station remained open throughout the drill. The second on Monday was held at the RFK Stadium parking lot and simulated an explosion on a Metrobus with multiple passengers injured, discovery of a second explosive found on a bus in a garage, and phone call stating that additional explosive devices have been placed on other buses. The emergency response exercises are funded through a \$1.2 million U.S. Department of Homeland Security Urban Area Security Initiative grant obtained by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Fire Chiefs and managed by the Arlington County Fire Department.



[http://www.wmata.com/about\\_metro/news/PressReleaseDetail.cfm?ReleaseID=4371](http://www.wmata.com/about_metro/news/PressReleaseDetail.cfm?ReleaseID=4371)

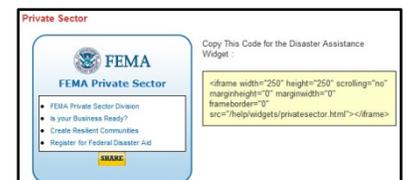
### FEMA Private Sector Widget

The FEMA Private Sector Division recently launched the new FEMA private sector widget leveraging Web 2.0 tools to enhance our ability to protect, prepare, respond, recover and mitigate against all forms of disasters as well as enhance community resiliency across the nation. FEMA’s goals with Web 2.0 tools are:

- Provide timely and accurate information related to disaster preparedness response and recovery.
- Provide the public with another avenue for insight into the agency’s operations.
- Engage in what has already become a critical medium in today’s world of communications.

[www.fema.gov/privatesector](http://www.fema.gov/privatesector)

Is Your Business Ready? (The Ready Campaign) - <http://www.ready.gov/business/index.html>



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Create Resilient Communities with Citizen Corps - <http://www.citizencorps.gov/>  
To get the FEMA widgets: <http://www.fema.gov/help/widgets/#4>

## PANDEMIC FLU

### Findings Confirm H1N1 Flu's Toll on Pregnant Women

Reuters reports that new research from Australia confirms that the H1N1 flu hits pregnant women particularly hard—especially if they have asthma, obesity or diabetes.

[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory\\_95810.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_95810.html)

### FDA Issues Final Guidance to Boost Development of Cell-based Viral Vaccines

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today issued final guidance to help manufacturers who are developing safe and effective cell-based viral vaccines to address emerging and pandemic threats. Titled “Guidance for Industry: Characterization and Qualification of Cell Substrates and Other Biological Materials Used in the Production of Viral Vaccines for Infectious Disease Indications,” the document will aid manufacturers who wish to use new cell substrates for vaccine production, such as for influenza vaccines. Currently, all licensed influenza vaccines are produced in chicken eggs. Report: <http://l.pr/a4c1x/>

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/03/20100302a.html>

### American College Health Association Spring Break Vaccination Letter

*Don't let influenza spoil your plans for Spring Break*

Although flu activity has declined in recent weeks, 2009 H1N1 Influenza viruses continue to spread in the United States and abroad, causing illness, hospitalizations and even deaths. Recently, several colleges and universities have reported increased influenza activity on their campuses. Flu activity is difficult to predict, but experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) expect that flu activity — caused by 2009 H1N1 or seasonal flu viruses — will continue for weeks, and parts of the world may even see big outbreaks. This season the 2009 H1N1 virus has hit young adults especially hard in terms of illness, as most young people do not have immunity to the virus. For these reasons, the CDC and the American College Health Association (ACHA) continue to encourage all students, faculty and staff at universities and colleges to protect themselves against 2009 H1N1 by getting vaccinated. In the spring of 2009, we saw the spread of 2009 H1N1 result in a lot of illness following travel associated with “Spring Break.” With the 2010 “Spring Break” coming up and large numbers of students expected to travel both domestically and internationally, getting vaccinated against 2009 H1N1 influenza is especially important.

<http://www.flu.gov/professional/school/springbreakltr.html>

### Morbid Obesity a Risk Factor for Hospitalization and Death due to 2009 H1N1

During the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, early reports from the United States and abroad suggested that obesity was more frequent among persons hospitalized with 2009 H1N1 disease or who died following 2009 H1N1 infection. Since that time, a number of studies have suggested that many 2009 H1N1 patients tend to be morbidly obese. The study “Morbid Obesity as a Risk Factor for hospitalization and Death due to 2009 Pandemic Influenza A (H1N1) Disease,” sought to determine whether or not obesity or morbid obesity were in fact independent risk factors for serious 2009 H1N1-related complications, including death. This study found that morbidly obese persons have a higher risk of hospitalization for 2009 H1N1 infection compared to persons with normal weight. Data from this study also suggest that the risk of death following H1N1 infection may be higher for morbidly obese individuals.

[http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/in\\_the\\_news/obesity\\_qa.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/in_the_news/obesity_qa.htm)

### Follow Flu.gov on Twitter

Flu.gov is using Twitter. If you use social media, you may want to “follow” them on Twitter.

<http://twitter.com/flu.gov>



### **Vaccinating Children against Flu Helps Protect Wider Community**

Results of a clinical trial conducted in a largely self-contained religious community during the 2008-09 influenza season show that immunizing children against seasonal influenza can significantly protect unvaccinated community members against influenza as well. The study was conducted to determine if immunized children could act as a barrier to limit the spread of influenza to the wider, unvaccinated community, a concept known as herd immunity. The researchers found that influenza vaccination was 61 percent effective at indirectly preventing illness—that is, protecting via herd immunity—in unvaccinated individuals if they lived in a colony where approximately 80 percent of the children had received flu vaccine. The findings, they write, “...offer experimental proof to support selective influenza immunization of school aged children...to interrupt influenza transmission.”

<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/newsreleases/2010/Hutterite.htm>

### **Bird Flu Remains a Threat: WHO**

Bird flu outbreaks that have killed seven people in several countries so far this year show the virus remains a threat to humans, the World Health Organization (WHO) said Wednesday, March 24 (as reported by Yahoo! News). “The newly confirmed human and poultry cases of avian influenza this year are a reminder that the virus poses a real and continuous threat to human health, the WHO said in a statement. One danger is that bird flu, also known as H5N1, may mutate, warned Takeshia Sakai, the WHO's regional adviser for communicable diseases. So far this year, authorities monitored 21 human cases of bird flu from Egypt, Vietnam and Indonesia, including seven deaths, the organization said.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20100324/hl\\_afp/healthfluwhoasia](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20100324/hl_afp/healthfluwhoasia)

### **1918 and 2009 Pandemic Influenza Viruses Lack a Sugar Topping**

Although they emerged more than 90 years apart, the influenza viruses responsible for the pandemics of 1918 and 2009 share a structural detail that makes both susceptible to neutralization by the same antibodies. Scientists led by Gary J. Nabel, M.D., Ph.D., of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, describe the molecular basis for this shared vulnerability and suggest how it might be exploited to design vaccines matched to future pandemic influenza virus strains. The research appears online in the journal “Science Translational Medicine.”

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/mar2010/niaid-24.htm>

Visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) for one-stop access to U.S. government influenza.

Also, visit NIAID's flu Web portal at <http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/topics/Flu>.

### **Everyday Preventive Actions That Can Help Fight Germs, Like Flu**

New flyer available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

[http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/2009-10/pdf/everyday\\_preventive\\_actions.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/2009-10/pdf/everyday_preventive_actions.pdf)



## **TRAININGS / EXERCISES / CONFERENCES**

### **2010 Emergency Preparedness Conference**

April 8-9; Washington, D.C.

The theme is “Emergency Preparedness Compliance 2010.” This conference brings together the best practices and case studies for “planning, maintaining, responding, executing and evaluating the six critical elements of emergency preparedness,” and it fulfills 13 continuing education contact hours.

<http://www.jcrrinc.com/common/PDFs/education/E-prep-brochure.pdf>

### **25th Annual NSI IMPACT 2010! Conference, Expo and Awareness Fair**

April 26-28; Westfields Marriott, Chantilly, Va.

IMPACT 2010 is programmed by security professionals who are confronting the same issues, worrying the same

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worries and wrestling with the same problems. Register at <http://nsi.org/impact-registration.html>; 508-533-9099.

### **Defense Industrial Base Critical Infrastructure Protection Conference**

April 26-28; Philadelphia, Pa.

This year's theme is "Risk Reduction & Mitigation in the Defense Industrial Base." The panel topics include "Critical Infrastructure Protection/Resilience Leadership," "Threats to the Defense Industrial Base," "Cyber Security Critical Infrastructure Protection and Public-Private Partnerships," "Critical Infrastructure Protection Mission Assurance Assessments," "Effective Partnerships for Homeland Defense and Security Program Implementation" and "Commercial Interdependencies Risk Management."

<http://www.ndia.org/meetings/0030/Pages/default.aspx>

### **Sport Event Risk Management Workshop**

April 27-28; FedEx Field, Washington, D.C.,

DHS has identified professional and collegiate stadiums and arenas as potential targets for terrorist activity. The Sport Event Risk Management Workshop has been specially designed for NCAA institutions to help them develop university security action teams, which are composed of specialists from five distinct areas: campus police, athletic department, emergency management, fire/hazardous materials and emergency medical/health services. The workshop will be delivered to these key personnel via regional workshops. Emergency managers that have an NCAA institution in their areas are encouraged to participate; contact National Center for Spectator Sports Security Project Manager Nick Nabors at 601-266-4694. More information is at [www.ncs4.com/workshop](http://www.ncs4.com/workshop).

### **Emergency Management Procurement Forum**

VDEM's Procurement Office will host the 2010 Emergency Management Procurement Forum, May 2-4, 2010, to raise awareness about being better prepared to procure goods and services during emergencies. The conference will begin with an overview and tour of the Virginia Emergency Operations Center and continue with presentations and demonstrations that address Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprises Small, Woman- and Minority-owned certification, legal issues, Small Purchase Charge Cards, prequalified contracts, ethics and more.

### **Transformational Medical Technologies Initiative Partnership Symposium**

May 3-4; Lansdowne, Va.

The initiative was pioneered by the Defense Department in 2006 to better prepare and protect warfighters and the nation from emerging, genetically engineered, and unknown biothreat agents. Professionals from government, academia, and the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries are invited for a unique opportunity to learn about the initiative, network with the initiative's performers, and discuss collaborative opportunities with the program, the state of medical countermeasure preparedness, and plans for enhancing national capabilities to respond to emerging and novel biological threats.

<https://tmti.jscbis.apgea.army.mil/conferences/>

### **BioDefense 2010**

May 3-4; Washington, D.C.

This conference will evaluate the state of America's biodefense readiness. Speakers will discuss strategy and policy, collaboration, detection and situational awareness, and consequence management.

<http://biodefenseconference.com/index.html>

### **Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction Symposium**

May 5-6; Washington, D.C.

This year's symposium will explore the administration's emerging strategic approach to challenges involving weapons of mass destruction: explicating its key elements, considering the implications for practitioners, and assessing how it all adds up to a comprehensive blueprint for success. It will focus on recent and forthcoming reviews, including the Nuclear Posture Review, the Ballistic Missile Defense Review, and WMD aspects of the Quadrennial Defense Review as well as the National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats and ongoing chemical threat policy deliberations.

[https://beta.saic.com/ndu\\_symposium2010/index.htm](https://beta.saic.com/ndu_symposium2010/index.htm)

### **Clean Atlantic**

May 17-19; Baltimore, Md.

More than 50 speakers, along with over 15 conference sessions, panel discussions, and workshops, will address port and maritime security, inland waterway spills, liquefied natural gas, hazmats, and environmental concerns. The expo features 65+ exhibitors.

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



### **International Hazardous Materials 2010**

May 19-23; Baltimore, Md.

The conference features top hazmat thinkers, strategists, and leaders as they share ideas and insights. The expo offers the chance to talk one on one with leading company representatives about the latest hazmat equipment and technology.

<http://s36.a2zinc.net/clients/IAFC/hazmat10/Public/MainHall.aspx?ID=343&>

### **Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Consequence Management Conference**

June 8-10; Chantilly, Va.

The conference will provide a professional forum for decision makers and planners; develop a deeper understanding of capabilities, limitations, and challenges; and discuss how Defense Department supporting organizations can best provide integrated efforts to domestic and foreign lead federal agencies.

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

### **World Conf. on Disaster Mangement**

June 6-9; Toronto, Canada

Emergency management and business continuity working together – the largest annual conference in the world that brings together professionals from these and other disciplines.

<http://www.wcdm.org/emails/DRG/CS1.html>

### **Virginia Emergency Management Symposium: Haiti Response**

Representatives of two Urban Search and Rescue teams will share their experiences during rescue operations in Haiti after a major earthquake devastated the country on Jan. 12. USAR Virginia Task Force 1, a 72-member team from Fairfax, deployed the day of the earthquake, and pulled a security guard out of the collapsed United Nations building within hours of their arrival. The next day, USAR Task Force 2 from Virginia Beach was deployed. District Chief for the Virginia Beach Fire Department Mark Piland and Battalion Chief for Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Keith Morrison will describe their roles during the deployment. Registration for the 2010 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium, “Heads Up: Changes in Emergency Management,” is available at

<http://www.vemaweb.org/content/conference/>. The symposium offers opportunities to learn from a variety of experts and emerging leaders in public safety and emergency management. Topics include lessons learned from the November Nor’easter, the Washington, D.C. Metro crash and the Rockbridge County plane crash.

### **National Capital Region Homeland Security Events**

[http://www.mwcog.org/committee/committee/events\\_homeland.asp?COMMITTEE\\_ID=134](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://www.redcrossnca.org/Online/disaster_registration.php)

## LINKS

### Fairfax County Blogs and Web Resources

- Fairfax County CERT - <http://fairfaxcountycert.blogspot.com/>
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Web Page - <http://www.fairfaxcountycitizencorps.org/>
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Blog - <http://citizencorps.blogspot.com/>
- Virginia Citizen Corps - <http://www.vaemergency.com/citcorps/index.cfm>

### DHS Science & Technology Directorate Newsletter

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

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

### DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report (OSIR)

The Department of Homeland Security provides a Web-based "Daily OSIR," which is posted on the DHS public Web site. Accessing the report via the Web enables readers to retrieve the current Daily Report as well as 10 days of archived DHS Daily Reports. Once you arrive at the Web page you will find the most recent Daily OSIR at the top of the page, under the title "Current Report." This report is posted each morning, except for weekends and holidays. Simply click on the title "DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report." This will launch the current days report in PDF format. You can continue to submit content comments or make suggestions by contacting the DHS Daily Report Team by telephone at 202-312-5389 or by e-mail at [NICCRports@dhs.gov](mailto:NICCRports@dhs.gov). You can access the Daily OSIR at: [http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/programs/editorial\\_0542.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xinfoshare/programs/editorial_0542.shtm).

### Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Web Page

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

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/)

### Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Line

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/infoline.htm](http://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 703-807-7771**  
**EMERGENCY**  
**INFORMATION LINE**

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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.

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](mailto:merni.fitzgerald@fairfaxcounty.gov).

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