



ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

November 2012

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

Get Where You Need to Be Before the Weather Gets Bad

This winter, Fairfax County encourages residents to remember the phrase, “Get Where You Need to Be Before the Weather Gets Bad.” Why? By staying off the roads during the worst of the weather, Virginia Department of Transportation crews can more easily clear roads and the county’s public safety officials can respond more quickly to residents needing emergency services. When inclement weather is predicted, leave plenty of time to pick up your children from school, run errands and get home. Do not wait until snow begins to start your commute. Sometimes it is safer to stay put and not travel during inclement weather – whether you are at home, work or school. During emergencies, visit the emergency information blog

(www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog) for preparedness tips and news. Sign up online to receive information by e-mail. Weather alerts also can be delivered by text message to your cell phone. Sign up for the Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN) at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean. In addition, keep storm drains clear to help prevent flooding; trim dead or overgrown tree limbs, especially if they are over your home or electric lines; be prepared for power

outages; use space heaters and fireplaces carefully – and never leave a heater on when you are not awake and in the room; avoid exposure to cold temperatures, which can cause serious and even life-threatening health problems such as hypothermia and frostbite, and avoid exertion. Make sure everyone in your household knows how and where to turn off the water. Locate and tag the valve at your main water line so it can be found quickly. The valve is normally located where the water line enters your home through the foundation. Print a water valve tag from Fairfax Water at www.fairfaxwater.org/customer/youplum.htm. Call 703-289-6019 to request a tag by mail. Be a good neighbor and check on those around you, especially seniors and people with disabilities. For more information, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency.



Governor McDonnell Proclaims Dec. 2-8 Winter Preparedness Week in Commonwealth

While Hurricane Sandy brought a surprise, early significant accumulating snowfall to portions of Virginia, meteorological winter doesn't officially begin in the Commonwealth until Saturday, Dec. 2. With the upcoming winter season in mind, Governor Bob McDonnell has proclaimed Dec. 2-8 as Winter Preparedness Week in the Commonwealth and is encouraging all Virginians to take this time to prepare to protect themselves and their families in the event of any major winter storms in the months ahead. What should you do to prepare for winter weather?

Here are several important safety tips:

- Get fireplaces and wood stove chimneys inspected and cleaned. These often build up creosote, which is the residue left behind by burning wood. Creosote is flammable and must be professionally removed.
- Install smoke detectors in every bedroom and one on every level of your home. Check the batteries every month. If you already have smoke detectors and did not replace the batteries when the time changed recently, replace them now.
- If you use space heaters, plug them directly into wall sockets; don't use extension cords. Keep space heaters at least three feet from other objects such as furniture, bedding and draperies. Do not leave space heaters unattended. Turn them off when you go to bed or leave the house.
- Gather emergency supplies. Start with these items: at least three days of food that does not need refrigeration or electricity to prepare, in case the power is out; at least three days of water, which is one gallon of water per day per family member; a battery-powered and/or hand-crank radio and extra batteries; flashlights and extra

batteries; a first-aid kit and an extra supply of medications in case you can't get out to get prescriptions refilled. Get more details and a checklist at www.ReadyVirginia.gov.

- Make an emergency plan. Decide on a meeting place to reunite if your family cannot return home. Choose an out-of-town friend or relative as a point-of-contact and be sure all family members have that person's phone number - it is often easier to call long distance than to call locally during an emergency. Remember family members with special needs and your pets when making your emergency plan. Get a free worksheet at http://www.vaemergency.gov/sites/default/files/Plan_0.pdf.
- Get where you need to be before the weather gets bad. Road condition information is available 24/7 by calling 511 or visiting www.511Virginia.org. Even when roads have been treated with salt and/or sand, drivers should reduce speed and leave a safe driving distance from other vehicles on the road. Driving is most dangerous when the temperature is at or under 32° F. If the road is wet, ice is likely, especially on bridges, ramps and overpasses.

<http://governor.virginia.gov/news/viewRelease.cfm?id=1525>

President Declares Disaster for Commonwealth of Virginia

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency announced (on Nov. 26) that federal disaster aid has been made available to Virginia to supplement the commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Sandy during the period of Oct. 26 to Nov. 8, 2012. The President's action makes federal funding available to the commonwealth and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by Hurricane Sandy in the counties of Accomack, Arlington, Clarke, Craig, Culpeper, Essex, Fauquier, Frederick, Greene, Highland, King and Queen, Lancaster, Loudoun, Madison, Mathews, Middlesex, Nelson, Northampton, Northumberland, Prince William, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Surry, Warren and Westmoreland and the independent cities of Fairfax, Falls Church and Manassas. Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures for all counties and independent cities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Donald L. Keldsen has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area. Keldsen said additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the commonwealth and warranted by the results of further damage assessments. "This action will go a long way toward reimbursing local governments for their costs," said Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell. Emergency management officials at the state and local levels have been working with volunteer groups to assist people who suffered damage from Hurricane Sandy. Homeowners and renters should report damage to their local emergency management officials, who may be aware of volunteer groups in their communities that are actively assisting with clean up and repair efforts. In addition, McDonnell announced that FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program was approved for all Virginia localities. This funding source helps local and state governments take actions to reduce the impact of future disasters, such as elevating homes in flood zones, flood-proofing businesses and other measures.

FEMA announcement: <http://www.fema.gov/news-release/president-declared-disaster-commonwealth-virginia>

Governor's announcement: <http://governor.virginia.gov/News/viewRelease.cfm?id=1522>

Flood Insurance and Why It's Important

Floods can happen anywhere at any time, but certain areas across the U.S. are particularly prone to flooding. To help communities understand their risk, flood maps (Flood Insurance Rate Maps, FIRMs) have been created to show the locations of high-risk, moderate-to-low risk and undetermined-risk areas. To prepare for a flood, it is important for individuals and community partners to know they should:

- Avoid building in a floodplain unless you elevate and reinforce your home.
- Create a personal flood file containing information about all your possessions and keep it in a secure place. For more information about safeguarding your possessions, visit www.knowyourstuff.org.
- Develop a family emergency plan.

For more information about flooding visit www.ready.gov/floods; for more on flood insurance, visit FloodSmart.gov.

Virginia Disaster Relief Fund

The Virginia Disaster Relief Fund is a state-managed relief fund to financially help Virginia residents impacted by disasters. Proceeds of the fund are distributed as grants to Local Disaster Recovery Groups. Grants also can be made

to charities and faith-based organizations associated with the Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters. To donate to the fund, visit <https://payments.vi.virginia.gov/donatenow>.



Most Organizations Unprepared For DDoS Attacks, Study Says

Organizations are becoming increasingly concerned about system availability as they experience more and more distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks, a new study says. The study, conducted by the Ponemon Institute and sponsored by Radware, surveyed 705 IT security professionals on issues related to downtime and DDoS. While security pros have traditionally been focused on preventing data theft or corruption, today's professionals are more worried about system availability, the study says. "DDoS attacks cost companies 3.5 million dollars every year," Ponemon says. Sixty-five percent reported experiencing an average of three DDoS attacks in the past 12 months, with an average downtime of 54 minutes per attack. "With the cost for each minute of downtime amounting to as much as \$100,000 per minute – including lost traffic, diminished end-user productivity and lost revenues – it is no surprise that respondents ranked availability as their top cyber security priority," the study says.

<http://www.darkreading.com/risk-management/167901115/security/vulnerabilities/240142111/most-organizations-unprepared-for-ddos-attacks-study-says.html>

Hurricane Sandy Caused Dramatic Changes to Hundreds of Miles of East Coast Shoreline

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has released a series of aerial photographs showing before-and-after images of Hurricane Sandy's impacts on the Atlantic Coast. The photos, part of a U.S. Geological Survey assessment of coastal change from as far south as the Outer Banks of North Carolina to as far north as Massachusetts, show that the storm caused dramatic changes to portions of shoreline extending hundreds of miles. "This storm's impact on sandy beaches included significant beach and dune erosion and minor disruption of infrastructure in the south," said USGS oceanographer Nathaniel Plant, "to extreme and often catastrophic erosion, overwash and sediment deposition, and inundation on northern beaches like Mantoloking, New Jersey." Overwash occurs when storm surge and waves exceed the elevation of protective sand dunes, thereby transporting sand inland. In addition to threatening infrastructure like roadways, it can bury portions of buildings and cause extensive property damage. Since beaches and dunes serve as a first line of defense against extreme storms, this could further compromise the safety of coastal populations. In the days before Sandy approached the eastern seaboard, the USGS ran models forecasting that 91 percent of the Delmarva coastline would experience beach and dune erosion, while 98 percent and 93 percent of beaches and dunes in New Jersey and New York, respectively, were likely to erode. Preliminary analysis suggests that Hurricane Sandy rapidly displaced massive quantities of sand in a capacity that visibly changed the landscape.

<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3452#.UKotQWcnlmp>

Firewood

Having a roaring fire during the holidays can be fun, but remember these simple steps:

- It is against the law to transport firewood outside quarantine areas
- Use firewood from local sources or "Burn it where you buy it."

Firewood may carry the emerald ash borer, an insect that is a serious threat to ash trees in the county. These insects have killed more than 25 million ash trees in the U.S. and are not native to this country. For more information about the emerald ash borer, contact the Fairfax County Forest Pest Branch, at 703-324-5304, TTY 711, or visit

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/eab_general.htm.



www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov

News and information from National Capital Region jurisdictions

Holiday Lighting Safety: Tips to Follow

The holiday season is a festive and joyous occasion. However, it's also a dangerous part of the year; over 400 lives are claimed, more than 1,600 injuries occur, and over \$990 million in property damage is lost. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, taking simple, common-sense, life-saving steps will help ensure a safe and happy holiday. By taking some easy precautions, residents can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

Lighting Safety Tips

- Look for Underwriters Laboratories label on all holiday light sets to ensure UL standards are met.
- Buy lighting sets according to indoor use, outdoor use, or both.
- Before attaching lights, check for fraying wires, damaged sockets, or cracked insulation. If defects are found, replace the entire set.
- To minimize fire and shock danger, make sure a bulb is in each socket. If a bulb burns out, leave it in and unplug the light set--then replace the bulb.
- Don't connect more light strings than the manufacturer recommends.
- Keep indoor extension cords and lights away from water.
- All outdoor cords, plugs, and sockets must be weatherproof.

As a final precaution, make sure you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, and ensure you have an escape plan, and practice it.

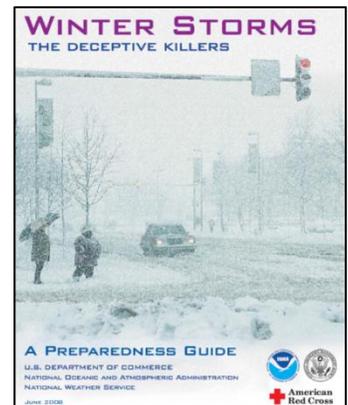
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr

PLANNING / PREPAREDNESS

Before Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

To prepare for a winter storm you should do the following:

- Before winter approaches, add the following supplies to your emergency kit:
 - Rock salt or more environmentally safe products to melt ice on walkways. Visit the Environmental Protection Agency for a complete list of recommended products.
 - Sand to improve traction.
 - Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment.
 - Sufficient heating fuel. You may become isolated in your home and regular fuel sources may be cut off. Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.
 - Adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm.
- Make a Family Communications Plan. Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency. (<http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>)



- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or other local news channels for critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS). Be alert to changing weather conditions.
- Minimize travel. If travel is necessary, keep a disaster supplies kit in your vehicle.
- Bring pets/companion animals inside during winter weather. Move other animals or livestock to sheltered areas with non-frozen drinking water.

<http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

Get the PDF "Winter Storms" online at: www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/resources/Winter_Storms2008.pdf.

Radio Interoperability Elusive at DHS

The goal of interoperable Homeland Security Department radio communications remains elusive, despite \$430 million invested to that end over the past decade, says the DHS office of inspector general. In a report, dated Nov. 2, auditors say components mainly develop and manage their own radio programs with no formal coordination between them. As a result, when auditors tested 382 radios from various DHS components, they found that only 20 percent contained the correct program settings for the DHS common channel. Of those radios, 54 percent lacked the common frequency in the first place while another 26 percent were programmed for it, but incorrectly. There are approximately 123,000 radio field users within DHS, the majority from Customs and Border Protection or the Transportation Security Administration. When auditors approached 479 of those users, they found that 72 percent didn't know about the DHS common channel. Twenty five percent of users knew about the channel, but couldn't find it on their radio. In fact, only one user was able to access and communicate, presumably only with himself, using the DHS common channel.

<http://www.fiercehomelandsecurity.com/story/radio-interoperability-elusive-dhs/2012-11-13>

Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN)

Get emergency alerts by email, as well as by text or pager. Sign up at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean. Businesses can also register up to five people in their organizations – such as security officers – who can receive alerts and then share that information with their workforce.



Christmas Tree Safety

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department crews distributed Christmas tree safety tags to holiday tree lot vendors the week prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. The green and white 5 x 8 inch tags provide valuable fire safety tips for residents when purchasing a tree. Vendors will provide the "Fire Safety and Your Tree" tags with every tree purchase while they last. Here are some Christmas tree fire safety tips from the Fire and Rescue Department:

- Keep tree base immersed in water.
- Do not permit smoking near the tree.
- Use only lights that are Underwriters Laboratories (U.L.) approved.
- Use flame retardant decorations and paper.
- Inspect lights for frayed or cracked wiring, broken plugs, and defective sockets.
- Unplug lights at night and when leaving the home.
- Remove the tree soon after the holidays—before the needles dry out.



If you would like a printable copy of our "Fire Safety and Your Tree" tag, visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/download/MultiLanguageTreeTag.pdf>.

Disaster Planning on an Small-Medium Business Shoestring

For folks on the East Coast of the United States, the past few weeks have been pretty intense. Between hurricane Sandy and the associated fallout – flooding, lack of public transportation, power outages, dark cell towers – many firms in impacted areas have experienced firsthand the value of their BCP – business continuity planning – and DR –

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disaster recovery – planning efforts. Those that didn't have a DR or BCP plan in place before? Well, many have them now – or at least have started the planning. The point is, an event like this puts the value of disaster preparedness in stark relief.

<http://www.technewsworld.com/story/76603.html>

Business Continuity Video Training

Ready.gov has lots of resources for businesses to ensure they can survive disasters by putting focusing on continuity of operations. If you need more help getting a business or organization prepared, you can use the Business Continuity Planning Suite (www.ready.gov/business-continuity-planning-suite) developed by DHS' National Protection and Programs Directorate and FEMA. The software was created for any business with the need to create, improve, or update its business continuity plan. The Suite is scalable for optimal use by organizations of any size and consists of a business continuity plan (BCP) training, automated BCP and disaster recovery plan (DRP) generators, and a self-directed exercise for testing an implemented BCP. Businesses can utilize this solution to maintain normal operations and provide resilience during a disruption. In addition, there is video training available explaining business continuity, why business continuity planning is important and what is involved in the process. Watch the videos at www.ready.gov/business-continuity-planning-suite.



National Terrorism Advisory System

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

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

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

A screenshot of a National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) Alert poster. The poster has a blue header with the DHS seal and the text "National Terrorism Advisory System Alert". Below the header, there are sections for "SUMMARY", "DURATION", "DETAILS", "AFFECTED AREAS", "HOW YOU CAN HELP", "STAY PREPARED", and "STAY INFORMED". The "SUMMARY" section states that the Secretary of Homeland Security informs the public and relevant government and private sector partners about a potential or actual threat. The "DURATION" section explains that an individual threat alert is issued for a specific time period and then automatically expires. The "DETAILS" section provides more information about the threat and what the public and sectors need to know. The "AFFECTED AREAS" section includes visual depictions of the affected location(s), sector(s), or other illustrative detail about the threat itself. The "HOW YOU CAN HELP" section provides information on ways the public can help authorities. The "STAY PREPARED" section emphasizes the importance of public planning and preparing for emergencies. The "STAY INFORMED" section notifies the public about updates from local public safety and community leaders. At the bottom, there is a call to action: "If You See Something, Say Something™ Report suspicious activity to local law enforcement or call 911." and a footer with contact information.

Hidden Flood Dangers

Hurricane Sandy's recent landfall and the corresponding fires in New York and New Jersey remind us of the dangers

of simultaneous disasters. Flood waters can dislodge tanks, drums, pipes and equipment, which may release hazardous materials such as pesticides, chemicals or fuels. This event can serve as a reminder of steps to take before and after flooding to minimize the damage.

- Properly anchor all outside storage tanks (including underground tanks) as well as any other item that might float in a flood. Underground tanks, if not completely filled at the time of the flood, may be hydrostatically lifted and thereby sustain major damage. Water can be poured into the tank before a flood to prevent this problem. Mobile containers containing flammable liquids should be secured as well.
- In flood prone areas, tanks should be located so at least 30 percent of their allowable storage capacity is above the 100-year flood level. If this cannot be accomplished, tanks should be anchored to resist floating or moved to areas less prone to floods. Additionally, tank openings that are not water tight should be extended above the 100-year flood level.
- Confirm that vents from tanks and containers are extended above the maximum anticipated flood level. Tank vents generally should be at least 12 feet (3.7 m) above the adjacent ground level.
- Separate and place in a safe location all water-reactive chemical products and flammable liquids. In case of spillage, they would create a pollution issue and a fire hazard with potentially catastrophic consequences.

http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/coffee-break/hc_2012_3.pdf

The Three R's of Resilience for Small Businesses

Business continuity is coming into the mainstream as a core part of business strategy for the small business owner and small or satellite operations. Just this month, Hurricane Sandy gave a number of small business operations a big challenge with its destruction of the critical infrastructure, interruption of lifeline services and the resultant social crisis for the communities it hit. Whether you are an owner, investor, operator, supplier, employee or customer of a small business, you are a key stakeholder in that business' business continuity management strategy. Here are some things to consider. Resilience is the vision of business continuity. It is the capability to withstand a direct hit, like Hurricane Sandy, to the business operation through pre-planned strategies to be safe, secure and to rapidly restore and recover operations. While there are many aspects and details about resiliency for the small business that can be discussed, the heart of resiliency are the 3 R's: RTO, RPO and ROI.

<http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature1027.html>

Winter Fire Safety

Home fires are more prevalent in winter than in any other season. This is due in part to an increase in cooking and heating fires. Holiday decorations and winter storms that can interrupt electrical service and cause people to turn to alternative heating sources also contribute to the increased risk of fire in winter. Winter fires can be prevented! A video (screen shot at right) from FEMA can help you maintain a fire-safe home this winter season. Watch it at

<http://youtu.be/1UXLRvu61Gc>.



MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Winter Outlook 2012-13 for Washington, D.C.

Over the last 25 years, winters have delivered either feast or famine for snowfall in the Washington, D.C., metro region. Except for the few blockbuster winters of 1995-96, 2002-03, and 2009-10, the overwhelming majority of winters featured normal to below normal snowfall. We expect this winter to fall into that majority. That doesn't mean it won't come with its share of inclement weather.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/capital-weather-gang/post/winter-outlook-2012-13-for-washington-dc-near-normal-cold-and-snow/2012/11/13/034a7552-2d1b-11e2-89d4-040c9330702a_blog.html

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Geologists Find East Coast Quakes Travel Farther

Data from the 2011 earthquake centered in Virginia shows East Coast tremors can travel much farther and cause damage over larger areas than previously thought, that according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The agency estimated about one-third of the U.S. population could have felt the magnitude 5.8 tremor centered about 50 miles northwest of Richmond, which would mean more people were affected than any earthquake in U.S. history.

<http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20121107-2011-virginia-quake-triggered-landslides-very-far-away>

Cloud-Based Emergency Response Systems Can Prove Invaluable During Events like Sandy

Superstorm Sandy left devastation and loss in her wake and has had a major impact on business operations throughout the East Coast. Many organizations were unable to respond appropriately to the storm because of a lack of access to their emergency response plans, particularly in the case of paper-based plans. This catastrophic storm proved that in the case of an actual emergency, having a physical binder of information and protocol is not enough to protect a business, particularly if that information is unavailable during the actual event.

<http://www.mspnews.com/msp/articles/314626-cloud-based-emergency-response-systems-prove-invaluable-during.htm>

New York Emergency Boss Fired Over Sandy Flap

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo has fired his \$153,000-a-year emergency management director for diverting a crew to remove a tree from his Long Island home's driveway after Superstorm Sandy hit, a state official said earlier this month. Director of Emergency Management Steven Kuhr was fired after the governor was told that Kuhr called a Suffolk County crew to remove a fallen tree from his driveway, according to the official. Kuhr was working in Albany at the time last week, shortly after Sandy hit.

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/10826545/new-york-emergency-boss-fired-over-sandy-flap>

NSA Chief Calls on Private Sector to Collaborate on Cybersecurity Standards via Legislation

Not too long ago, one of Army Gen. Keith Alexander's grandsons grabbed an iPad while at home in Texas and activated Skype to talk to his grandmother in Maryland. Alexander's wife asked her grandson where his mother, her daughter, was. The boy, who was less than three years old at the time, carried the iPad upstairs to his mother. The capability of a boy less than three years old alone to contact his grandmother via an Internet application represents a profound increase in communications capabilities, said Alexander, the director of the National Security Agency (NSA), in a keynote speech earlier this month at the Symantec Government Symposium in Washington, D.C.

<http://www.hstoday.us/single-article/nsa-chief-calls-on-private-sector-to-collaborate-on-cybersecurity-standards-via-legislation/372f1181df1ef70e24450842dafa781f.html>

National SMS System Successful During Superstorm Sandy

Roughly six months after the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS), a free, national alert system that sends emergency notifications to the public via their mobile phone during emergencies, went live, alert messages were sent out during superstorm Sandy, which swept across the eastern seaboard in late October. Despite damages caused by Sandy, however, some experts said CMAS was ultimately successful during the storm.

<http://www.govtech.com/public-safety/National-SMS-System-Successful-During-Superstorm-Sandy.html>

Unsung Heroes at a FEMA Disaster Assistance Center

Anyone who has watched television, read a newspaper or surfed the Internet during the month of November has been exposed to the devastation of Hurricane Sandy – through the eyes of its various victims. But what about the perspectives of the FEMA full-time employees, the FEMA part-time “reservists” who have been activated on a temporary basis, the state employees, and the volunteers who help the nonprofit relief organizations – many of whom sit at FEMA-organized disaster assistance centers and interact directly with the victims who come to the centers in search of one sort of help or another.

http://www.gsnmagazine.com/node/27809?c=disaster_preparedness_emergency_response

The Five Costliest U.S. Hurricanes of the Past 20 Years

The early estimate of the total cost of Hurricane Sandy – \$50 billion – places it second among U.S. hurricanes in the last 20 years. Four of that period's five costliest hurricanes have hit since 2005, including Hurricane Katrina, which cost about the amount of the Homeland Security Department's entire fiscal 2012 budget

<http://www.fiercehomelandsecurity.com/slideshow/5-costliest-us-hurricanes-past-20-years>

Anti-terrorism Expert Advises Against BioWatch Upgrade

DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano's top expert on anti-terrorism technology has privately advised her to spike a long-planned, multibillion-dollar upgrade of BioWatch, the nation's troubled system for detecting a biological attack. Dr. Tara O'Toole, the department's undersecretary for science and technology, doubts that the so-called Generation 3 version of BioWatch could be relied on to detect anthrax, smallpox, plague or other deadly germs in the event of a biological attack, scientists familiar with the matter said.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-biowatch-dissent-20121113,0,4389905.story>

Thousands Seen Dying If Terrorists Attack U.S. Power Grid

A terrorist attack on the U.S. power grid could be more destructive than superstorm Sandy, possibly costing hundreds of billions of dollars and leading to thousands of deaths. Other entities have issued reports on electric-grid vulnerabilities; the study released today provides an unusually stark picture of what might happen if hackers, extremist groups, disgruntled employees or even energy companies sabotage the nation's power network.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-11-14/thousands-seen-dying-if-terrorists-attack-vulnerable-u-dot-s-dot-grid>

Sandy Ends Hurricane Season on Forceful Note

The 2012 Atlantic hurricane season officially ends November 30, but the season is likely over. Only five hurricanes have hit the USA in November in the past 162 years. Isaac hit in Louisiana on Aug. 28 with 80-mph winds and caused \$2 billion in damage. Sandy killed 121 in the USA (199 overall) and caused an estimated \$50 billion in damage, the second costliest natural disaster in U.S. history after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/weather/2012/11/15/sandy-brought-violent-end-to-hurricane-season/1707839/>

Would You Swim to Work?

After swimming to a main road, the emergency room technician hitched a ride to the hospital

The first thing Marsha Hedgepeth did when she moved into her home three years ago was count the steps from the front door to her second-floor apartment, a preparatory measure for future grocery-lugging. Fifteen. Then Sandy hit, and the superstorm provided her with another reference guide. She now knows that it takes about a half hour to swim from her doorstep, in the riverside neighborhood of Gilford Park, to about two blocks from the eastbound side of Route 37, roughly the length of two football fields. She also knows that it's a 5-minute drive from the highway to the hospital where she works, if taken by utility truck.

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2012/11/19/hurricane-%C2%AD%E2%80%90sandy-%C2%AD%E2%80%90swim-%C2%AD%E2%80%90to-%C2%AD%E2%80%90job/1714019/>

Power Outage Time After Sandy Not Extraordinary

As the number of nights without power stretched on for thousands left in the dark after Superstorm Sandy, patience understandably turned to anger and outrage. But an Associated Press analysis of outage times from other big hurricanes and tropical storms suggests that, on the whole, the response to Sandy by utility companies, especially in hardest-hit New York and New Jersey, was typical – or even a little faster than elsewhere after other huge storms. The AP, with the assistance of Ventyx, a software company that helps utilities manage their grids, used U.S. Energy Department data to determine how many days it took to restore 95 percent of the peak number of customers left without power after major hurricanes since 2004, including Ivan, Katrina, Rita, Wilma, Ike and Irene. After Sandy, New York utilities restored power to at least 95 percent of customers 13 days after the peak number of outages was reported. New Jersey reached that same level in 11 days and West Virginia in 10 days. Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma in 2005 and Ike in 2008 all resulted in longer outages for customers in Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi and

Florida. The longest stretch to 95 percent restoration since 2004 was Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina, where local utilities had power restored to only three-quarters of their customers after 23 days before Hurricane Rita hit and caused additional outages. Rita left Texas customers in the dark for 16 days; Katrina knocked out power to Mississippi customers for 15 days; Wilma and Ike knocked Florida and Texas out for 14 days each before power was restored to 95 percent of those who lost it, according to the federal data. New York and New Jersey recovered far faster after last year's Hurricane Irene. It took seven days for New York to restore 95 percent of customers and six days for New Jersey. But the number of outages in each state was less than half than from Sandy.

<http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2012/nov/21/us-superstorm-utility-response/>

DHS Employees Have Low Confidence in Their Leaders

Employees of the Homeland Security Department are less satisfied with their jobs and their leaders than other federal employees, more likely to see mission execution as unsuccessful and more likely to disagree that their workplace rewards creativity and innovation. Overall DHS morale is the lowest of any cabinet department, and in most indices of employee confidence prepared with newly released results of the Office of Personnel Management federal employee annual survey, the lowest even in a list that includes smaller agencies such as the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation and Railroad Retirement Board. Between about 75,000 and 80,000 DHS employees responded to OPM online survey questions this year. When compared against overall federal responses (some 687,000 federal employees responded to survey questions), DHS survey results show workers have significantly lower positive responses to key questions about their organization. Departmental employees are less likely to agree that their leaders motivate them and less likely to say they have a high level respect for their leaders.

<http://www.fiercehomelandsecurity.com/story/dhs-employees-have-low-confidence-their-leaders/2012-11-26>

Office of Personnel Management Survey Results: <http://www.fedview.opm.gov/2012/Reports/>

New Smartphone App for Crime Tips

Howard County, Maryland police announced Nov. 26 that the department has launched a new smartphone app allowing residents anonymously to send crime tips by text, email, photo or video, according to a police news release. Howard County police are the first jurisdiction in Maryland to install the technology, which is called iWatch.

http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/howard/columbia/ph-howard-police-smartphone-app-20121119_0.7706549.story

FLU

WHO to Change the Way it Reports H5N1 Cases

Henceforward, WHO reports that it will publish information on human cases with H5N1 avian influenza infection on a monthly basis on the Influenza webpage, which can be found online at:

http://www.who.int/influenza/human_animal_interface/HAI_Risk_Assessment/en/index.html. Cases of human infection with H5N1 will only be reported on Disease Outbreak News for events that are unusual or associated with potential increased risks. Member States will be continued to require to report information on every sporadic case of H5N1 human infection or novel influenza virus infection to WHO as per Article 6 of the International Health Regulations (2005).

<http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/index.html>

Flu Vaccine was 62 Percent Effective Over 4 Years in Australian Study

Australian researchers who conducted case-control studies over five influenza seasons found that seasonal flu vaccines were 62 percent effective in protecting working-age adults, according to a report in *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses*. From 2007 through 2011, researchers recruited adults aged 20 to 64 from sentinel general practices in Victoria state and conducted prospective case-control studies using the test-negative design with PCR-confirmed flu as the endpoint. The adjusted vaccine effectiveness (VE) over all years except 2009, the pandemic

year, was 62 percent (95 percent confidence interval, 43 percent-75 percent), which the authors call moderate protection. By virus type, the VE estimates ranged from 31 percent for seasonal H1N1 to 88 percent for pandemic H1N1. The authors also compared VE estimates with the match between the vaccine and circulating strains, as assessed by hemagglutination inhibition assays. In 2007, when the match was “incomplete,” overall VE was estimated at 58 percent. But in 2011, when the match was assessed as good, the overall VE was almost the same, at 59 percent. “VE estimates correlated poorly with circulating strain match, as assessed by haemagglutination inhibition assays, suggesting a need for VE studies that incorporate antigenic characterization data,” the report says. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/irv.12018/abstract;jsessionid=87BBCEBEDC24CA26DAAE45D3AE8BF.A80.d01t01>

Dallas-area Pandemic School Closure Associated with Lower Rate of Disease

A school closure in the Dallas–Ft. Worth, Tex., area was associated with lower rates of acute respiratory illness (ARI) and flu-related emergency department (ED) visits during the 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic, according to a study in “Clinical Infectious Diseases.” Researchers from the Dallas–Ft. Worth area and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention compared data on parent-reported ARI and ED visits for self-reported flu before, during, and after an Apr 30 to May 7, 2009, school closing in a district in Tarrant County (which includes Ft. Worth) with data from a district in Dallas County (home to Dallas) that did not shutter schools. They found that, although ARIs and ED flu visits both climbed in both school districts, the increase in ARI rates was 45 percent lower in the Tarrant County district: It went from 0.6 percent before the intervention to 1.2 percent during it, compared with 0.4 percent to 1.5 percent for the Dallas County district. The rate of ED flu visits in the Tarrant County district rose from 2.8 percent before the school closure to 4.4 percent, compared with an increase from 2.9 percent to 6.2 percent during the same period in Dallas County. The authors point out that the two counties have similar demographics but emphasize that their study did not assess lab-confirmed influenza.

<http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2012/10/18/cid.cis890.short>

FAO Sees Signs of Decline in H5N1 Outbreaks

The number of reported H5N1 avian influenza outbreaks in poultry and wild birds has decreased since mid 2011 and was down sharply in the second quarter of this year, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said in a quarterly update on the ongoing situation. Six countries reported a total of 98 domestic poultry outbreaks and 5 wild bird cases or outbreaks from April through June of this year, which was far below the 508 outbreaks reported in the second quarter of 2011, the FAO said. The affected countries were Bangladesh, Cambodia, China (including Hong Kong), Egypt, India, and Indonesia. The global number of H5N1 outbreaks dropped from 2003 to mid 2008, increased again from mid-2008 to mid-2011, and has dropped since then, according to the FAO figures. Factors in the second-quarter decline included lower numbers reported from Egypt and Indonesia and an absence of reported outbreaks in countries where the disease has occurred sporadically, such as Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam, the agency reported. But the FAO cautioned that not all outbreaks are reported, making it difficult to tell if the world has actually made progress in H5N1 control.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/nov1912fao.html>

Bird Flu Outbreak Eradicated after Cull (Australia)

AN outbreak of bird flu in the NSW lower Hunter region has been eradicated after authorities culled 50,000 chickens at an egg farm. Tests from 12 nearby properties confirmed the virus hadn’t spread, but the Maitland facility would remain quarantined while disinfection and surveillance were completed, The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) said. The virus detected at the Maitland facility was not the H5N1 strain that can fatally infect humans. But the particular type of virus detected, H7, caused deaths in birds and could have a devastating impact on poultry and egg producers, a DPI spokesman told AAP. Australian Egg Corporation director James Kellaway praised the DPI for its quick response to the outbreak, which was detected on Nov. 15.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/breaking-news/bird-flu-outbreak-eradicated-after-cull/story-fn3dxiwe-1226521386594>

FDA Approves First Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Manufactured Using Cell Culture Technology

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced on Nov. 20 the approval of Flucelvax, the first seasonal influenza

vaccine licensed in the United States produced using cultured animal cells, instead of fertilized chicken eggs. Flucelvax is approved to prevent seasonal influenza in people ages 18 years and older. The manufacturing process for Flucelvax is similar to the egg-based production method, but a significant difference is that the virus strains included in the vaccine are grown in animal cells of mammalian origin instead of in eggs. Cell culture technology has already been in use for several decades to produce other U.S. licensed vaccines. "Today's approval represents the culmination of efforts to develop a seasonal influenza vaccine using cell culture as an alternative to the egg-based process," said Karen Midthun, M.D., director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research. Cell culture technology is another manufacturing alternative to conventional egg-based influenza vaccine production. Advantages of cell culture technology include the ability to maintain an adequate supply of readily available, previously tested and characterized cells for use in vaccine production and the potential for a faster start-up of the vaccine manufacturing process in the event of a pandemic. Flucelvax was evaluated in a randomized controlled clinical study conducted in the United States and Europe that involved about 7,700 people ages 18 to 49 years who received either Flucelvax or a placebo. The study showed that Flucelvax was 83.8 percent effective in preventing influenza when compared to placebo. The use of Flucelvax in people older than 49 is supported by antibody responses in about 1,700 adults which showed it to be comparable to Agriflu, an egg-based seasonal influenza vaccine approved by FDA for use in people 18 years and older. The safety evaluation included about 6,700 individuals who received Flucelvax in controlled clinical studies. Injection site and general reactions to Flucelvax were typical of those seen with current influenza vaccines. Pain, redness and soreness at the injection site and headache and fatigue were the most common reactions.

<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm328982.htm>

Fairfax County Flu Preparedness

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

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



TRAININGS / EXERCISES / CONFERENCES

International Disaster Conference and Expo

Jan. 8-10, 2013; New Orleans, La.

Conference brings together public and private sector professionals for discussions on policy, lessons learned, best practices, and forward thinking.

<http://www.internationaldisasterconference.com/index.html>

6th Annual Biometrics for National Security and Law Enforcement Summit

Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 2013; Pentagon City, Va.

As technology continues to advance and national security remains at the forefront of discussion, it comes as no surprise that biometrics is a hot topic. The ability for scientists to determine ways to accurately identify people based upon physical and behavioral characteristics has been achieved; however, improvements in equipment, interoperability and database accuracy are essential. Biometrics is key to our nation's intelligence and security efforts in the fight against terrorism. Establishing an individual's identity with certainty provides our military personnel an immediate edge and aids our national security capabilities. By participating in this conference, you will have the exceptional opportunity to take part in continued discussions where debate, dialogue, and networking are encouraged. By the end of the Biometrics for National Security and Law Enforcement Training Summit, delegates will understand

the future of biometrics, new guidelines and standards of biometrics, and the progress towards interoperability.

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

2013 Military Health System (MHS) Conference

Feb. 11-14, 2013; The Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, National Harbor, Md.

The MHS conference promotes professionalism throughout the organization; enhance partnerships within and outside the federal sector, and concentrates on ways to best serve the preventive and health-care needs of its diverse beneficiary population. Four-thousand military and civilian medical personnel from the MHS attended the conference held in January 2012. The event will include an expanded exhibit hall featuring agency and commercial exhibitors whose products and programs are aligned with the MHS mission. The focus of the conference is sharing knowledge and achieving breakthrough performance in healthcare delivery, research, education and training. Each day will feature a specific educational theme with all plenary and breakout sessions aligned to furthering the goals of the Quadruple Aim and the associated strategic initiatives.

<http://www.health.mil/2012MHSConference.aspx>

12th World Congress on Stress, Trauma and Coping

Feb. 19-24, 2013; Baltimore, Md.

World Congress participants will identify the tools needed to solve current problems and explore the future direction of the crisis intervention field. The 12th World Congress on Stress, Trauma and Coping is the premier forum for multidisciplinary exchange of ideas and information among those who provide crisis and disaster mental health services.

<http://www.icsif.org/world-congress/12th-world-congress>

MeriTalk Data Center Brainstorm

March 7, 2013; Washington, D.C.

Data center consolidation continues to be a high priority as we move closer to OMB's rigorous 2015 deadlines. How is the intersection of consolidation, cloud, mobility, and even big data going to affect the path forward? Which mandates are realistic and which should change? Join MeriTalk's Data Center Exchange for the second annual 2013 Data Center Brainstorm on Thursday, March 7, 2013 at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. The event will bring together savvy Federal data center movers and shakers to share best practices, collaborate on challenges, and discuss what is needed for effective consolidation. We'll cover key topics on today's data center horizon.

<http://meritalk.com/datacenterbrainstorm>

Learning in Disaster Health: A Continuing Education Workshop

April 2-3, 2013; Georgetown University Hotel and Conference Center, Washington, D.C.

A unique opportunity to assist with the nation's disaster health preparedness. This workshop will focus on education and training in disaster health and provide an interdisciplinary academic forum to:

- Explore concepts of adult learning in the context of disaster health.
- Highlight the implications of the latest research and practice for disaster health learning and performance and identify key areas for future research.
- Present a unique opportunity for collaboration among disaster health, human resource development and adult education professionals.
- Identify potential solutions for maximizing learning in a resource-constrained environment.

<http://ncdmph.usuhs.edu/KnowledgeLearning/2013-04LearningWorkshop.htm>

Critical Infrastructure Symposium

April 15-16, 2013; West Point, N.Y.

Symposium promotes the exchange of ideas and experiences among students, educators, practitioners and government officials developing critical infrastructure.

<http://www.tisp.org/index.cfm>

SPIE Defense Security + Sensing

April 29-May 3, 2013; Baltimore, Md.

Meeting for scientists, researchers and engineers from industry, military, government agencies and academia throughout the world.

<http://spie.org/x6766.xml>

GovSec Featuring TREXPO

May 13-15, 2013; Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

Description: Advanced-level education from public and private sector industry experts on today's hot topics and challenges, including: Homeland Security; Counter and Anti-Terrorism; Critical Infrastructure Protection; Cyberterrorism and Cybercrime; and Law Enforcement Case Studies, Tactics and Technologies.

<http://govsecinfo.com/Home.aspx>

International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference

June 6-June 9, 2013; Baltimore, Md.

The Hazmat Conference is recognized as a high quality, in-depth conference with cutting-edge educational programs designed for professionals at all levels of experience. For nearly 30 years the Hazmat Conference has offered informative sessions and unique hands-on training designed to tackle the most pressing issues facing hazmat professionals.

<http://www.iafc.org/micrositeHazConf/homeHazConf.cfm?ItemNumber=6165&navItemNumber=6150>

IS-450.NC - Emergency Preparedness for Federal Employees in the National Capital Region

The goal of this independent study course is to provide practical steps you can take to prepare for emergencies that could threaten your home, workplace, and community. This course is intended specifically for Federal employees living and working in the National Capital Region. The first lesson focuses on the importance of personal emergency preparedness and its relationship to your professional responsibilities as a Federal employee. The second lesson introduces the four steps to personal emergency preparedness: Be Informed, Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and Get Involved. The last lesson reinforces the concepts learned in the previous lessons by applying the four steps of emergency preparedness to a given scenario.

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is450nc.asp>

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.redcrossna.org/Online/disaster_registration.php

LINKS**Fairfax County Web Resources**

- Fairfax County Emergency Information Blog - www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog
- Fairfax County Emergency Information Web page - www.fairfaxcounty.gov/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.

- Fairfax County CERT - <http://fairfaxcountycert.blogspot.com/>
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Web Page - www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/
- Fairfax County Citizen Corps Blog - <http://citizencorps.blogspot.com/>

Additional Web Resources

- Capital Region Updates - www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov
- Virginia Citizen Corps - www.vaemergency.com/citcorps/index.cfm

DHS Science & Technology Directorate Newsletter

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

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

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report (OSIR)

The Department of Homeland Security provides a Web-based "Daily OSIR," which is posted on the DHS public Web site. Accessing the report via the Web enables readers to retrieve the current Daily Report as well as 10 days of archived DHS Daily Reports. Once you arrive at the Web page you will find the most recent Daily OSIR at the top of the page, under the title "Current Report." This report is posted each morning, except for weekends and holidays. Simply click on the title "DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report." This will launch the current days report in PDF format. You can submit content comments or make suggestions by contacting the DHS Daily Report Team by telephone at 202-312-3421 or by e-mail at NICCRports@dhs.gov. You can access the Daily OSIR at:

http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/editorial_0542.shtm.

Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Line

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/infoline.htm

Emergency Management Magazine

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

FEMA Private Sector

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



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To Unsubscribe:

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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.

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