



ESF 15 Business / Nonprofit Update

Produced by Emergency Support Function 15 – External Affairs

October 2011

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR ESF 15

DHS Secretary Kicks Off National Cyber Security Awareness Month

DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano recently joined White House Cybersecurity Coordinator Howard Schmidt at the Michigan Cyber Summit 2011 to discuss the importance of cybersecurity and the partnerships that are critical to building our nation's cyber resilience, kicking off National Cyber Security Awareness Month. Secretary Napolitano highlighted the importance of engaging the entire society – including government, law enforcement, the private sector and most importantly, members of the public – to protect our critical cyber infrastructure and create a safe and secure cyber environment.

<http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/20111007-napolitano-michigan-cyber-summit.shtm>

How Can You Be Safe Online?

- Use strong passwords with alphanumeric and special characters.
- Maintain separate passwords for work related and non-work related accounts.
- Keep your operating system and applications patched and current.
- Keep anti-virus and other malicious code analysis software up to date.
- Never connect unauthorized devices to systems (phones, USB drives, cameras, music players).
- Never visit un-trusted websites or follow links provided by unknown sources.
- Secure your transactions online by ensuring —HTTPS” appears in the website’s address bar before making an online purchase.
- Never respond to any unsolicited or spam incoming emails.
- Never open attachments received in suspicious emails.
- Never provide personal information to uninitiated online sources.

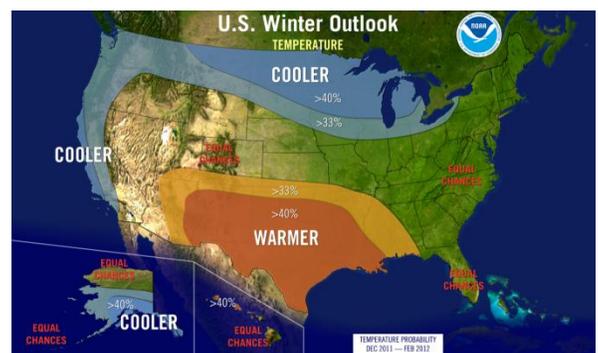
Tips courtesy of the Fairfax County Department of Information Technology.

EAS National Test

FCC and FEMA are planning the first EAS nationwide test at 2 p.m. (EST), on Wednesday, Nov. 9. The test will last approximately three (3) minutes. Normal programming will return following the test. The Nov. 9 test will utilize what is called a “~~live~~” national alert code, i.e., a coded message that will present itself to viewers as an actual emergency announcement, not a test. This is necessary in order to allow FCC and FEMA to test the reliability of EAS equipment and the state of readiness of EAS operators and participants. As a consequence, however, while an audio message will announce that the exercise is a “~~Test Only~~,” there may not always be a corresponding visual message alerting viewers that this is only a test. Additional information about the test is available at www.fcc.gov/nationwideeatest, <http://www.fcc.gov/pshs/>, http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas_info.shtm and <http://www.nab.org/documents/advocacy/EAS/EAS.asp>.

U.S. Dealt Another La Niña Winter but „Wild Card“ Could Trump It

The Southern Plains should prepare for continued drier and warmer than average weather, while the Pacific Northwest is likely to be colder and wetter than average from December through February, according to the annual Winter Outlook released this month by NOAA. For the second winter in a row, La Niña will influence weather patterns across the country, but as usual, it’s not the only climate factor at play. The “wild card” is the lesser-known and less predictable Arctic Oscillation that



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could produce dramatic short-term swings in temperatures this winter. NOAA expects La Niña, which returned in August, to gradually strengthen and continue through the upcoming winter. It is associated with cooler than normal water temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean and influences weather throughout the world. For the **Northeast and Mid-Atlantic** NOAA expects **equal chances for above-, near-, or below-normal temperatures and precipitation**. Winter weather for these regions is often driven not by La Niña but by the Arctic Oscillation. If enough cold air and moisture are in place, areas north of the Ohio Valley and into the Northeast could see above-average snow. This seasonal outlook does not project where and when snowstorms may hit or provide total seasonal snowfall accumulations. Snow forecasts are dependent upon winter storms, which are generally not predictable more than a week in advance.

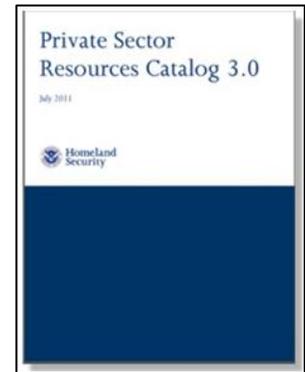
http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2011/20111020_winteroutlook.html

DHS Revises Private Sector Resources Catalog

The Private Sector Resources Catalog, originally released in 2010, has “new and improved resources” and has “been completely re-organized,” according to Douglas A. Smith, assistant secretary of Homeland Security for the Private Sector. Filled with over 400 entries that cover tornado safety to critical infrastructure security, this catalog provides information for all homeland security issues. Moreover, it also includes an index that lists resources by type including: brochures, reports, exercises, trainings and more.

<http://blog.dhs.gov/2011/09/private-sector-resources-catalog-30.html>

Private Sector Resources Catalog: http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/gc_1273165166442.shtm



Public Comment Period

The 11 All-Hazards Position Task Books (PTBs) developed by the Incident Management Working Group for FEMA have been released for a period of public comment. These PTBs are an important component in providing consistent performance-based guidelines needed by incident management professionals as they qualify to respond to Type 3 incidents or events. The National Integration Center asks that you utilize this comment period to review and submit questions, comments and/or recommendations to assist with finalizing these documents. Comments must be received by Nov. 3, 2011.

Federal Register – Volume 76, Number 192; All-Hazard Position Task Books for Type 3 Incident Management

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-10-04/html/2011-25578.htm>

Hurricane Irene Recovery

According to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, the U.S. Small Business Administration has made low-interest loans available to individuals, renters and businesses recovering from Hurricane Irene, which brought heavy rains and flooding to Virginia Aug. 26-28. The loans are available in New Kent County and the city of Petersburg. The following adjacent localities also are eligible: the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Hanover, Henrico, James City, King and Queen, King William and Prince George and the city of Colonial Heights. Although damage was reported in other localities, the damage did not meet the threshold to qualify for federal disaster assistance. Loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for loans up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property.

www.vaemergency.gov

Governor Requests Federal Disaster Assistance for Individuals in the Wake of Tropical Storm Lee

Governor Bob McDonnell has requested a federal disaster declaration to help individuals and families in Fairfax and Prince William counties recover from the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee, which brought heavy rains and flooding Sept. 8-9. Damage assessments by FEMA, the Small Business Administration, state and local teams found more than 100 homes and business that were destroyed or sustained major damage. Approximately 500 people were displaced from their homes in Prince William County. “The heavy rain from Tropical Storm Lee caused catastrophic damage to neighborhoods and businesses in Fairfax and Prince William counties,” said Governor McDonnell. “Federal assistance is critical in helping people who suffered significant losses.” The governor requested federal aid through FEMA’s Individual Assistance program. If approved, the Individual Assistance program makes funding available for

homeowners and renters in the form of grants and low-interest loans as well as disaster housing assistance. The governor also requested disaster unemployment assistance, legal services and crisis counseling. If the governor's request is approved and if sufficient damage information is collected, other localities will be added to the declaration. In addition, Governor McDonnell requested Hazard Mitigation Assistance for all Virginia localities. The Hazard Mitigation Assistance program helps local and state governments take actions to reduce the impact of future disasters, such as modifying or removing structures from a hazard area and conducting public education campaigns.

<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/News/viewRelease.cfm?id=956>

Be Safe When Using Alternate Heating Sources

Fall and winter are upon us. The cooler temperatures cause many of us to seek out alternative sources to heat our home and keep warm. Alternate heating sources are a major contributing factor in residential fires. The following safety tips will help you keep a safe home.

- Keep at least three feet of clearance between your heat source and anything combustible.
- Do not keep or store combustible materials in closed areas or near a heat source.
- Never leave a heater on when you are not in the room or when you go to sleep, and never leave children or pets unattended near heating sources.
- If you use an electric heater, be careful not to overload the electrical circuit.
- Avoid using electrical heaters in bathrooms as they may come in contact with water.
- Only use heaters that have been tested to the latest safety standards and certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). These heaters will have the most up-to-date safety features, such as automatic shut-offs. It is important to install and use heaters according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Do not use a range or oven as an alternate heating source. This is a safety hazard and may be a source of toxic fumes.
- Do not use fuel burning appliances without the proper room ventilation.
- Never fill a kerosene heater while it is in operation or hot. Avoid overfilling.

For more information, visit the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr.

PLANNING / PREPAREDNESS

National Terrorism Advisory System

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

- —Elevated Threat": Warns of a credible terrorist threat against the 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.

Poll Shows Businesses Lacking in Preparedness

More than a decade after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, only a third of businesses believe they are well prepared for threats and disasters, even though about three-quarters have preparedness plans. A new poll from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) found that organizations with more than 2,500 employees were more likely to be prepared than smaller businesses. When SHRM polled on this subject in 2001, about 54 percent said they had a plan in place. More than 60 percent of members recently polled said they implemented or updated their plans as a result of Sept. 11. Preparedness tactics include training, business continuity planning, communication plans for emergency situations, monitoring employee e-mail and Internet use, and developing backup data storage systems.

<http://safety.blr.com/workplace-safety-news/emergency-planning-and-response/emergency-preparedness/Poll-Shows-Businesses-Lacking-in-Preparedness/>

Cybersecurity Tips

General Tips

- Set secure passwords and don't share them with anyone. Avoid using common words, phrases, or personal information and update regularly.
- Keep your operating system, browser, anti-virus and other critical software up to date. Security updates and patches are available for free from major companies.
- Verify the authenticity of requests from companies or individuals by contacting them directly. If you are being asked to provide personal information via email, you can independently contact the company directly to verify this request.
- Pay close attention to website URLs. Pay attention to the URLs of websites you visit. Malicious websites sometimes use a variation in common spelling or a different domain (for example, .com instead of .net) to deceive unsuspecting computer users.

Email

- Turn off the option to automatically download attachments.
- Save and scan any attachments before opening them. If you have to open an attachment before you can verify the source, take the following steps:
 - Be sure your anti-virus software is up to date.
 - Save the file to your computer or a disk.
 - Run an anti-virus scan using your computer's software.

Social Media, Video Games, Forums, Chat Sites and More

- Limit the amount of personal information you post. Do not post information that would make you vulnerable, such as your address or information about your schedule or routine. If your friend posts information about you, make sure the information is something that you are comfortable sharing with strangers.

The image shows a template for a National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) alert poster. At the top left is the DHS seal and the text 'National Terrorism Advisory System'. The word 'Alert' is prominently displayed in the top center. To the right, it says 'DATE & TIME ISSUED: XXXX'. Below this are four main sections: 'SUMMARY', 'DURATION', 'DETAILS', and 'AFFECTED AREAS'. Each section contains bullet points describing the information provided. At the bottom, there are three columns: 'HOW YOU CAN HELP', 'STAY PREPARED', and 'STAY INFORMED', each with specific instructions. A blue banner at the bottom reads 'If You See Something, Say Something™ - Report suspicious activity to local law enforcement or call 911.' Below the banner is a small disclaimer: 'The National Terrorism Advisory System provides Americans with alert information on homeland security threats. It is distributed by the Department of Homeland Security. More information is available at: www.dhs.gov/alerts. To receive mobile updates: www.textfiler.com/NTASAlerts. If You See Something, Say Something™ used with permission of the NY Metropolitan Transportation Authority.'

- Take advantage of privacy and security settings. Use site settings to limit the information you share with the general public online.
- Be wary of strangers and cautious of potentially misleading or false information.

Mobile

- Only access the Internet over a secure network. Maintain the same vigilance you would on your computer with your mobile device.
- Be suspicious of unknown links or requests sent through email or text message. Do not click on unknown links or answer strange questions sent to your mobile device, regardless of who the sender appears to be.
- Download only trusted applications from reputable sources or marketplaces.

At Home

- Talk to your children about Internet safety. Keep your family's computer in an open area and talk to your children about what they are doing online, including who they're talking to and what websites they're visiting.
- Inform children of online risks. Discuss appropriate Internet behavior that is suitable for the child's age, knowledge, and maturity. Talk to children about the dangers and risks of the Internet so that they are able to recognize suspicious activity and secure their personal information.

At Work

- Restrict access and secure the personal information of employees and customers to prevent identity theft.
- Be suspicious of unsolicited contact from individuals seeking internal organizational data or personal information. Verify a request's authenticity by contacting the requesting entity or company directly.
- Immediately report any suspect data or security breaches to your supervisor and/or authorities.

<http://www.dhs.gov/files/events/cybersecurity-tips.shtm>

Check Chimneys and Smoke Alarms Now

Is your chimney safe? How do you know? If your chimney was damaged in the August earthquake, you need to know whether it is safe or not before using your stove or fireplace this fall and winter. Broken or cracked chimneys can let heat, smoke and toxic gasses such as carbon monoxide into your home, and your home could even catch fire. Some damage is obvious, and some is hidden:

- Check to see if bricks have fallen or the chimney is leaning.
- Look for shiny areas on your metal chimney pipe. This means the chimney moved during the earthquake.
- Look for cracks at joints where the chimney connects to the firebox, at the roofline and in the attic.
- Check for debris that may have fallen into the fireplace.
- Use a screwdriver to check the mortar between the bricks or stones. If it crumbles when you pick at it, the chimney may be a hazard.
- When in doubt, consult a licensed engineer or contractor. For the name of an inspector, call your insurance or mortgage company.

Carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors save lives. If it is possible that you have chimney damage, make sure you install these and inspect them regularly.

- Consider purchasing combination smoke/carbon monoxide detectors.
- Install them in sleeping areas and on every level of your home.
- Install them away from air vents.
- Interconnected smoke alarms are best because if one sounds, they all sound.
- Test smoke alarms monthly. Change alkaline batteries at least once a year. Use a date you already know as a reminder, such as your birthday or when you change your clocks.
- Prepare and practice a fire escape route with everyone in your home, including children.

For more information go to www.usfa.dhs.gov/smokealarms or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr.

Fall Fire Season Began Saturday, Oct. 15

Shorter days and cooler nights are sure signs that autumn has arrived. And that means wildland fire season in Virginia began Saturday, October 15. Officials with the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) remind residents to be careful with outdoor fire any time of year but especially during the fall and spring seasons when the risk of a fire

escaping is greatest. John Miller, director of resource protection, said, —Fall fire season runs through Nov. 30. Each autumn, after the leaves turn color, they dry out and fall to the ground creating ‘fuel’ for a wildland fire. As humidity levels drop and winds increase this time of year, it doesn’t take long for a fire to escape.” VDOF records indicate that humans cause more than 95 percent of wildland fires – the bulk of which are preventable. In addition to taking safety precautions to prevent a debris burn, campfire or hot ashes from a woodstove or fireplace from escaping and becoming a wildland fire, Miller noted that motorists should also avoid parking their vehicles in piles of dry leaves. http://www.dof.virginia.gov/press/nr/2011/10-07_FallFireSeason.htm

Winter Safety

By following the following fire prevention measures, you can greatly reduce the risk of fire in your home and enjoy a safe winter season.

- Keep all objects at least three feet away from heating equipment such as the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater. Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.
- Before you go to sleep, be sure your fireplace fire is out. Never close your damper with hot ashes in the fireplace. A closed damper will help the fire heat up again and will force toxic carbon monoxide into the house.
- If synthetic logs are used, follow the directions on the package. Never break a synthetic log apart to quicken the fire or use more than one log at a time. They can burn unevenly, releasing higher levels of carbon monoxide.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- If you use an electric heater, be sure not to overload the circuit. Choose an extension cord the same size or larger than the appliance electrical cord.
- Avoid using electrical space heaters in areas where they may come in contact with water.
- Always remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Always let ashes cool before putting them in a metal container and keep the container a safe distance away from your home.

Last but not least, plan and practice a home escape plan with your family. If windows are used as emergency exits in your home, be sure that all the windows open easily. Home escape ladders are recommended. If you do not have one already, install a carbon monoxide detector. Carbon monoxide is a tasteless, odorless, invisible gas, which is absorbed by the human body 200 times faster than oxygen. Gas fireplaces, gas stoves, barbecues, gas furnaces, automobiles, propane appliances and any other device that produces a flame will produce carbon monoxide. Learn more about carbon monoxide poisoning at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr.

Be Flood Smart; Buy Flood Insurance

Savvy Virginians know how to protect their homes from the country’s number one natural disaster: buy flood insurance. —“It takes a few inches of water to cause major damage to your home,” said Virginia Department of Emergency Management’s State Coordinating Officer Michael Cline. —“Flood insurance is a low-cost way of protecting yourself and your property from harm,” he said. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is backed by the federal government, but policies are sold by private insurance agents throughout Virginia. Homeowners, businesses and renters can purchase flood insurance as long as their community participates in the program. Today 21,564 communities nationwide participate in NFIP; 283 of them are in Virginia. Only 17 communities in Virginia have yet to join the program. To join, a community must adopt and administer flood hazard regulations. To see a list of participating Virginia communities, go to www.fema.gov/fema/csb. Flood insurance pays off. Homes in high risk areas, have a 1 in 4 chance of flooding during a 30-year mortgage. As a result, many borrowers in high-risk areas are required to buy flood insurance. But flooding can happen anywhere. In fact, nearly 20 percent of flood insurance claims come from moderate to low risk areas. The average homeowner pays about \$600 a year for flood insurance. NFIP flood insurance can be purchased for as little as \$129 a year for a home in a low risk area. Costs increase significantly in high risk zones. Coverage can include up to \$250,000 for the structure up to \$100,000 for its contents. For businesses, structural coverage is available up to \$500,000, and up to \$500,000 for contents. Flood insurance is not dependent upon a federal disaster declaration. NFIP pays claims even if a disaster is not declared by the president. Less than half of the floods in the U.S. result in a federal disaster declaration. Since 1973, the NFIP has paid nearly \$40 billion dollars in flood insurance claims, helping hundreds of thousands of

families and businesses recover from flood events. Even after a home, apartment, or business has been flooded, owners and renters are still eligible to purchase flood insurance, provided that the community is participating in the NFIP. Be flood smart. Buy flood insurance. Remember: It takes 30 days after purchase for flood insurance to go into effect. Act now. Go to www.floodsmart.gov to find out more.

Every Home and Business Should Have a NOAA Weather Radio

The recent storms and flooding that have devastated many parts of the East Coast serve as a stark reminder of how important it is to be prepared when it comes to bad weather. One of the essential preparedness items you should have is a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio. A NOAA Weather Radio can help you monitor dangerous storms: it transmits alerts of severe weather and dangerous conditions before they arrive. The National Weather Service (NWS) broadcasts forecasts and severe weather warnings and watches 24 hours a day over the NOAA radio network. A watch means that potentially life-threatening weather is heading toward your area. A warning means that potentially life-threatening weather is imminent or already occurring. NOAA's radio system is an all-hazards system, providing watches and warnings for such incidents as floods, tornados, oil spills, 9-1-1 telephone outages, terrorist and AMBER alerts, as well as post-event information. The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends that every home and business have a NOAA Weather Radio receiver as standard equipment for around-the-clock reports. Weather radios are available at electronics stores at prices ranging from \$20 to \$200. Here are some features you should look for when purchasing one:

- Alarm tone - This allows the radio to be set on silent but produces a special tone to alert you to severe weather.
- Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) - This feature provides area specific information by filtering out alerts that do not affect your immediate area.
- Hand crank or battery operated - A radio should be able to operate on batteries or be hand-cranked to produce operating power.
- Tunable to all NWS frequencies.
- For those with a hearing impairment - A feature that allows radios to connect the alarms to other attention-getting devices such as personal computers and text printers.

More information is available online at www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr.

MEDIA ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Officials: U.S. Better Prepared to Respond to Biological Attacks

A decade after the deadly anthrax mailings of 2001, the United States is more ready to rapidly distribute medical countermeasures to save a population or a large city in the event of a major biological strike, key Obama administration officials said early this month. U.S. military personnel take mock anthrax samples during a 2007 exercise. "We're definitely better prepared now than we ever have been," Thomas Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said during a panel discussion hosted by University of Pittsburgh's Center for Biosecurity. Countermeasures from the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile are intended to reach potential victims of a biological or other WMD event within 48 hours. In that vein, six metropolitan areas recently received grant funds from the Health and Human Services Department to prepare volunteer U.S. Postal Service mail carriers to deliver anthrax medications to area residents. Frieden said that more states have established the capacities to detect potentially lethal biological outbreaks and to respond quickly with vaccines. He specifically noted the H1N1 influenza outbreaks in 2009, during which some localities used football stadiums and drive-through pharmacies to vaccinate large numbers of people. Still, anthrax and other "worst-case scenarios" continue to challenge health officials — in terms of what is a realistic expectation of what we can do and what we can do that will cause no harm." http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20111005_2679.php

Falls Church Council Briefed on Emergency Preparedness

Emergency readiness in the city of Falls Church was among the primary topics at a recent City Council work session

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where Fire Marshall and Emergency Manager Tom Polera advised the Council that the City's emergency operations plan is in dire need of review. —With reductions in staff there are capabilities [in the plan] that we just cannot perform," Polera said. —We may be only at one shift to perform [a service], so anything extending to a moderate to long term event would be critical for the City." Police Chief Harry Rietz agreed. —The potential for our resources to be overwhelmed quickly in a very serious emergency is very real, simply because of the reduction of staffing," he said.

<http://fallschurchtimes.com/30839/council-briefed-on-pension-plans-emergency-preparedness-storm-water-town-hall-scheduled-for-1017/>

“Burying” FEMA in DHS was “Huge Structural and Operational Mistake”

Homeland Security NewsWire's executive editor Eugene K. Chow recently interviewed Aden Hogan Jr., the city manager of Evans, Colo. and the former assistant city manager of Oklahoma City during the 1995 terrorist attack. In their interview, Hogan rates FEMA's response during the recent spate of natural disasters in the United States, problems the agency has had since it became integrated in DHS and steps that local governments and residents should be taking to better prepare themselves for major disasters.

<http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/burying-fema-dhs-was-huge-structural-and-operational-mistake>

Businesses Aim for Cybersecurity Assistance, Not Regulation

Cyberattacks have business leaders concerned, but what may be equally worrisome to them is the potential for sweeping new government regulations designed to counter cyberthreats. Earlier this month the Business Roundtable, which includes dozens of America's largest corporations, released a report calling for industry-friendly, voluntary steps, rather than overt mandates, to reduce cyberattacks. Its message to the government: Help us, but don't overregulate us.

http://www.nextgov.com/nextgov/ng_20111012_4883.php

D.C. Emergency Officials to Ask Public to Stay Put During Emergencies in Bid to Avoid Gridlock

District of Columbia emergency management officials say they plan to communicate with the public more quickly during emergencies in a bid to avoid the traffic gridlock that occurred in the wake of a January snowstorm and the August earthquake.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-council-hearing-to-examine-emergency-preparedness-response-in-the-region/2011/10/13/gIQAAnUDwgL_story.html

Editorial: http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/before-the-next-earthquake/2011/10/14/gIQA7nihpL_story.html

Next-generation 9-1-1 Technology Requires New Money and Policies

The Washington Office of Unified Communications fields 4,000 emergency calls a day, but not a single text message makes its way to 911 dispatchers. At least not yet. Emergency officials, government regulators, and lawmakers are seeking to change that by pushing forward with next-generation 911 technology, which could allow people to send text, photos, video, and other types of data in case of an emergency.

http://www.nextgov.com/nextgov/ng_20111014_4694.php

D.C. Officials Receive Priority Disaster Phone Access

During major disasters or a terrorist attack, phone lines quickly become inundated with traffic which makes it nearly impossible for residents to make calls or send texts; to ensure that local officials have the ability to communicate during disasters, DHS recently issued special calling cards to members of the Washington, D.C. City Council that allow their calls to take priority during moments of heavy phone traffic.

<http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dc-officials-receive-priority-disaster-phone-access>

Billion-dollar Weather Disasters: 12 and Counting

The billion-dollar weather disasters keep piling up, with the United States now at a record-shattering 12 for the year. The previous single-year record for billion-dollar disasters was nine, set in 2008.

<http://content.usatoday.com/communities/sciencefair/post/2011/10/billion-dollar-weather-disasters-tropical-storm-lee-hurricane-irene/1>

San Francisco to Release Game-based Disaster Preparedness App

Riffing on social gaming mobile applications such as FarmVille and FourSquare, San Francisco wants to reward you for disaster preparation – not with money, but with digital satisfaction. Employing a motivational method known to tech industry aficionados as “gamification,” The City’s Department of Emergency Management said a new app called SF Heroes will be available for the iPhone ... with an Android version coming in spring. The game allows users to connect with friends and complete tasks through games and in real life, earning them —badges” that rank them against online counterparts. Laura Adleman, a spokeswoman for the emergency department, said even if cell service and Internet access are unavailable in a disaster, users will still have access to stored map data, plus the phone and supply lists. —This is going to be a great tool to be prepared in San Francisco,” Adleman said, adding that the department has been working with game developer CosmiCube and spent \$25,000 to develop SF Heroes.



<http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/2011/10/san-francisco-release-game-based-disaster-preparedness-app-today>

Inside a Government Computer Attack Exercise

Forget, for the moment, about computer whiz kids who download copyrighted music for free. Forget, too, about sophisticated hackers who can steal identities. Focus instead on the next wave of potential computer miscreants -- criminals who can penetrate corporate computer systems to turn valves, start pumps or surge power at factories or electrical plants. They might even be able to hit chemical facilities. Those folks are on the minds of the researchers at the Idaho National Laboratory, where the federal government regularly trains industry leaders on how to protect critical infrastructure from cyberattacks. In the not-so-distant past, instructors here say, security officials relied on the "3 Gs" -- guns, gates and guards -- to protect infrastructure from intrusions. But increasingly mechanical systems inside those gates are being linked to computers and controlled via networks and cyberspace. That has left industrial control systems vulnerable to attack.

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/10/17/tech/innovation/cyberattack-exercise-idaho/>

Communications Plan Gets Supervisors’ Boost

A coordinated effort in times of emergencies is among items the Hanover County Board of Supervisors will be proposing to the Virginia General Assembly for the 2012 session. ... county attorney Sterling E. Rives III reviewed the Legislative Agenda with the board. He said it —may be a little bit simpler than it has been in previous years.” Under action items, a proposal board chair Deborah B. Winans of the Mechanicsville District brought to 97th District Del. Christopher K. Peace’s attention targets the impact on emergency communications centers when natural disasters occur. As an example, he cited an overwhelmed call center. For instance, a county like Albemarle, which is at a distance from Hanover and may not be affected by the same emergency, could assist with calls. Neighboring counties like Henrico may be impacted by the same emergency. Winans said the assisting locality should be pretrained —and we would be pretrained, so we would be familiar with their roads.”

http://www.mechlocal.com/index.php/news/article/communications_plan_gets_supervisors_boost/6605/

FLU

Fairfax County Pandemic Flu Preparedness

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

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

Initial 2011-2012 Seasonal “FluView” Report

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently released the initial —FluView” report for the US 2011-2012 flu season with the message that flu activity is currently low, making this the perfect time to get vaccinated. There should be lots of vaccine available, because the supply is projected to set a U.S. record. With rare exceptions, CDC

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recommends that everyone 6 months and older get an annual flu vaccine. This season, people have more options than ever in this regard, both in terms of where they get vaccinated and which vaccine they chose to get. While doctor's offices and health departments continue to provide flu vaccinations, vaccine also is available at many pharmacies, work places and other retail and clinic locations. In addition to the traditional seasonal flu shot that has been available for decades, a nasal spray vaccine was introduced in 2003 for non-pregnant healthy people between 2 and 49 years of age, and a high dose flu shot was introduced last season for people 65 and older. Also, new for this season is an intradermal shot, which uses a needle 90 percent smaller than the regular flu shot and is approved for people 18 to 64 years of age.

http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2011/p1014_fluview_report.html

Priming with DNA Vaccine Makes Avian Flu Vaccine Work Better

The immune response to an H5N1 avian influenza vaccine was greatly enhanced in healthy adults if they were first primed with a DNA vaccine expressing a gene for a key H5N1 protein, researchers say. Their report describes results from two clinical studies conducted by researchers from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health. A majority of study volunteers who received the DNA vaccine 24 weeks before receiving a booster vaccine made from whole, inactivated H5N1 virus produced high levels of antibodies thought to be protective against the globular head region of a protein called hemagglutinin (HA). Traditional seasonal influenza vaccines are designed to elicit antibodies to the head region of HA, but it changes each year and so vaccines must be repeated annually to maintain immunity. In some volunteers, the prime-boost vaccine regimen also spurred production of broadly neutralizing antibodies aimed at the HA stem, a region that is relatively constant across many strains of influenza viruses. The findings from the Phase I clinical trials appear in an article online Oct. 4 in "The Lancet Infectious Diseases."

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/oct2011/niaid-03.htm>

People with Egg Allergies in Canada are Getting a Green Light to Get Flu Shots

A panel of experts which issues advice on which vaccines Canadians ought to get has changed its stance on flu shots and egg allergies. Flu vaccine is made in chicken eggs and people allergic to eggs have long been told they should forgo the annual shots. But a series of recent studies have looked at the issue and have found the shots can be safely given to people with egg allergies. The new advice from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization relates to injectable flu shots only — the form of flu vaccine most commonly given in Canada. The panel says there isn't enough evidence at this time to determine whether the nasal spray flu vaccine — a live virus vaccine sold as FluMist — is also safe for people with egg allergies. But it notes a study is underway looking at that question. The new advice is contained in NACI's 2011-2012 statement on seasonal flu immunization. It suggests that doctors don't need to give people with egg allergies a skin test first to see if they can tolerate the vaccine. Instead, they suggest one of two options for people with egg allergies, depending on their individual risk of having a severe reaction to egg protein. People with a lower risk of a severe reaction can be given the vaccine in a single dose, but should be observed for 30 minutes after getting the shot in case a reaction develops, the statement says.

<http://www.therecord.com/news/canada/article/603657--flu-shots-ok-d-for-those-with-egg-allergies-though-injectable-vaccine-advised>

Three New Indonesian H5N1 Deaths Include Two Siblings

Three Indonesian children have recently died from H5N1 avian influenza infections, including two siblings from the island of Bali, according to reports from the media and the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO confirmed one of the deaths [Oct. 10], and its verification of the two from Bali would push Indonesia's H5N1 total to 181 cases, including 149 fatalities. The country has the most WHO-confirmed H5N1 cases and deaths in the world. The first case involves a 1-year-old girl from the West Jakarta district of DKI Jakarta province, who died on Aug 25, the WHO said in a statement. She got sick and was treated at a healthcare facility on Aug 8 then admitted to a private hospital on Aug 15. An investigation into the source of her infection found that one of the girl's family members is a caterer who routinely processes poultry, including slaughtering, according to the WHO statement. Poultry was kept in the girl's neighborhood, but no chicken deaths had been reported within the 14 days before her illness. Meanwhile, a hospital in Bali said that two children, a 10-year-old boy and his 5-year-old sister, died after a 2-day hospitalization, Deutsche Presse-Agentur (DPA) reported. The two children were admitted to Sanglah General Hospital in Denpasar

on Oct 7 with H5N1 symptoms and placed in isolation, according to a –Jakarta Globe” story. Though tests at the hospital were positive for the H5N1 virus, further tests are being conducted at Udayana University and at Indonesia's health ministry.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/news/oct1011avian.html>

UK: H1N1 Linked to Stillbirths

Babies born to mothers who contracted the swine flu virus faced a much greater risk of being stillborn, according to a new study. Baby deaths among women infected with the 2009 strain of the virus were five times higher than normal. There was also a greater risk of premature births when compared to mothers who had not caught the virus. Health workers say the findings reinforce the message that all pregnant women should get immunized against flu. The study was carried out by the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit at the Oxford University and it examined the cases of every pregnant woman in the UK who was admitted to hospital while suffering from flu. In 256 mothers infected with the H1N1 flu virus between September 2009 and January 2010, seven of the babies were stillborn and three died shortly after birth. That is the equivalent of 39 babies in 1,000 dying, before or shortly after birth, compared to 7 in 1,000 in mothers not infected with the virus.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-15357218>

CDC Confirms 5th Case of New Swine-Origin H3N2 Reassortant in Maine

CDC has confirmed the fifth case of human infection with a swine–origin influenza A (H3N2) virus that carries the M gene from the 2009 H1N1 virus. This virus was first detected in a child in Indiana in July. Subsequently three additional cases of human infection with swine–origin influenza A (H3N2) viruses carrying the same genetic change were detected in Pennsylvania. Though rare, human infections with swine–origin influenza viruses can occur, usually after close contact with infected swine. The patient in Maine was reported to have attended an agricultural fair where animals, including pigs, were present. The child was not hospitalized. He received antiviral treatment and is recovering from his illness. Though an investigation is ongoing and surveillance for influenza–like–illness is being enhanced, no human–to–human transmission of this virus has been identified in Maine. The patient had not received a seasonal influenza vaccination. However it should be noted that seasonal influenza vaccine would NOT be expected to protect against this swine–origin influenza virus because it is so different from the human viruses in the seasonal vaccine. Seasonal influenza vaccination is important to decrease the risk of getting infected with human seasonal influenza viruses, which are beginning to circulate in the United States for the 2011-2012 season.

http://www.cdc.gov/media/haveyouheard/stories/H3N2_virus.html

TRAININGS / EXERCISES / CONFERENCES

National Capital Region Homeland Security Events

http://www.mwcog.org/committee/committee/events_homeland.asp?COMMITTEE_ID=134

Virginia Emergency Management Courses

<http://www.vaemergency.com>

FEMA Independent Study Courses

<http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/>

American Red Cross Disaster Services Training

http://www.redcrossnca.org/Online/disaster_registration.php

FEMA

Emergency
Management
Institute

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's
Emergency Management Institute offers an extensive
catalog of training and education at numerous locations.
[View website](#)

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

Terror on Trial

Nov. 3-5; Washington, D.C.

The theme of this conference sponsored by the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa is –Out of the Past, Into the Future: Reflections on the Middle East and Africa.” It will feature a keynote address by Barham Salih, Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region, along with presentations by top policymakers and scholars, roundtable discussions on –Turkey as a Democratic Ally Under the AKP [Party for Justice and Progress]” and –The Saddam Tapes, 1978-2001: The Inner Workings of a Tyrant’s Regime,” and panel discussions of the latest academic research in Middle Eastern and African studies and related disciplines.

http://www.asmeascholars.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1417&Itemid=108

Maritime Regional Resilience and Whole Community

Nov. 3; Norfolk, Va.

This forum presented by the Infrastructure Security Partnership will bring together leaders from several port regions to discuss strategies, priorities, and collaboration efforts to ensure maritime regional resilience.

<http://tisp.org/index.cfm?cdid=12264&pid=10231>

Emergency Medical Services Symposium

Nov. 9-13; Norfolk, Va.

This symposium sponsored by the Virginia Department of Health offers seminars, courses with continuing education credits, an exhibit hall, and a career fair.

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/OEMS/Symposium/index.htm>

Secured Cities

Nov. 10-11; Baltimore, Md.

This conference on municipal video surveillance brings together key partners in urban security (city management, law enforcement, and transit security administration) to facilitate the dialogue necessary for a city to create a holistic emergency safety or security plan.

<http://securedcities.com/>



Homeland Security Financing Briefing

Nov. 15; Washington, D.C.

This conference provides details on the more than \$40 billion in homeland security discretionary funding for 2012. It will feature top Congressional and federal agency leaders discussing homeland security appropriations and the programs funded during the next year.

<http://www.cvent.com/events/the-2012-homeland-security-financing-briefing/event-summary-af82de9c8eb5447c85957b2b752f96f8.aspx?i=8b213d7a-5314-4876-b4e2-87a5647b8b5e>

MAST Americas 2011

Nov. 14-16; Washington, D.C.

The conference and expo unite the major global shareholders in maritime security and defense to discuss and debate maritime capabilities and concepts, evaluate future and state-of-the-art enabling technologies, and develop international partnerships.

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



International Workshop on Innovation, Diversity and Sustainable Development in Areas of Social Vulnerability

Nov. 17-18; Boston, Mass.

This workshop organized by the Center for Rebuilding Sustainable Communities After Disasters will discuss strategies for the empowerment of residents in the areas of social vulnerability and the implementation of public policies with a sustainable basis in such areas.

<http://www.rebuilding.umb.edu/idsd.php>

Continuity of Operations and Emergency Planning in the Government Environment

Nov. 29-30; Washington, D.C.

Industry experts and government managers will present practical, real-life solutions to the challenges of electrical outages, fires and natural disasters – including hurricanes and earthquakes – by establishing or improving a business continuity program.

<http://www.potomacforum.org/?view=467>

Infrastructure and Regional Resilience Conference

Nov. 30–Dec. 1; National Harbor, Md.

This conference of the Infrastructure Security Partnership offers workshops and plenary sessions on —Operationalizing the Regional Disaster Resilience Guide and Whole Community Approach,” —Community Health Resilience Systems and Other Data Exchange Networks,” —Risk Assessment Standardization,” “Arriving at Post-Disaster New Normal,” and —Impacts of Interdependent Infrastructure, Capabilities, and Resources.” This year’s theme is —Design Resilience. Build Preparedness.”

<http://www.tisp.org/index.cfm?pid=11824>



Homeland Security for Networked Industries

Dec. 5-6; Washington, D.C.

This conference brings together senior leaders from industry and government to discuss current challenges, share best practices, and make recommendations for securing the nation’s critical infrastructure. This year’s conference will focus on the nation’s ability to optimize investment in security, both for industry and government, which are threatened by challenging economic times. It will also focus on reliability—particularly the smart grid, communications infrastructure during crises, and the nation’s financial services industry. The event will culminate in formal recommendations to the federal government for optimizing government industry resources for the greater benefit of national security.

<http://hsnievents.com/>

2011 Law Enforcement – Homeland Security

Dec. 7-8; Chantilly, Va.

The National Reconnaissance Office and the Interagency Council for Applied Homeland Security Technology present this conference and exposition. The theme is —Vigilance Through Integrated Intelligence, Technology, and Collaboration.” It will promote information and intelligence integration opportunities; enhance mutual awareness of intelligence, law enforcement, and homeland security community needs and capabilities; identify collaborative initiatives between the national law enforcement, homeland security, and intelligence communities; determine rapid engineering solutions to support national security; and showcase existing and innovative national security technologies. Topics to be covered include emerging national security threats for the 21st century, border security, innovative technologies to support the law enforcement and homeland security communities, strategic partnership for information sharing and integrated intelligence, and national security initiatives.

<http://www.ncsi.com/lehs11/index.html>



Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting

Jan. 4-8, 2012; Washington, D.C.

One topic on the program is “War, Terrorism, and the Federal Courts Ten Years After 9/11.” The panel will focus on the unique issues that federal courts have confronted during (and relating to) the conflict against al-Qaeda and related terrorist groups, and how that body of jurisprudence has—and may yet—affect the role of the federal courts more generally going forward.

https://memberaccess.aals.org/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?webcode=2012Aamwhy&Reg_evt_key=d4a06b1f-994e-4ffe-b5ea-548f57898594&RegPath=EventRegFees

2012 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium

March 28-30, 2012; Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa/Short Pump, 12042 West Broad Street, Richmond, Va.

The 2012 Virginia Emergency Management Symposium, sponsored by the Virginia Emergency Management Association and Virginia Department of Emergency Management, will be held in Richmond. The 2012 theme is “Don’t Fail the Mission” and is designed for anyone whose professional commitment causes them to seek a greater understanding of emergencies, both natural and man-made.

http://www.vemaweb.org/apps/public/news/newsView.cfm?News_ID=125

LINKS

Fairfax County Blogs and Web Resources

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

DHS Science & Technology Directorate Newsletter

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

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

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report (OSIR)

The Department of Homeland Security provides a Web-based “Daily OSIR,” which is posted on the DHS public Web site. Accessing the report via the Web enables readers to retrieve the current Daily Report as well as 10 days of archived DHS Daily Reports. Once you arrive at the Web page you will find the most recent Daily OSIR at the top of the page, under the title “Current Report.” This report is posted each morning, except for weekends and holidays. Simply click on the title “DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report.” This will launch the current days report in PDF format. You can submit content comments or make suggestions by contacting the DHS Daily Report Team by telephone at 202-312-3421 or by e-mail at NICCRports@dhs.gov. You can access the Daily OSIR at: http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/editorial_0542.shtm.

Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Web Page

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

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/

Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Line

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/infoline.htm

Emergency Management Magazine

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

FEMA Private Sector

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

FAIRFAX COUNTY 703-817-7771
EMERGENCY
INFORMATION LINE

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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. Should someone you know like to be added to our distribution list, have them send an e-mail to jim.person@fairfaxcounty.gov and ask to be subscribed to the ESF 15 Business/Nonprofit Update.

If you have any suggestions on how to improve this update or other communications between Fairfax County and the business/nonprofit community, please contact Merni Fitzgerald, Director of the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs, at 703-324-3187, TTY 711, or by e-mail at merni.fitzgerald@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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