



Emergency Management and Response Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

INFOGRAM 10-11

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NOTE: This INFOGRAM will be distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures. For further information, contact the Emergency Management and Response- Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) at (301) 447-1325 or by e-mail at emr-isac@dhs.gov.

Emergency Vehicle Theft

(Source: NY State Department of Health)

As in past years, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) occasionally receives information about stolen emergency vehicles. Although it is not an indication of a major problem among Emergency Services Sector (ESS) departments and agencies, it is still a matter for concern and correction. The issue is particularly problematic during these times when budgets are shrinking and resources are sparing for repair of recovered vehicle or purchase of replacements.

ESS leaders recognize that stolen police sedans, fire apparatus, and ambulances can be potentially disruptive to emergency operations. Furthermore, stolen emergency vehicles could draw less scrutiny and provide the vehicle occupants with unauthorized access to sensitive areas.

Examples of recently stolen emergency vehicles can be seen at [Fox News 23](#), [News Channel 9](#), and at [The Daily Progress](#). To prevent additional incidents such as these, the [New York State Department of Health](#) recommends implementation and enforcement of the following common best practices:

- Leave a crew member with the vehicle.
- Turn off the engine and remove the key when exiting the vehicle.
- Lock the vehicle and its exterior storage compartments when left unattended.
- Install a commercial anti-theft device.
- Secure the vehicle and contents whenever not in service, including when in for maintenance or repair.
- Conduct frequent inspection of vehicles and promptly report missing equipment.

At Risk Dams

(Sources: Association of State Dam Safety Officials and the NY Times)

Considering the present situation at the Lake Isabella Dam in California, and the possibility of catastrophic flooding as far as 40 miles away, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) revisited the current status of American dams to ascertain the potential impact of dam failures on the plans and operations of the Emergency Services Sector (ESS). According to information provided by the [Association of State Dam Safety Officials](#) to the [New York Times](#), it is possible that organizations (e.g., ESS) at particular locations of the United States may be vulnerable to operational degradation in the event of a nearby dam failure.

Dam safety watchdogs indicate that the condition of American dams continues to worsen with each passing year. These specialists stated: “The number of high-risk dams keeps rising as structures age, downstream development increases, and more accurate information is obtained about watersheds and earthquake hazards.” Furthermore, “many dams exceed their hazard ratings, and, in most states, rankings do not account for the consequences of the toxic chemicals and runoff from farms and mines that would be released downstream of a dam failure.”

Prudence dictates awareness by emergency managers and chief officers of the emergency services regarding the number and status of dams within their jurisdiction. With this knowledge, ESS leaders can appropriately participate in the development and implementation of emergency action plans to repair weakened dams, as well as planning for a dam failure, including the evacuation of affected citizens. Resources to assist planning endeavors are available from the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#), [Association of State Dam Officials](#), and [the Dam Safety Coalition](#).

Flooding Awareness

(Sources: NOAA and floodsmart.gov)

Flooding is a coast to coast threat to municipalities and their Emergency Services Sector departments and agencies during all months of the year. Anywhere it rains, it can flood. This week, 26 States are reporting flooding and flash flooding, with flood watches and warnings currently in effect throughout the Eastern and Southern United States, according to the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#). Midwestern states are especially susceptible to snow melt and ice jam that cause spring flooding, but states in every region of the country are at risk. [Floodsmart.gov](#) defines a flood as a general and temporary condition where two or more acres of normally dry land or two or more properties are inundated by water or mudflow.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) acknowledges that 14 to 18 March is National Flood Safety Awareness Week. Its purpose is to highlight some of the many ways floods can occur, the hazards associated with floods, and what can be done to safe life and property. “It is important to be prepared for flooding regardless of location, but particularly if situated in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam.”

The following resources are available to promote flooding awareness and preparedness to avoid disruption of essential services and enhance personnel safety:

- [The Ready Campaign](#)
- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Flood Safety](#)
- [FEMA's FloodSmart Program](#)
- [FEMA's Flood Preparedness](#)
- [Flood Insurance](#)

Emergency Responder Health Monitoring and Surveillance

(Source: DHS, Office of Health Affairs)

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) was notified that the [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#) requests comments on their draft guidance document: [Emergency Responder Health Monitoring and Surveillance](#) (PDF, 10 Mb) (Docket Number: *NIOSH 223*). Comments will be accepted until 5:00 pm EDT on April 5, 2011.

Following the World Trade Center attacks in 2001, concerns were raised regarding the ability of the emergency response community to ensure the safety and health of all workers involved in a large scale, complex emergency response. More recent disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, continue to reveal the gaps existing in the safety and health programs utilized during large scale emergency events.

This draft document proposes a new framework for ensuring responder safety and health by monitoring and conducting surveillance of their health and safety during the entire cycle of emergency response, including the pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment phases of a response. The proposed system is referred to as the “Emergency Responder Health Monitoring and Surveillance” (ERHMS) system, and includes a guidance section describing the principles involved in ensuring optimal responder safety and health, as well as tools which can be utilized to help facilitate the execution of these principles during an actual response.

The goals of the ERHMS system are to ensure that only properly trained and properly fit responders are deployed to a response, that the health and safety of all responders are appropriately monitored during a response, and that a systematic and comprehensive evaluation be conducted to determine the potential need for long term surveillance of responders' health after their deployment has been completed.

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REPORTING NOTICE

The National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Infrastructure Protection is the central point for notifications regarding infrastructure threats, disruptions, intrusions, and suspicious activities. Emergency Services Sector personnel are requested to report any incidents or attacks involving their infrastructures using at least the first and second points of contact seen below:

- 1) NICC - Voice: 202-282-9201, Fax: 703-487-3570, E-Mail: nicc@dhs.gov
- 2) Your local FBI office - Web: www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm
- 3) EMR-ISAC - Voice: 301-447-1325, E-Mail: emr-isac@dhs.gov, fax: 301-447-1034,
Web: www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac, Mail: E-108, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727