



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

INFOGRAM 2-09

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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.

Reporting Suspicious Activity

Acknowledging there are legally acceptable ways for first responders who are not sworn officers to report unusual, suspicious, and criminal activity, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) infrastructure protection and intelligence officials restated the importance for Emergency Services Sector personnel to report suspicious actions to the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC) as well as their local authorities. Although there are no specifically known terrorist threats, DHS specialists offered the following reasons to increase reporting during 2009:

- Analysts cannot know what's happening without suspicious activity reports.
- Suspicious activity reports are necessary to track potential terrorist threats.
- Security experts cannot "connect the dots" when there are no dots to connect.
- Reporting suspicious activity to the NICC saves valuable time.

In a recent meeting, the FBI counterterrorism division chief asserted that prompt and detailed reporting of suspicious activity may prevent a terrorist attack. FBI counterterrorism specialists, therefore, recommend individuals provide the following information when reporting unusual, suspicious, and criminal actions:

- Brief description of the activity.
- Date, time, and location of the activity.
- Physical description of the person(s) and vehicle(s) involved.
- Direction of travel and possible destination of those involved.
- Complete contact information of the individual making the report.

Suspicious activity should be reported to the local law enforcement agency, but also to the NICC: voice: 202-282-9201; Fax: 703-487-3570; E-mail: nicc@dhs.gov.

The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) regards the above reasons for and methods of reporting suspicious activity particularly timely considering the 20 January Presidential Inauguration events. The FBI counterterrorism division chief advised last month that public and private sector managers "double-check their security plans and prepare for the possibility of a sophisticated terrorist attack. He added, however, that "no credible threats to the inauguration currently exist."

Ice Storm Lessons Learned

A massive ice storm in Kansas City, Missouri, in 2002 challenged local Emergency Services Sector agencies as well as city officials and departments, but created positive changes and yielded advice for emergency managers in the many U.S. jurisdictions tested by severe winter weather.

The storm covered the city in 2 inches of ice, destroyed or damaged nearly 500,000 trees, knocked down power lines that blocked 20,000 streets, and left 75 percent of residents without power for weeks. According to GovTech.com, "After 81 twelve-hour workdays and \$26.8 million, the city was back to normal, but not before the importance of having emergency management contract clauses, an emergency management office and detailed documentation were reinforced."

City officials launched a three-phase response. First, streets were unblocked to enable access by the emergency services and utility companies. The 48-hour phase included plowing snow and ice and trimming tree limbs that threatened further damage. In phase two, a task force was created to relocate debris to collection sites. A city agency director took the role of incident commander to supervise collecting and disposing of 1.6 million metric tons of debris. The final phase of 30 days encompassed tree trimming, curbside collection of residents' rubble, and street sweeping.

Although the storm occurred before the National Incident Management System (NIMS) was created, city officials later used the system and credited NIMS with helping them establish a new response framework, including an improved and reliable emergency management office. The Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) offers the following additional abbreviated insights from Kansas City officials:

- Consider including emergency management clauses in contracts with private contractors, and understand how doing so affects billing and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement. (One of the city's clauses allowed it to request 100 extra tree maintenance crews with 72 hours' notice.)
- Contemplate expanding the use of contractors to minimize the disruption to city workers' normal service.
- Stage a dry run to ensure that all systems are in place and that those in charge understand their roles.
- Evaluate storms in other jurisdictions and apply that information locally.
- Communicate with contractors to keep them apprised of available resources during emergencies.

"Kansas City Emergency Management Office Helps City Recover after Ice Storm" can be viewed at <http://www.govtech.com/qt/565980>.

OSHA QuickCards

"Protecting Worker Safety and Health under the National Response Framework" is the newest of various "QuickCards" available from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) relevant to the Emergency Services Sector.

The new QuickCard explains that the Federal Emergency Management Agency can activate OSHA to coordinate worker safety and health following a disaster when federal, state, tribal, and local assets are overwhelmed and assistance is needed to protect employees. Depending on the scope, complexity, and hazards associated with the incident, OSHA's services can include the following:

- Identify and assess worker health and safety hazards present at the incident site and in the environment.
- Assess the resources needed to protect workers and identify the sources available to meet those needs.
- Provide technical expertise in industrial hygiene, occupational safety and health, structural collapse engineering, safety engineering, radiation safety, biological and chemical agent response, and occupational medicine.
- Manage the creation and implementation of a site-specific health and safety plan (HASP).
- Monitor and manage worker safety and health hazards through on-site identification, evaluation, analysis, and mitigation, including personal exposure monitoring.
- Provide assistance with developing, implementing, and monitoring the personal protective equipment (PPE) program, including the selection, use, and decontamination of PPE.
- Coordinate the collection and management of exposure and accident/injury data to identify trends and facilitate data sharing.
- Coordinate and provide incident-specific response and recovery worker training.
- Assist with the development and distribution of educational materials on preventing and mitigating hazards.

Of the more than 40 OSHA QuickCards available, the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) notes that topics pertinent to emergency responders include carbon monoxide poisoning, motor vehicle safe driving practices, portable ladder safety, construction hazards, heat and cold stress, fall protection, work zone traffic safety, portable generators, mold, trench safety, avian flu, West Nile virus, and general decontamination. OSHA QuickCards can be downloaded at <http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.AthruZ?pType=Types&pID=6>.

More Winter Weather Considerations

In the past few weeks, harsh winter weather has been creating havoc in some parts of the United States. Emergency Services Sector departments and agencies in affected areas can attest to the impacts of the recent winter weather on personnel and equipment. In some cases, wintry conditions with sub-zero temperatures nearly degraded emergency operational capabilities.

What plans, processes, and response changes must be considered and trained to guarantee continuity of operations and mission success during extremely cold weather with or without precipitation? To answer this question, the Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) consulted an article in FireRescue1. Some of the topics discussed in the article pertain to vehicle and apparatus readiness, scene safety, on-scene operational considerations, and dealing with frozen hydrants.

The FireRescue1 article can be seen at <http://www.firerescue1.com/Columnists/Michael-Lee/articles/447195-Impact-of-Winter-Weather-on-Personnel-Part-2>.

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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: <http://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/subjects/emr-isac, Mail: J-247, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727