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The U.S. Fire Administration maintains the **Emergency Management and Response – Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)**.

For information regarding the EMR-ISAC visit [www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac) or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: **(301) 447-1325** and/or [emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov).

# The InfoGram

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## CBRNIAC Offers Free Biodefense Presentations

The Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense Information Analysis Center ([CBRNIAC](#)) has free [PowerPoint presentations on 15 biodefense topics](#) available on their website. The presentations provide an overview of diseases that have been or could be used as biological weapons.

Though the slide deck briefs were designed to be used for military medical officers, they are useful resources for anyone in a need-to-know position. The presentations consist of means of infection, detection, pictures of infected people, timelines of symptoms starting from the point of exposure, treatment and therapies, methods of infection control, means of protection from the diseases for responders, and more.

CBRNIAC is a Department of Defense Information Analysis Center managed by the Defense Technical Information Center to be a reliable source for information on CBRN information. In addition to the biodefense products they produce a [quarterly electronic newsletter](#) and provide research assistance on request. They also maintain both public and password-protected databases.

(Source: [CBRNIAC](#))

## High-Tech Ambulance Simulators on the Road

Using simulators for emergency training is an old practice, but technological advances are making possible what was only envisioned before. [Washington County Emergency Medical Services in Oregon](#) has developed a new simulator to train public health personnel, firefighters, EMTs, and EMT students on EMS procedures.

Using a real ambulance chassis for a more realistic experience, students work on their skills while their classroom is traveling down the highway, bringing to life another aspect of a realistic environment. The simulator is equipped with [lifelike mannequins that mimic bodily functions](#), generators enabling extended training sessions, and audio-visual equipment for viewing training in process and recording the training for debriefings later.

The mobile classroom also gives rural parts of the county the opportunity to benefit from such advanced training. Response times in rural areas can often be high, making retaining and practicing pre-hospital skills important.

*The InfoGram is distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures.*

Washington County EMS partnered with several regional colleges and universities to share the financial burden of the ambulance simulator in exchange for its shared use. Working partnerships between regional organizations and educational institutions is a practical way to combine resources for mutual benefit while minimizing the economic impact on any one entity.

(Source: [Emergency Management Magazine](#))

## Changing the WUI Discussion

The wildfires in Colorado earlier this summer brought renewed interest to many of the overlying, long-term issues surrounding wildland urban interface (WUI) fires. Regional response to WUI fires varies greatly depending on variables such as terrain or jurisdictional oversight, but certain key issues float to the top repeatedly.

Discussions on WUI fire often only take place after a major wildfire is in progress, and then usually with a reactive spin, e.g., who or what is responsible, why things are being handled a certain way, etc. This can put an additional burden on agencies responding to the event, making them feel the need to justify every move or decision they make.

Preemptive local outreach well before wildfire season can help change the focus from reaction to action, creating the plan instead of responding to outside influences or criticism. Altering the conversation early to risk communication or working to fix local issues will begin the process of changing the public attitudes and views.

An article in the Denver Post discusses these and several other issues and concerns that are being argued in parts of the country where WUI fires are an ongoing threat. The article recounts how the reactive approach is problematic to the overall organization of resources and creates instability in the disaster management cycle of “Prevent, Prepare, Respond, and Recover.”

(Source: [The Denver Post](#))

## Maintaining Operations During a Pandemic

Since July 2012, there have been more outbreaks of H3N2 influenza around the country, particularly in the Midwest. This variant is a type of swine flu, and is more likely to be passed from pigs to humans than other swine flu strains seen in the past few years.

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) is [tracking these cases](#), and has stated “while there is no evidence at this time that sustained human-to-human transmission is occurring, all influenza viruses have the capacity to change and it's possible that this virus may become widespread.” The CDC has [H3N2 resources available](#) to include recent cases, treatment, surveillance, and printable resources such as flyers and posters for public events like fairs and farm shows.

The Department of Homeland Security's Office of Health Affairs produced a document jointly with the U.S. Fire Administration entitled “[Information for First Responders on Maintaining Operational Capabilities during a Pandemic](#)” (PDF, 632.52 Kb) to help the fire service, law enforcement, EMS, 9-1-1, and emergency management agencies maintain continuity of operations during a pandemic.

(Source: [DHS Office of Health Affairs](#))

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For information specifically affecting the private sector critical infrastructure contact the **National Infrastructure Coordinating Center** by phone at **202-282-9201**, or by email at [nicc@dhs.gov](mailto:nicc@dhs.gov).