



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

INFOGRAM 46-09

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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.*

New Web Site for Infrastructure Leaders

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano unveiled this week a new web site designed to inform the public about DHS critical infrastructure protection, readiness, and resilience efforts. This latest resource is part of the Department's effort to heighten awareness about the importance of protecting America's vital assets, systems, and networks over the coming weeks.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) confirmed that the new [web site](#) should provide infrastructure stakeholders and the public with easily accessible information about their role in safeguarding critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR). The web site features a link to the convenient CIKR Resource Center, which includes information about how to sign up for free web-based seminars on the tools, trends, issues, and best practices for infrastructure protection and resilience, etc.

This user-friendly web site also provides information about the ongoing CIKR efforts of DHS, such as the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP), National Response Framework, and other initiatives to ensure the protection and resilience of CIKR through partnerships with thousands of public and private members.

"Securing our nation's critical infrastructure is vital to maintaining the safety of communities across the country," said Secretary Napolitano. "DHS is committed to working with federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal partners, the private sector, and the public to protect against threats to these assets—from cyber networks to drinking water."

Best Practices for Protecting EMS Responders

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently published "[Best Practices for Protecting EMS Responders during Treatment and Transport of Victims of Hazardous Substance Releases](#)" (PDF, 1.45 Mb) as a guide for employers of emergency medical service (EMS) responders. The document discusses best practices employers can implement to protect their EMS responders from becoming additional victims while on the front line of medical response.

OSHA states that employers of EMS responders will find this guide useful during development of hazard evaluations and Emergency Response Plans (ERP). For example, the document will inform employers about the following matters:

- The relevance to EMS responders of OSHA's Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) standard.
- Methods for obtaining information on the types of hazardous substance release events that the local community is preparing to address.

- The importance of identifying responders' roles and responsibilities in the community (including those under mutual aid agreements).
- Important topics to consider while developing an ERP.
- OSHA's recommendations and requirements for training and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when EMS responders' roles include the potential for response to incidents involving hazardous substance(s).

The EMR-ISAC noted the guide contains several appendices that provide additional information on topics introduced in the text, including a detailed glossary and list of cited references.

Projectiles at Vehicle Fires

An article in the November 2009 issue of Firehouse magazine captured the attention of the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC). "[Take Cover—Incoming! Projectiles at Vehicle Fires.](#)" (requires log in to open document) written by Chief William Goldfeder, provided accounts where vehicle fires resulted in explosions that launched vehicle parts causing "close calls" or actual injuries to first responders.

The author, a Firehouse contributing editor and 33-year veteran of the fire service, discussed incidents that imparted noteworthy lessons learned to protect emergency personnel and bystanders from harm at the scene of a vehicle fire. For the benefit of fire, police, and emergency medical responders, the EMR-ISAC summarized some of the salient lessons as follows:

- Approach with apparatus at a 45-degree angle to the front and rear of the burning vehicle when arriving at scene and if the situation permits.
- Attempt to park uphill and upwind from a burning vehicle if possible.
- Position any apparatus as far away from the vehicle fire as practicable.
- Do not assume you are safe inside the apparatus.
- Stay mindful of overhead wires and other obstacles.
- Ensure firefighters are in full personal protective clothing, including breathing apparatus.
- Use extreme caution (even after cooled) around the bumpers, hood, struts, trunk, hatchbacks, and airbags. (These are the frequent sources of dangerous projectiles.)
- Exercise care regarding vehicle contents when inside the passenger compartment.

See the U.S. Fire Administration [brochure](#) (PDF, 281 Kb) for more information regarding motor vehicle fires.

Family Disaster Preparedness for Responders

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) reviewed an [article](#) (PDF, 330 KB) regarding "Individual Responder and Family Preparedness," found in the Homeland Security Affairs Journal (Vol. V, No. 3, September 2009). It provides an overview of employee and family preparedness in a resilient organization. "The overall goal of the paper is to examine the role of employers in developing and maintaining employee and family preparedness and to identify the general elements of an effective preparedness program."

The authors, Mark Landahl and Cynthia Cox, articulated that the level of preparedness and capability of government and private sector first-response entities to react to disaster rests upon the assumption that personnel will be present for duty if ready and able to execute planned functions because they have been properly trained, equipped, and exercised. However, studies reviewed by the authors indicate "personal and family preparedness and safety are the predominant issues for first responders in their ability and willingness to report for assignment in a crisis."

In reviewing several studies and determining the ability and willingness of responders to appear for duty in a disaster, a consistent theme emerged across response disciplines and geographic areas according to Sergeant Landahl and Ms. Cox: “families matter.” The decision to report to work is at least partially based on “what is going to happen to family when responders walk out the door, or come back in after dealing with a disaster.”

To address the “families matter” issue, the EMR-ISAC offers for consideration the following essential actions that were gleaned from multiple public and private sources:

- Discuss the type of hazards that could affect your family and home.
- Locate a safe room or the safest areas in your home as assembly points for each hazard.
- Determine escape routes from your home and places to meet.
- Design and conduct family preparedness and evacuation drills.
- Designate an out-of-state relative or friend as the family single point of contact (POC).
- Create and memorize recognition passwords for family members and the family POC.
- Establish an emergency support network with nearby neighbors.
- Assemble a Disaster Kit of non-perishable food, blankets, lights, first-aid materials, weather radio, etc.
- Consider what to do with pets if a quick evacuation is necessary.
- Draft and rehearse a family emergency plan that includes the above actions.

See the FEMA “[Are You Ready?](#)” campaign for more information about family disaster readiness.

NOTE: There will be no INFOGRAM prepared on Thanksgiving Day. Nevertheless, the EMR-ISAC will continue to monitor events during the week of 23 November and disseminate any credible information regarding man-made emergencies or natural disasters. The next INFOGRAM will be dated 3 December.

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The U.S. Fire Administration/EMR-ISAC does not endorse the organizations sponsoring linked web sites, and does not endorse the views they express or the products/services they offer.

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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