



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

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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@fema.dhs.gov.*

Cold Weather Operations

(Source: FireRescue1)

The approaching extreme cold weather will again challenge emergency operations, potentially diminish response capabilities, and threaten critical infrastructures in many parts of the United States. As in past years, freezing conditions will make response operating conditions more hazardous by endangering personnel, damaging equipment, and adversely affecting the available water supply. Considering these possibilities, it is not too late for Emergency Services Sector departments and agencies to prepare personnel, apparatus, vehicles, and equipment for harsh winter weather.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) reviewed an [article](#) regarding cold weather firefighting tips reprinted last month by [FireRescue1](#). The suggestions are summarized as follows:

- Avoid coming up dry by initiating a hydrant “pump-out” plan.
- Perform apparatus maintenance and ensure tire chains or traction devices are available.
- Develop a contingency plan with the authority responsible for road maintenance.
- Prepare standard operating procedures for “dry-pump” versus “wet-pump” operations.
- Carry an ample supply of salt or sand to enhance footing and vehicle traction.
- Add extra lengths of attack line to increase operational options.
- Allow water to flow slowly and prevent freezing when hoses are in standby.
- Follow the manufacturer’s recommendation about the cold weather use of SCBA.
- Use layers of warm clothing and carry extra gloves and socks.
- Encourage safe speeds and driving habits consistent with road conditions.

For more recommendations, see [Impacts of Winter Weather](#) Parts 1 and 2, and [Out in the Cold](#) by FireRescue1 and Fire Chief respectively.

Health Care Innovation Challenge

(Source: Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation)

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) was notified by the Department of Homeland Security Office of Health Affairs regarding an opportunity for the funding of creative Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and emergency care ideas offered by the [Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation](#).

The [Health Care Innovation Challenge](#) will award up to \$1 billion in grants to applicants who will implement the most compelling new ideas to deliver better health, improved care, and lower costs to people enrolled in Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP (i.e., children’s Medicaid), particularly those with the highest health care needs. EMS agencies are eligible for these grants, because “expanded use of community-based paramedics to provide basic services to extend available primary care resources in rural communities” is particularly listed as an example of the type of project the Innovation Center is requesting.

Proposals do not need to be limited to community-based paramedic projects. This grant may provide an opportunity to test alternative service delivery and payment models. There are also opportunities to look at the transformation of EMS agencies to address prevention, care coordination, team-based care, community-based care, and other initiatives.

The grant will fund many projects involving EMS and emergency care; however, “this is a competitive process and there are no guarantees.” Potential applicants must submit a [letter of intent](#) by December 19, 2011 to compete for a funding award. Applications are due January 27, 2012.

Regional Disaster Resilience

(Source: Infrastructure Security Partnership)

The [Infrastructure Security Partnership](#) recently released the 2011 edition of the [Regional Disaster Resilience Guide for Developing an Action Plan](#) (RDR Guide) (PDF, 5 Mb). This guide describes a step-by-step process that can be customized to develop a cross-sector, multi-jurisdiction strategy to improve capabilities to deal with any major incident or disaster. Most importantly, the RDR Guide outlines a multi-step approach to develop a regional resilience Action Plan.

According to the document’s introduction, a stakeholder-validated resilience roadmap is achievable by identifying and bringing together in partnership the necessary broad stakeholder base of public, private, and non-profit organizations; conducting workshops; a baseline assessment of capabilities and needs; an interdependencies exercise; and other activities.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) confirmed that the RDR Guide is designed for use by any practitioner or expert who seeks to improve the capabilities of their organization or community to withstand major incidents or disasters. Typical users include emergency managers, public health officers, homeland security directors, and utility owners and operators. Local emergency management officials, specifically, can apply the guide to spearhead development of a multi-jurisdictional emergency preparedness plan.

Compliance Guide for PPE

(Source: Occupational Safety and Health Administration)

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) received notification that the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) (OSHA) released a new personal protective equipment (PPE) compliance guide titled “[Small Entity Compliance Guide for the Respiratory Protection Standard](#)” (PDF, 5.6 Mb).

This guide intends to assist program administrators, employers who need to develop a program, employees who may be required to wear respirators, and licensed medical professionals who must evaluate an employee’s ability to wear respirators, among others. The document provides information on procedures that will help the administrator to develop a program for the particular workplace.

The guide offers guidance only, and does not alter or determine compliance responsibilities, which are set forth in the [Occupational Safety and Health \(OSH\) Act](#) (29 U.S.C. 655). OSHA’s goal for this document is to provide a comprehensive step-by-step guide with checklists and commonly asked questions that will aid both employees and employers with a better understanding of respiratory protection standards.

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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.

When available, each report submitted should include the date, time, location, type of activity, number of people, equipment used for the activity, name of submitting person and organization, and a designated point of contact.