



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

INFOGRAM 12-11

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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.

Public Works in Emergency Management and Response

(Source: American Public Works Association)

When disaster strikes in the United States, citizens expect to see their uniformed emergency responders (i.e., police, fire, and emergency medical services). However, very frequently, public works (PW) personnel become a critical component of response and recovery operations. According to the [American Public Works Association](#) (APWA), when the infrastructure is threatened, PW is prepared to take a comprehensive and collaborative role with other first responders in emergency management and response—trained and equipped to safeguard lives and reduce or repair damaged infrastructure.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) acknowledges the tenet that interagency coordination, support, and cooperation are vital to the success of emergency planning and operations. No single discipline functions totally independent of the others. Therefore, PW managers need to be familiar with all community emergency response plans, and to comprehend the PW role in those plans for providing skilled support persons. Participation by PW leaders in the emergency planning process can make a significant difference during and after a catastrophe.

PW equipment operators should be aware of standard operating procedures or guidelines when entering an incident scene, particularly where weapons of mass destruction or hazardous material may be present. The APWA also advises that these personnel should understand the functions they perform, safety measures, special precautions, site security, evidence preservation, etc. "It is likewise necessary for them to know how to report any pertinent information or suspicious activity."

More information about the effective integration of PW in preparedness and response activities can be seen at the following papers:

- [The Essential Role of Public Works in Emergency Management](#) (PDF, 149 Kb)
- [Public Works Professionals as Emergency Responders](#) (PDF, 48Kb)

Social Media and the Emergency Services

(Source: Emergency Management Journal)

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned that there is growing concern in the Emergency Services Sector regarding the effect of social media in emergency management and response. In an article in *Emergency Management* entitled "[Establishing Responsible Social Media Use](#)," Adam Crowe, a county emergency preparedness assistant director stated there is an increasing impact of social media in emergency management and disasters.

The author makes the case that the profuse utilization of photo- and video-integrated mobile phones potentially jeopardizes traditional scene control. Therefore, he cautioned that emergency responders and citizens need to establish and accept rules for proper social media use during emergencies and disasters to ensure responder and resident safety as well as incident preservation.

To promote the safe and effective functions of social media, Mr. Crowe recommended the following prohibitions for implementation by citizens everywhere:

- Do not put emergency responders and other public safety officials in harm's way by using social media.
- Do not put myself or those around me at risk by using social media.
- Do not redistribute disaster-related content unless it has been confirmed by two different and trusted sources.
- Do not expect a response via social media from an emergency response agency unless it has stated that doing this will be supported.

NGOs for Disaster Preparedness and Response

(Sources: Rand Corporation and Homeland Security Today)

Nongovernment organizations (NGOs) are instrumental in communities' resilience to man-made and natural disasters. However, according to a new [report](#) from the [Rand Corporation](#), the plans and processes for their involvement are not well-defined despite some national progress.

When reviewing the Rand report, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) noted: "As many communities continue to confront stressors from the current economic downturn to the devastation created by multiple catastrophes, it is critical to consider how these communities develop the capacities and capabilities to respond and effectively recover from such crises." The report continued: "In the wake of these stressors, both government and nongovernmental organizations, including nonprofit and for-profit organizations, must be engaged in long-term recovery and community resilience-building activities to improve communities' ability to withstand future stressors."

The report further indicated NGOs, in particular, are the "go-to" entities in disaster response and recovery because of their real or perceived insight on the assets, needs, and socio-cultural complexities of their neighborhoods; ability to leverage resources with less administrative hassle for more-efficient response; often unique access to distribution and dissemination channels for disaster-related information and resources; and ability to support sustainable long-term recovery efforts given ongoing and integrated local presence.

Regarding NGOs for disaster preparedness and response, there are multiple areas that require the attention of federal, state, and local policymakers, as well as elected leaders. These can be seen in an [article](#) at the [Homeland Security Today](#) website.

National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program

(Source: FEMA)

The [National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program](#) (NEHRP) seeks to mitigate earthquake losses in the United States through both basic and directed research and implementation activities in the fields of earthquake science and engineering.

NEHRP is the Federal Government's coordinated approach to addressing earthquake risks. Congress established the program in 1977 ([Public Law 95-124](#)) as a long-term, nationwide program to reduce the risks to life and property in the United States resulting from earthquakes. NEHRP is managed as a collaborative effort among the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

The NEHRP agencies have established three overarching, long-term strategic goals:

- Improve understanding of earthquake processes and impacts.
- Develop cost-effective measures to reduce earthquake impacts on individuals, the built environment, and society-at-large.
- Improve the earthquake resilience of communities nationwide.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) observed additional pertinent information at the NEHRP [website](#) and also at the FEMA online [library](#).

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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