



The InfoGram

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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 or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: (301) 447-1325 and/or emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov.

Self-Storage Units Used as Illegal Housing

Fire Rescue 1 recently ran an article about [people living in self-storage units in South Salt Lake, UT](#). According to the police, six units were set up with electricity, furniture, computers, televisions, air conditioning, and heaters. Holes had been knocked in the walls so people could move between units, and outside doors were rigged to look like they were always locked while still allowing easy access to those living inside.

A quick online news search found stories about fires in self-storage units in [Trotwood, OH](#), and [Camden County, NJ](#), where preliminary investigations indicate the fires may have been caused by people knocking over heaters while living in the units illegally. All the articles state financial reasons or economic depression as likely causes for this apparent increase in “alternative housing” such as this.

A [related editorial](#) on Fire Rescue 1 addresses the responsibility of local fire personnel and codes enforcement officials to be mindful of alternative housing within their jurisdictions and suggests pre-incident planning and training for uncommon incidents. Fire and codes officials should discuss the possibility of these problems in the community and contact the local or county health and human services, housing departments, and even homeless shelters to see if these offices have heard of people living in storage units.

(Source: [FireRescue1](#))

Two New EMS Guides Published

Earlier this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Recommendations and Reports \(MMWR\)](#) (PDF, 602.1 KB) on the 2011 Guidelines for Field Triage of Injured Patients. These guidelines have been endorsed by 37 organizations, the Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services, and received concurrence from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

According to the [CDC's Field Triage website](#), injury is the leading cause of death for Americans ages 1-44 and emergency medical services (EMS) professionals must be able to quickly triage the injured person to determine the level of care the individual requires. The 2011 edition of the Guidelines takes into account medical advances in the past 5 years and has updated information to help pre-hospital triage.

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

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Health Affairs recently released the [Handbook for EMS Medical Directors](#) (PDF, 2.5 MB) for physician medical directors of EMS departments and agencies. The Handbook was developed through an agreement with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) EMS Section.

The document aims to provide guidance to new and experienced medical directors, while understanding that “the nuances involved in the oversight and direction of an EMS agency requires specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond the typical curriculum of emergency medicine or alternative acute care medical practices.”

(Source: [USFA](#) and [CDC](#))

Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) Program

For more than 30, years Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies around the country have used the [Regional Information Sharing Systems](#) (RISS) program for access to databases and investigative support services.

RISS offers analysis support for crime scenes, digital/cell phone forensics, and financial records. Some of the RISS databases and programs include:

- [RISSGang](#) - contains information on gang organizations, symbols and graffiti, and providing access to databases of suspected gang activity.
- [RISSafe](#) - an officer safety event deconfliction system that maintains data on planned law enforcement events to help avert agency conflicts.
- [RISS Atix](#) - provides access to homeland security, disaster, and threat information.

Six regional RISS Centers provide investigation and prosecution support to help combat multijurisdictional crime. Training, equipment loan, and research assistance is also available. The U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Affairs (BJA) administers and funds the RISS program, although it is locally managed.

(Source: [RISS.net](#))

Early High-Risk Weather Warnings

Prior to the tornadoes that tore through the central plains the middle of April, the [Storm Prediction Center](#) at the [National Weather Service](#) issued a high-risk weather warning more than 24 hours in advance. The announcement of high-risk warnings comes out several times a year, but this is only the second time in history that one has been issued so far ahead of time. The first time almost 100 tornadoes came across the southeast in April 2006.

An [article in Emergency Management magazine](#) reports that the improved forecasting is thanks to technological advances in satellite and radar and the ability to mathematically model storms on a smaller scale, such as individual thunderstorms instead of larger storm fronts.

Early high-risk warnings will likely be forecasted in the future, especially in the early spring when the weather is more unstable. Earlier forecasted warnings like these enable the public and emergency services to prepare or at least be aware that conditions for dangerous weather exist.

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

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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.