



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

INFOGRAM 22-11

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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.*

Mitigation Planning

(Sources: Occupational Health & Safety and FEMA)

A disaster is any unplanned event that can cause deaths or significant injuries, disrupt operations, generate physical or environmental damage, or threaten a facility's financial standing or public image, according to an [article](#) in [Occupational Health & Safety](#) (OH&S). "The key to mitigate threats before a disaster occurs is to have a plan to respond appropriately."

The [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) (FEMA) website explains that mitigation plans form the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The planning process is as important as the plan itself. It creates a framework for risk-based decision making to reduce damages to lives, property, and the economy from future disasters. [Hazard mitigation](#) is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk from hazards to communities, their citizens, and property.

Within the OH&S article, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) noted that effective mitigation planning for any municipality, infrastructure, or organization begins with the assessment of at least four critical areas:

- Evacuation procedures that minimally ensure the availability of two exit routes clear of debris.
- First aid procedures that "bridge the gap" until more comprehensive medical care becomes available.
- Fire prevention supported by good housekeeping, proper handling and storage of hazardous materials, and quality fire suppression equipment.
- Communication capabilities that provide accurate and timely information to prevent ineffective, fear-driven, and potentially damaging public responses.

The EMR-ISAC agrees having a mitigation plan that is periodically exercised and updated can bolster safety, survivability, and continuity of operations of a community and its critical infrastructures.

Emergency Response Plans

(Source: Emergency Management Magazine)

In an [article](#) (PDF, 13.7 Mb) seen at page 33 of the May/June issue of [Emergency Management Magazine](#), the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) observed that some local emergency response plans do not discuss railroads within a jurisdiction, despite the fact that rail disasters have the potential to be monumental and multijurisdictional events. Additionally, high-speed rail initiatives and increasing passenger loads could result in more railroad emergencies, thus emphasizing the prudence for better local government emergency response planning.

The author, John Cease, president of Clear Tracks Ahead and former police chief, proposed that a comprehensive plan should help to quickly determine precise locations, identify the best access and staging areas, multijurisdictional coordination, mass casualties, and evacuation of rail passengers. He maintained that consideration must also be given to the hazmat factor in the event of releases or spills.

As recommended by Chief Cease, the following are specific questions emergency managers should address when forming a railroad appendix to an emergency response plan:

- Does the plan identify each separate railroad in the response area?
- Does the plan include accurate emergency contact information for each railroad?
- Does the plan incorporate railroad milepost locations on response maps?
- Is the plan reviewed, verified, and updated for continued changes?

“To ignore the railroad in your emergency plans would be like ignoring a major interstate highway or airport in your jurisdiction,” stated Chief Cease.

Meth Labs: Continuing Danger

(Sources: WYFF4.com, EPA, and DOJ)

The production and use of methamphetamine (meth) across the United States continues to present considerable dangers to Emergency Services Sector personnel. For example, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned from [WYFF4.com](#) that deputies investigating a shooting last week were sickened by fumes from a meth lab and had to be temporarily hospitalized.

According to the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (PDF, 1 Mb), meth is easy to make, highly addictive, and its production and use may have serious consequences for both human health and the environment. These realities warrant vigilance by emergency personnel “not only because of the destructive nature of meth itself, but also due to the significant environmental hazards meth labs generate.”

[U.S. Department of Justice](#) (PDF, 791 Kb) sources indicated that thousands of independent meth labs operate across the nation. These labs require no specialized equipment or knowledge and can be found in any geographic area or setting. Recently, the “shake and bake” method of producing a small batch of meth has become popular. It requires only a soda bottle, some cold pills, and easily available chemicals. However, if not handled correctly, this technique can produce powerful explosions.

The EMR-ISAC also verified that addicts are increasingly using their vehicles as mobile labs. Consequently, a routine traffic stop or accident with injuries can quickly escalate into a hazmat incident. Therefore, first responders must exercise caution when approaching an individual passed out in a car, any vehicle during a traffic stop, or at the scene of an accident. It is prudent to consider these events as potential hazmat situations.

Since the toxicity of the chemicals may have contaminated the area surrounding a meth lab, responding personnel should follow their department’s operating procedures and personal protective equipment guidelines.

Residential Building Fires Topical Reports

(Source: U.S. Fire Administration)

The [United States Fire Administration](#) (USFA) announced the release of two special reports focusing on the causes and characteristics of fires in one- and two-family and also multifamily residential buildings. The reports, [One- and Two-Family Residential Building Fires](#) and [Multifamily Residential Building Fires](#) were developed by the USFA National Fire Data Center.

From the [Media Release](#) regarding the topical reports, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) understands that one- and two-family buildings include detached dwellings, manufactured homes, mobile homes not in transit, and duplexes, where there are an estimated 248,500 fires each year. Multifamily residential buildings consist of structures such as apartments, townhouses, rowhouses, condominiums, and other tenement properties, where there are approximately 103,000 fires occurring yearly.

Topical reports explore facets of the U.S. fire problem as depicted through data collected in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Each topical report briefly addresses the nature of the specific fire or fire-related topic, highlights important findings from the data, and may suggest other resources to consider for further information.

Visit the USFA [website](#) for information about other topical reports.

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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