

# The InfoGram



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## First responder family preparedness

First responders working during and after a major disaster do their jobs better when they know their families are safe and secure, yet [many first responder families have not prepared for disasters](#).

This issue plays a part in continuity of operations and can lead to a lowered response capacity. If multiple staff members are checking on older family members or managing a last-minute evacuation from the family home, this limits departmental operations, capabilities and affects job performance during a time of emergency.

Ultimately, it may lead to community relations concerns if people feel your agency or personnel are unreliable in an emergency. It is important for departments to discuss personal and family disaster preparedness with their staff.

Steps toward a more resilient first responder family are the same steps everyone should take. From Ready.gov's [Ready Responders](#) section:

- Build an emergency supply kit and make a family emergency plan.
- Know what disasters are typical for your area and what to do if they happen.
- [Have an emergency fund saved](#) and make sure it is accessible.
- Plan for family members with special needs, children, older adults and pets.
- [Get tech ready](#): have an emergency charging option for devices, store important documents in the cloud or on a jump drive.
- If you haven't gone over your homeowner or rental property insurance policy recently, see if it needs updating. Also, reevaluate your need for flood insurance.

(Source: [Ready.gov](#))

## Campus Fire Safety Month

September is Campus Fire Safety Month, aimed at reducing fires and fire deaths in on- and off-campus housing.

College-related fire fatalities have been trending downward thanks to the increase in education and outreach. Since 2000, 175 people have died in campus housing fires. The vast majority of fire fatalities, 87 percent, occurred in off-campus housing. These are all preventable deaths caused by such things as missing or disabled smoke alarms, lack of sprinklers and careless disposal of smoking materials.

Fire departments interested in outreach or partnerships with colleges, universities and landlords in their jurisdiction should visit [Campus-Firewatch.com](#) and take advantage of the resource materials they have available. The site hosts guides, videos and posters for resident hall staff; videos to use in outreach and talks; an off-campus housing checklist for students to use when looking for housing; and a [town/gown community service project](#), currently in its second year.

The National Fire Academy (NFA) offers several courses on campus fire and life

## Highlights

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Steel Drum Basics and Fusible Plugs for first responders



U.S. Fire Administration

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

safety in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and around the country. Visit the NFA website to see the [schedule of offerings](#) or to find out how to request an offering near you.

(Source: [Campus-Firewatch.com](#))

## PHMSA requests input for updated Emergency Response Guidebook

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) is currently updating the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) with an expected 2020 release, and they need your help.

PHMSA wants input from stakeholders who use the ERG in order to make the resource better and more user-friendly. All comments are welcome, but PHMSA has some specific questions. A few:

- Have you encountered ambiguous or conflicting guidance in the ERG?
- Do you find the terms in the glossary appropriate and current?
- Have you found contact information that is incorrect?
- Should the informational charts and tables be reformatted? Is information missing from them that should be added?
- What format of the ERG do you use (hard copy, online, mobile, electronic, etc.) and why?

All comments should be sent to [ERGComments@dot.gov](mailto:ERGComments@dot.gov).

PHMSA has distributed over 14.5 million copies of the ERG to emergency services agencies. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the 2016 edition you must contact your [state emergency management ERG distribution coordinator](#) (PDF, 159 Kb). More information on other formats can be found on [PHMSA's ERG website](#).

(Source: [PHMSA](#))

## Steel Drum Basics and Fusible Plugs for first responders

The Industrial Steel Drum Institute joined with TRANSCAER to produce the short training video “The Basics of Steel Drums and Fusible Plugs” to help first responders know how to handle industrial or transportation calls involving these containers.

Steel drums used in combination with fusible plugs can be the safest option when transporting flammable and combustible products. Fusible plugs are plastic and melt during fire exposure, relieving internal pressure and minimizing the likelihood of a boiling liquid expanding vapor explosion (BLEVE) or tank rupture.

This video is the 29th video in TRANSCAER’s “[Seconds Count](#)” training series for first responders. All videos are available online for free. See [TRANSCAER's website](#) for more of these videos and the available training on chlorine safety, anhydrous ammonia, rail transportation incidents, ethanol and more.

(Source: [TRANSCAER](#))

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](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac) or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: (301) 447-1325 and/or [emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov).

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