



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

INFOGRAM 3-10

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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.*

Exercises Enhance Preparedness

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) often examines lessons learned and best practices to acquire insights for infrastructure protection and resilience. As researchers and analysts, finding and studying lessons learned and best practices is an appropriate activity. However, the EMR-ISAC staff understands that genuine participation in activities and exercises provides “real learning opportunities” to enhance the preparedness of Emergency Services Sector (ESS) departments and agencies.

Simulations of emergency situations, or emergency exercises, are integral to a sound preparedness program. They offer practical and beneficial opportunities to practice and improve response plans, incident command protocols, operational procedures, and mission-essential tasks for various incidents. By participating in different types of exercises, ESS organizations can identify strengths and weakness in emergency response and recovery operations.

According to specialists at the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#), exercises assess and validate the speed, effectiveness, and efficiency of capabilities, and test the adequacy of policies, plans, procedures, and protocols in a risk free environment. “Aside from actual events, they provide the best means of evaluating homeland security capabilities.” Additionally, lessons learned by the EMR-ISAC substantiate that quality exercises promote the goals of infrastructure preparedness and operational continuity.

The [Exercise Design Course \(IS-139\)](#), offered online by the Emergency Management Institute, is based on the premise that emergency exercises are worth the effort. “Exercises identify areas that are proficient and those that need improvement.” They can be used to revise operational plans and provide a basis for training to develop proficiency in executing those plans. The course specifically addresses the value of conducting exercises to increase preparedness and the steps in designing a functional exercise.

Meth Labs Update

The production and use of methamphetamine (meth) across the United States continues to present considerable challenges to Emergency Services Sector (ESS) personnel. The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) consulted the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (PDF, 1 MB) to ascertain that meth is easy to make, highly addictive, and its production and use may have serious impacts on 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 indicate 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. In the past year, 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. More information regarding hazardous chemicals at meth labs can be seen at the [Fact Sheet](#) by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

National Health Security Strategy

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) learned that the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published the "[National Health Security Strategy of the United States of America](#)" (PDF, 639 KB) to help galvanize efforts to minimize the consequences of significant health incidents.

According to the [HHS News Release](#) dated 7 January 2010, the document is "the nation's first comprehensive strategy focused on protecting people's health during a large-scale emergency. The strategy sets priorities for government and non-government activities over the next four years."

The National Health Security Strategy and the accompanying "[Interim Implementation Guide for Implementing the National Health Security Strategy of the U.S.](#)" (PDF, 1.9 MB) outline the following 10 objectives to achieve health security:

- Foster informed, empowered individuals and communities.
- Develop and maintain the workforce needed for national health security.
- Ensure situational awareness prevails.
- Encourage integrated, health care delivery systems.
- Guarantee timely and effective communications.
- Promote an effective countermeasures enterprise.
- Support prevention or mitigation of environmental and other emerging threats to health.
- Incorporate post-incident health recovery into planning and response.
- Work with cross-border and global partners to enhance national, continental, and global health security.
- Ensure that all systems supporting national health security are based upon the best available science, evaluation, and quality improvement methods.

The EMR-ISAC noted in the HHS News Release that national health security means the nation and its people are prepared for, protected from, and resilient in the face of health threats or incidents such as bioterrorism and natural disasters. The National Health Security Strategy provides a framework for actions that will build community resilience, strengthen, and sustain health emergency response systems, and fill current gaps.

NFA Completes Management Science Curriculum Overhaul

The National Fire Academy (NFA) announced its Management Science curriculum has been updated. The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) observed that course names reflect the increasingly diverse role contemporary fire and emergency medical service leaders perform in their communities.

According to the [U.S. Fire Administration Press Release](#), NFA Superintendent Dr. Denis Onieal explained that emergency services management skills have changed over the last few years and NFA modernized several courses to keep pace with this trend. "The Management Science curriculum now offers some of the leading courses that prepare today's fire service leaders to better handle the challenges of managing organizations in today's rapidly changing economic, political, regulatory, and social climates."

The following courses were updated:

R107 – Communications for Emergency Services Success (formerly Fire Service Communications)

R331 – Strategic Organizational Issues in Fire and EMS (formerly Organizational Theory in Practice)

R332 – Effective Leadership Skills for Fire and EMS Organizations (formerly Interpersonal Dynamics in Fire Service Organizations)

EMR-ISAC also noted in the press release that Leadership I, II, & III for Fire and EMS (formerly Leadership I, II & III) were updated to include lessons learned and activities emphasizing the NFA's congressionally-mandated role to expand its presence in fire-based emergency medical services management training and education.

NOAA Notification Changes

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) advises Emergency Services Sector organizations of the following changes to the notifications provided by National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA), its National Hurricane Center, its Storm Prediction Center, and its National Weather Service:

- [Tropical Storm and Hurricane Watches and Warnings](#)
To provide a greater lead time for preparation, the National Hurricane Center will issue tropical storm and hurricane watches and warnings 12 hours sooner than in previous years. Watches will be issued 48 hours in advance and warnings will be issued 36 hours in advance.
- [Public Severe Weather Outlooks for Nighttime Tornado Potential](#)
Realizing that nighttime tornados pose a significant challenge to public safety officials to alert the public to the impending threat, the Storm Prediction Center will issue a Public Severe Weather Outlook (PWO) when there is a 10 percent probability of significant nighttime tornadoes. These PWOs will be issued through 31 March 2010.
- [Severe Thunderstorm Warning new Hail Criteria](#)
Previously, the National Weather Service criteria for Severe Thunderstorm Warnings were 58 mph winds and ¾ inch hail or larger. Now, the criteria is 58 mph winds and 1 inch hail or larger.

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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