



# Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Preparedness Division

November 7, 2003

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **Helping Our Nation's First Responders**

*DHS Press Release*, November 3, 2003

DHS announced the allocation of grant funding for the State Homeland Security Program, the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, and Citizen Corps.

- [FY04 US Department of Homeland Security Counterterrorism Grants – State Allocations](#), *DHS*, Nov 3
- [DHS Doles Out \\$2.2 Billion in Grants](#), *Federal Computer Week*, Nov 3

### **WHO Assails Wealthy Nations on Bioterror**

*Washington Post*, November 5, 2003

An exercise involving a simulated bioterrorism attack underscored concerns that severe lack of funding for surveillance and other measures has left the WHO unprepared to deal with a global bioterrorism attack.

### **Region V Participates in Boy Scout Disaster Drill**

*FEMA Press Release*, November 4, 2003

Boy Scouts from Illinois participated in an emergency preparedness drill to help scouts working towards the newly established Emergency Preparedness BSA Award.

### **FEMA Special Review of Firefighter Training Uncovers Ways to Reduce Risk of Tragic Outcome**

*Firehouse/FEMA*, November 6, 2003

In a [special report](#) on the risks of firefighting training, FEMA underscores the inherent dangers of such training and reiterates the importance of gaining experience during response to real fires.

### **DHS OIG Completes Assessment of Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program**

*USFA Press Release*, November 6, 2003

The DHS Office of Inspector General has completed an [assessment](#) of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

## CONGRESS

### **House Panel Backs Homeland Security Financial Management Bill**

*Congress Daily/GovExec*, November 3, 2003

The Select Committee on Homeland Security passed [H.R. 2886](#), which would require the department to abide by the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990.

### **Lawmakers Urge Feds to Take Lead on First Responder Issues**

*Technology Daily/GovExec*, November 6, 2003

House lawmakers found that while there is an abundance of information on the issues facing first responders, a lack of leadership has hampered progress.

## RECENT LEGISLATION

- [H.R. 3431](#): To require the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to monitor the long-term health of firefighters involved in fighting fires within federal disaster areas, Nov 4
- [H.R. 3439](#): To promote the sharing of personnel between federal law enforcement agencies and other public law enforcement agencies, Nov 4

- **S. 1820:** To authorize the states to implement such mechanisms as are necessary to endure the continuity of the Congress in the event that one-fourth of the members of either the House of Representatives or the Senate are killed or incapacitated, Nov 5
- **S.J. Res. 23:** Proposing an amended to the Constitution of the United States providing for the event that one-fourth of the members of either the House of Representatives or the Senate are killed or incapacitated, Nov 5

#### RECENT HEARINGS

- **Database Security: Finding Out When Your Information Has Been Compromised**, Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Homeland Security, Nov 4
- **First Responder Interoperability: Can You Hear Me Now?**, House Subcommittees on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations and Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations, and the Census, Nov 6

### STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

#### Practice Makes Perfect During Tornado Season

*The New Star*, November 6, 2003

The Ouachita Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness in conjunction with the National Weather Service conducted its annual fall tornado drill, which is hosted at different schools each year.

#### MEMA, Ole Miss to Create Plan in Case of Natural Disasters

*AP/Clarion Ledger*, November 1, 2003

MEMA and the University of Mississippi will create a statewide hazard mitigation plan to lessen damage from storms and to prevent or reduce risk to life and property from disasters.

#### Louisville Gets Grant for Radio System

*The Courier-Journal*, November 1, 2003

Louisville will received a grant from DHS for a unified communications system for first responders and a consolidated dispatch center.

#### Planning Ahead

*The Post & Mail*, November 3, 2003

City and county officials and emergency management staff conducted a pre-tabletop emergency plan exercise in preparation for the official exercise in mid-November.

#### LEPC Completes Emergency Operations Plan

*Eastern Arizona Courier*, November 3, 2003

Graham County has completed development of its emergency operation plan and has also finished a risk assessment report for ODP.

#### California's Search for Wildfire Solutions

*Christian Science Monitor*, November 4, 2003

In the wake of October wildfires, California officials are examining ways to prevent against a repeat of the devastating fires and preparedness measures that home owners can take.

#### Hesperia Schools Pass Disaster Test

*Daily Press*, November 4, 2003

The Hesperia Unified School District emergency plan and preparedness measures were exercised as the district assisted the Red Cross with sheltering fire evacuees.

- **School Nurses to Help Vaccinate Residents During Emergency**, *Tri-Town News*, Nov 6
- **Schools Assist in Homeland Security**, *The News Journal*, Nov 5

### **CDC Takes a Look at State's Disaster Plans**

*Tallahassee Democrat*, November 6, 2003

Officials from the CDC reviewed Florida's plan for dealing with public health threats as part of its study of how the five largest states have sharpened their public health emergency responses.

- [CDC to Rate Smallpox Plans](#), *AP/Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Nov 7

### **Casinos Slow to Submit Plans for Emergency**

*Las Vegas Sun*, November 4, 2003

A majority of the casinos in Nevada have not filed emergency response plans as mandated by state law requiring hotels with more than 200 rooms to submit emergency plans to authorities.

### **Mock Bioterrorism Exercise Held Saturday**

*Daily Leader*, November 4, 2003

A multi-county bioterrorism drill was held in Arkansas allowing responders to practice immunizing the public while administering flu shots.

- [Emergency Response Team Tested](#), *Newton Daily News*, Nov 6

### **Tanker Truck Shut Down Wirelessly in Test**

*Government Technology*, November 3, 2003

A [California bill](#) would require any truck carrying hazardous materials to be installed with a position-locating system and a device to immediately disable the vehicle.

### **County Gets Funds for Preparation**

*Porterville Recorder*, November 6, 2003

Tulare County received more than \$2.3 million in grant funding to assist its first responder community to prepare for a possible terrorist threat.

### **First Citizen Corps Class Graduates**

*The Press-Tribune*, November 5, 2003

The City of Roseville held graduation ceremonies for 23 citizens who successfully completed a new course designed to train them on disaster readiness and crisis response.

- [Gifts to Ready Friends, Family for Emergencies](#), *Hillsboro Argus*, Nov 6

### **County is Prepared for Health Disaster**

*The Davis Enterprise*, November 6, 2003

The Director of the Yolo County Health Department reported that because of federal funding, local agencies are well positioned to respond to a large-scale public health disaster.

### **Surprise Expert Helps Out**

*Greensburg Daily News*, November 6, 2003

Indiana is setting up 10 bio-terrorism districts to improve its response in the event of a public health emergency or disease outbreak.

### **Better Safe than Sorry**

*Secaucus Reporter*, November 2, 2003

Meadowlands Hospital participated in a drill to address decontamination and other issues associated with a hazardous materials response.

### **Emergency Responders Tested in Drill**

*The Advocate*, November 7, 2003

Iberville Parish sponsored an exercise for federal, state, and local emergency response agencies to test their communications and preparedness in response to an explosion at a chemical plant.

## **Mock Terrorist Attack on Dam Tests Emergency Response**

*Missoulian*, November 7, 2003

Emergency responders responded to a mock attack on the Milltown Dam to test the preparedness of local, state, and private sector response communities.

### **RELATED INFORMATION**

#### **RECENT REPORTS**

- [\*NIST Special Publication 800-53, Recommended Security Controls for Federal Information Systems\*](#), October 31
- [\*Interoperable Communications for First Responders: Major Challenges in Addressing the Issue\*](#) (GAO-04-23IT), November 6
- [\*Trends and Hazards in Firefighter Training – Special Report\*](#), USFA/FEMA, May 2003
- [\*A Review of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program\*](#) (OIG-ISP-01-03), DHS Office of Inspections, Evaluations, & Special Reviews

#### **SPOTLIGHT WEBSITE**

- [DHS Homeland Security Grants and Training](#)

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The information contained in this newsletter was collected from Internet sources. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the Department of Homeland Security or FEMA's Preparedness Division.