



# PREPAREDNESS NEWS AND INFORMATION

From FEMA's Preparedness Division

August 13, 2004

## NATIONAL NEWS

### [About 1 Million Told To Evacuate Ahead Of Charley](#)

Newsday, August 13, 2004

With a "scary, scary" Hurricane Charley zeroing in on Florida's west coast Friday, state officials urged about a million residents and tourists to evacuate and avoid the path of a storm that could submerge parts of this city's downtown and neighboring areas.

### [Developments With Hurricane Charley](#)

### [FEMA's Atlanta Operations Center Activated To Monitor Tropical Storm Bonnie And Hurricane Charley](#)

FEMA, August 12, 2004

The Regional Operations Center (ROC) of The Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region IV headquarters activated Thursday morning to coordinate response to Tropical Storm Bonnie and Hurricane Charley.

### [Seized Records Indicate Surveillance Of Buildings Was Updated This Spring](#)

The New York Times, August 13, 2004

Al Qaeda operatives updated surveillance conducted at five financial institutions in New York, New Jersey and Washington as recently as this spring, according to a senior White House official who said on Thursday that the authorities still had no direct evidence of an active terror plot.

### [Las Vegas Officials Say They Did Not Play Down A Qaeda Threat](#)

The New York Times, August 11, 2004

In Las Vegas, a place resolutely dedicated to fantasy and the pursuit of dreams, the all-too-real possibility that terrorists of Al Qaeda focused on several casinos has prompted city officials and casino operators into a frenzy of assurances that all is safe here.

### [Legion Partners With DHS To Build Community Preparedness](#)

U.S. Newswire, August 11, 2004

The nation's largest veterans organization has joined forces with the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security and a coalition of 50 national groups to encourage citizens in communities across the nation to be prepared when it comes to handling emergencies.

### [Highway Watch Incorporates Anti-Terrorism Vigilance](#)

CentreDaily.com, August 12, 2004

Gary Prewitt doesn't much look like the next line of defense in the fight against terrorism. At 62, he is an over-the-road truck driver far removed from his days with the U.S. Army in Vietnam. But Prewitt is one of more than 10,000 truckers nationwide who have joined the anti-terrorism movement through a federally funded program called Highway Watch.

### [Cingular Wireless To Provide Wireless Priority Service To Improve Emergency Communications](#)

Yahoo! Finance, August 11, 2004

Cingular Wireless has been awarded a contract by the National Communications System (NCS) to provide Wireless Priority Service (WPS) to the country's authorized emergency response personnel. Cingular has launched WPS in select markets and expects WPS to be deployed across much of its network by the end of 2004.

### [Homeland Security Badge Unites Agencies](#)

The Washington Times, August 8, 2004

The Department of Homeland Security last week announced the successful unification of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's work force by presenting officers, agriculture specialists and Border Patrol agents with the first DHS law enforcement badges.

#### **[GAO: Coast Guard Should Seek Partnerships To Monitor Vessels](#)**

*GovExec.com*, August 6, 2004

The Coast Guard should seek partnerships with public and private ports to monitor ships traveling to and through U.S. waters, government auditors conclude in a new report. The Coast Guard could implement a nationwide automatic identification system for ships more quickly and at less cost to the federal government through partnerships with local public and private ports of entry, according to the Government Accountability Office.

#### **[Staff Shortages Hurt Ag Port Inspections](#)**

*Newsday*, August 6, 2004

The government is detecting fewer agricultural pests that could get across the border in insect-infected foods and should hire more inspectors, an Agriculture Department official said. An official with the Homeland Security Department, which now handles those duties, defended the agency's performance but acknowledged a shortfall of about 500 inspectors.

#### **[Department Of Defense Intel Chief Addresses 9-11 Commission Recommendations](#)**

*Department of Defense*, August 11, 2004

The 9/11 Commission's report has the Defense Department looking closely at its intelligence mission, the department's chief intelligence officer told a House panel here today. Stephen A. Cambone, undersecretary for intelligence, told the House Armed Services Committee that two of the recommendations in particular have "focused our attention."

#### **[Excessive Secrecy Impedes War On Terrorism; Reform Prospects Slim](#)**

*Newhouse News Service*, August 10, 2004

While the White House and Congress discuss how to streamline intelligence systems, Washington bureaucrats are piling up new secrets at a record pace: more than 14 million last year, or 39,981 new secrets every day, according to a government watchdog agency. That's the kind of data-hoarding and congestion that the Sept. 11 commission cited as a major factor in the government's failure to anticipate the 2001 terrorist attacks.

#### **[Maryland Homeland Security Department Seeks Israeli Know-How](#)**

*Maariv International*, August 11, 2004

A high level delegation from Maryland, headed by Homeland Security director Dennis Schrader recently visited Israel. The delegation, which included the commander of the State police and other senior law enforcement officials, is part of the ongoing initiative by Governor Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. to promote economic and security cooperation between Israel and Maryland.

#### **[NRC Licensing Web Site Revamped](#)**

*FCW.com*, August 9, 2004

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) officials have upgraded the Web site dedicated to sharing documents related to the Yucca Mountain, Nev., radioactive waste repository. Energy Department officials are preparing an application to obtain an NRC license to begin constructing the nation's first long-term repository for used nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste.

#### **[Battle Swirls On Security At A-Plants](#)**

*The New York Times*, August 6, 2004

The nuclear power industry's trade association has hired the company that guards half of the nation's civilian reactors to train and manage "adversary teams" that attack the plants in drills. The decision, by the Nuclear Energy Institute, has drawn the disapproval of a government watchdog that has issued several reports in recent years critical of security at nuclear power and weapons plants.

### [Mayors Call For Inclusion Of '04 Metro Agenda For Cities In Presidential Candidates' Platforms](#)

*U.S. Newswire*, August 11, 2004

In the midst of the Presidential election season, The United States Conference of Mayors, a bi-partisan organization of Republican, Democratic and Independent mayors, led by Conference President and Akron (OH) Mayor Donald L. Plusquellic and Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, today released the Mayors' '04 Metro Agenda outlining key priorities for America's cities.

### [Ad Campaign Urges Employers, Families To Plan For Emergency](#)

*USA Today*, August 8, 2004

The Homeland Security Department is enlisting allies in its effort to prepare the nation for another terrorist attack: your kids and your boss. Starting next month, children in grades 4 through 8 and employers nationwide will be asked to help get families and companies better prepared to respond to a crisis.

### [Is A Fair Share In The Cards For New York?](#)

*The New York Times*, August 9, 2004

MORE. Send more. Within hours of learning about the terrorist alert last week, New York's political establishment had renewed its demand that Washington reform its ways and recognize that the city needs a larger piece of the homeland security pie.

## THE CONGRESS

### [Congressmen Wrestling Over 9/11 Panel Proposals](#)

*Associated Press*, August 12, 2004

Political jostling over the Sept. 11 commission's proposals intensified Wednesday as Democrats and Republicans differed over the idea of creating a new national intelligence director - and how fast to do it. Republicans echoed concerns from Defense Department officials that a "czar" with too much authority could hurt intelligence efforts, while several Democrats joined the leaders of the Sept. 11 commission to endorse speedy changes.

### [House Democrats Urge Special Session About 9/11](#)

*San Francisco Chronicle*, August 11, 2004

House Democrats, led by Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco, urged President Bush Tuesday to call a rare special session of Congress to swiftly pass the Sept. 11 commission's recommendations for reorganizing the country's intelligence operations.

### [9/11 Commissioners Worry Federal Reforms Might Not Stick](#)

*GovExec.com*, August 11, 2004

The chairman and vice chairman of the 9/11 commission said Wednesday they worry that federal agencies might not follow through with reforms unless Congress forces them. Many changes made inside federal agencies since the attacks have been top-heavy, raising questions about whether reforms are really taking hold in lower management, Commission Chairman Thomas Kean, former Republican governor of New Jersey, told a House Intelligence Committee hearing.

### [Lawmaker Warns About Security Lapses At Los Alamos Lab](#)

*GovExec.com*, August 11, 2004

Republican lawmakers are offering contrasting signals this week over the state of security at New Mexico's Los Alamos National Laboratory. House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman David Hobson, R-Ohio, said at a National Academy of Science symposium today there are "more serious problems than you've been reading about" regarding security at the nuclear laboratory.

## STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

### [Iowa State Fair Safe, Ridge Says](#)

*Sioux City Journal*, August 12, 2004

The more than 1 million people expected to visit the Iowa State Fair as it opens today should rest assured that organizers have taken precautions to improve security, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge said Wednesday.

### [New Disaster Agency Proposed](#)

*The Sacramento Bee*, August 8, 2004

The state panel that has called for sweeping reform of California government wants to create a new disaster-response agency that would combine flood management, fire suppression and emergency services.

### [Emergency Management Building Designed To Withstand Weather](#)

ABC 7, August 10, 2004

Collier County is preparing to become the most equipped area in Southwest Florida should a tropical system strike. ABC7 got a first look at the new emergency management building and how it will change the way disasters are handled.

### [N.J. Warns Hospitals Of Terror Threat](#)

*The Star Ledger*, August 11, 2004

Counter-terrorism officials have warned New Jersey hospitals that they themselves could become targets of terrorists in the minutes after a large-scale attack. By becoming "secondary targets," the hospitals would be crippled or rendered unable to treat victims of an earlier attack.

### [Tourist Copters In New York City A Terror Target](#)

*The New York Times*, August 8, 2004

Pakistan has given American officials what they regard as credible and specific information indicating that Al Qaeda has considered using tourist helicopters in terror attacks in New York City, domestic security officials said Sunday.

### [Emergency Volunteers Hold Drills In Brooklyn](#)

NY 1, August 9, 2004

If you had to do it, would you know how to put out a fire? What if a family member was hurt, or trapped, and needed immediate help? Some Brooklyn residents asked themselves those very questions and found the answers by becoming members of CERT1, the Certified Emergency Response Team that covers Bay Ridge, Bensonhurst and Dyker Heights.

### [Firefighters Task Force Practices For Disaster](#)

*The Journal News*, August 10, 2004

The firefighters, wearing heavy, bulky hazardous-material suits, waited in line to walk through a series of shower points, where they were scrubbed down with brushes. When they finally got the suits off, they were breathing hard and sweating profusely.

### [Disaster Drill Goes Well](#)

*The Clanton Advertiser*, August 11, 2004

A locally centered terrorist attack is something no one wants to think about, much less face; but minds from central and west Alabama converged on the subject in Clanton yesterday.

### [Emergency Vehicle Access Eased](#)

*The Washington Times*, August 10, 2004

D.C. and federal officials yesterday agreed to allow emergency vehicles to proceed through the new security checkpoints set up throughout the city. The agreement follows a report Friday in the Washington Times that ambulances and fire trucks rushing to emergencies were stopped at security checkpoints around the U.S. Capitol.

### [DC Dispatcher Adds Warning To Memo](#)

#### [Homeland Security Advises Vigilance](#)

*Fauquier Times-Democrat*, August 10, 2004

The Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation -- via an Aug. 3 e-mail to the Fauquier County Chamber of Commerce -- instructed business owners to be vigilant about security issues.

#### [Without A Home But Not Without Hope: Temporary Homes Sites Are Developed For Disaster Survivors](#)

*FEMA*, August 12, 2004

When the May rainstorms and landslides struck West Virginia, many residents lost their homes or found they were uninhabitable. In Mingo and Logan counties, which suffered the heaviest damage, a number of families were forced out of their homes and had to crowd in with friends or relatives. Rental units were difficult to find.

#### [La Honda Fire Brigade Gets A Slice Of Homeland Security](#)

*San Mateo County Times*, August 10, 2004

This tiny town is far from the terrorist targets in the country's largest cities; the closest thing to a national landmark here might be the house of the late writer Ken Kesey. But federal security funds have made it to this remote corner of the world, where wildfires can impose a more imminent threat than al-Qaida.

## RELATED INFORMATION

### RECENT REPORTS

- [Maritime Security: Partnering Could Reduce Federal Costs And Facilitate Implementation Of Automatic Vessel Identification System](#), July 2004

### SPOTLIGHT WEBSITES

- [National Weather Service: National Hurricane Center](#), August 13, 2004
- [U.S Department of Education: Emergency Planning](#), August 2004
- [Los Angeles Fire Department: Neighborhood Preparedness Info](#), August 2004

### OPINION

- [9/11 Report Defines Ills, Lacks Answers](#), August 11, 2004
- [Kids' Role In Securing USA](#), *USA Today*, August 9, 2004

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.