



Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Office of National Preparedness

March 21, 2003

NATIONAL NEWS

Terror Alert Level Raised

New York Times, March 17, 2003

The Bush administration called on the nation's governors to deploy National Guard troops or state police to protect government buildings, bridges, memorials, reservoirs and other public sites that could be the target of terrorist attacks.

- [U.S. Raises Terror Alert Level to High](#), *Washington Times*, March 18
- [Seaports Called 'Critically Vulnerable' to Terrorism](#), *GovExec*, March 20

Border Security Called 'Fixable' By New Chief

Washington Times, March 18, 2003

Asa Hutchinson, Department of Homeland Security Undersecretary for border and transportation security, maintains that increased technology is the key to enhanced border enforcement, and that efforts are ongoing within Homeland Security to "acquire and put into the field" the necessary equipment to safeguard America's borders.

Ridge Outlines Enhanced Security Plan

CNN, March 18, 2003

Warning anew of the possibility of terrorist attacks against the United States, Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge on Tuesday outlined a plan dubbed [Operation Liberty Shield](#), to enhance security nationwide.

- [U.S. Plans Homeland Security Ahead of War](#), *Associated Press*, March 18
- [Agencies Implement More Stringent Security Measures](#), *GovExec*, March 18
- [Ridge: Cybersecurity at 'Heart' of Department's Work](#), *GovExec*, March 20

Administration Seeks More Money to Protect Against Terror Attacks

New York Times, March 19, 2003

After months of criticism that the Bush administration had failed to provide enough money to defend against terrorist attacks on American soil, the White House said today that it would ask Congress for an emergency-spending package for domestic counterterrorism programs.

CONGRESS

Bipartisan Agreement Elusive on Homeland Security Priorities

GovExec, March 14, 2003

Congressional Democrats have been quick to criticize the 2004 homeland security budget, arguing that it would leave the nation's critical infrastructures, seaports and other potential targets vulnerable to terrorist threats, among other things.

Sen. Kerry Criticizes Homeland Security Steps

Reuters, March 18, 2003

Democratic presidential contender John Kerry criticized the Bush administration's homeland security strategy on Tuesday and proposed a domestic defense plan that would include hiring 100,000 new firefighters.

Committee Passes Bioshield Plan Minus Compensation Program

GovExec, March 19, 2003

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Wednesday unanimously approved a bill to authorize President Bush's "Bioshield" proposal to facilitate the development and production of vaccines and treatments for bioterror agents.

RECENT HEARINGS

- [Nuclear Regulatory Commissions Proposed Security Requirements for Nuclear Power Plants](#), House Energy and Commerce Committee, March 18
- [Cargo Containers: The Next Terrorist Target?](#), Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, March 20

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

W. VA to Get Federal Help

Parkersburg News and Sentinel, March 17, 2003

The head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has announced that President George Bush declared portions of West Virginia as major disaster areas and federal funds are now available to help people and communities recover from the effects of the severe winter storm that struck the state last month.

Town Sets up Crisis Phone Line

Greenwich Time, March 17, 2003

The Town of Greenwich has set up a toll-free emergency number and created an emergency preparedness section on its Web site.

Emergency Preparedness has Council's Attention

Chico Enterprise Record, March 21, 2003

Chico City Councilor Larry Wahl proposes setting aside \$100,000 for use in the event of a terrorist attack, and giving the city manager authority to use the money without a council vote.

State Prepares to Combat Bioterrorism

Lexington County Chronicle, March 15, 2003

With the threat of bio-terrorism attacks including anthrax and small pox, South Carolina officials have started small pox vaccinations of first responders and other emergency personnel.

- [County to Hold Forums on Bioterrorism](#), *Oakland Tribune*, March 16

- [Hospital Bioterror Drill Planned](#), *Crain's Chicago Business*, March 16

Terror Preparations in the Heartland

Minnesota Public Radio, March 16, 2003

Minnesota's Public Safety Commissioner Rich Stanek says he wants Minnesotans to feel secure but he also says it's wrong to assume the state is somehow immune from terrorism because of its location in the Midwest.

Palm Beach County: We are Ready for Code Red

Sun-Sentinel, March 16, 2003

When officials set out to assemble a policy for residents, fire and law-enforcement officials to follow in the event of a Code Red alert, Palm Beach County's annual preparations for a massive hurricane served as a starting point.

- [What Happens During Code Red?](#) *Santa Clarita Daily News*, March 15

New York Begins Beefing Up Security

CNN, March 18, 2003

After President Bush's speech Monday, New York authorities began implementing "Operation Atlas," a plan to bolster security that could cost the city up to \$5 million per week.

- [Cops Confirm Security Plan](#), *Newsday*, March 17

Ehrlich, Cabinet Meet to Rehearse Terrorism Scenarios

Baltimore Sun, March 18, 2003

With the United States moving closer to war with Iraq, Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. met with his Cabinet yesterday afternoon at the Maryland Emergency Management Agency headquarters in Reisterstown to go over scenarios for responding to a terrorist attack.

Region Braces for Red as Alert Moved to Orange

Erie Times News, March 20, 2003

As America teeters on the brink of war with Iraq, Erie area officials are waiting to hear if the nation's terrorism alert will go to its highest level, and how it will affect the Erie region.

Just in Case: Local Schools Practice Emergency Drills

Stamford News, March 18, 2003

In response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the slew of school shootings in the past few years, schools in Norwalk and neighboring towns have devised emergency preparedness plans.

- [Terrorism School Grants Get Criticism](#), *The Oklahoman*, March 17
- [Parents, Schools Prep for the Worst](#), *New York Newsday*, March 20
- [Cleburne County Schools Hold Evacuation Exercise](#), *Cleburne News*, March 20

Mathematical Model Estimates Impact of Large Scale Anthrax Attack

Scientific American, March 18, 2003

According to a report published online today by the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, a large-scale anthrax attack on a major U.S. city could cost 123,000 lives under current preparedness plans.

Lee Groups Consider Plan for Centralized Disaster Resource Center

Bonita Daily News, March 18, 2003

The American Red Cross of Lee County and the Harry Chapin Food Banks of Southwest Florida have joined with the Alliance for Community Response Inc. to build a Regional Emergency Resource Center.

City in Training for Warding off Terrorist Attacks

ABC 28, March 20, 2003

With war seemingly only hours away, the City of Lubbock is preparing for the possibility of an attack here on the homefront, as they get ready to train responders for both chemical and biological incidents.

Hahn Wants Emergency Center Activated

ABC News, March 17, 2003

Mayor Jim Hahn today urged the Los Angeles's top officials to activate the Emergency Operations Center on Wednesday in anticipation of a U.S.-led war against Iraq.

PEMA Announces \$2.7 Million Grant to Southwest PA Regional Counterterrorism Task Force

PEMA Press Release, March 17, 2003

Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) Director David M. Sanko today announced that the Southwest Pennsylvania Regional Counterterrorism Task Force has received a \$2.7 million grant to purchase personal protection equipment under the state's Regional Counterterrorism initiative.

Emergency-Homeland Security Council Discuss Steps to Preparedness

Tulahoma News, March 17, 2003

At a meeting of the Tullahoma Emergency Management/Homeland Security Council Tuesday at Tullahoma City Hall, council chairman John Riley provided three key steps that individuals and families should take to be properly prepared for unexpected emergencies.

RELATED INFORMATION

RECENT REPORTS

- [TERRORISM AND DEVELOPMENT: Using Social and Economic Development Policies to Inhibit a Resurgence of Terrorism](#), Rand Institute, March 2003
- [Homeland Security: Voluntary Initiatives Are Under Way at Chemical Facilities, but the Extent of Security Preparedness Is Unknown](#), GAO-03-439, March 14

The information contained in this newsletter was collected from Internet sources. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Office of National Preparedness.