



# Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Preparedness Division

December 12, 2003

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **Panel Weighs Security, Civil Liberties**

*AP/ABC News*, December 8, 2003

A former deputy attorney general informed the September 11 commission that the counterterrorism laws should be strengthened.

### **Homeland Security Chief Launches Ad Campaign Targeting Hispanics**

*AP/Naples Daily News*, December 9, 2003

DHS Secretary Ridge announced an advertising campaign ("[Listo](#)") aimed at educating Spanish-speakers on how to respond to potential emergencies, to include terrorist attacks.

### **Research Official Stewards Anti-Terrorism Complex**

*Technology Daily/GovExec*, December 8, 2003

The Science and Technology Directorate in DHS is the lead for advocating anti-terrorism technologies and has been tasked with building a homeland security complex.

### **Agencies Get Failing Grades on Cybersecurity**

*GovExec*, December 9, 2003

The federal government received an overall grade of D for its cybersecurity efforts according to the 2003 Federal Computer Security Scorecard.

### **Knowledge Is Power in Case of Terrorism**

*USA Today*, December 9, 2003

According to a survey released by the America Prepared Campaign, only about 25% of Americans were able to successfully pass a test indicating that they had basic knowledge to help them survive a terrorist attack.

## STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

### **Area CERT Teams Take Part in Emergency Training**

*Santa Cruz Sentinel*, December 7, 2003

The CERT program gained momentum in the Santa Cruz area after the Loma Prieta earthquake. Teams participate in drills and exercises so that they are prepared in the event of a disaster.

➤ [Disaster Teams Help Making Municipalities Prepared](#), *New Jersey News*, Dec 6

### **Plans in Place for 211 Telephone System**

*Arizona Capital Times*, December 9, 2003

Arizona hopes to have a 2-1-1 telephone system operational by the end of the year that would provide public safety and social services related information during an emergency.

### **County Plans Disaster Response**

*Register Citizen*, December 9, 2003

Northwest Connecticut is developing a regional steering committee to review individual county emergency operations plans to ensure an organized approach to preparedness.

### **MCC Institute Trains in Homeland Security**

*Democrat and Chronicle*, December 9, 2003

Monroe Community College is creating a Homeland Security Management Institute to train individuals regionally and nationally on homeland security issues.

### **'Disease Tracker' Knows if You're Ill**

*Nashville City Paper*, December 10, 2003

The Nashville Metro Public Health Department is conducting 'syndromic surveillance' to identify trends and provide officials with an early warning in the event of public health crisis.

### **City Prepares for Weapons of Mass Destruction**

*Firehouse*, December 9, 2003

Fort Lauderdale conducted a WMD drill simulating a chemical attack at a rock concert designed to test local, state, and federal agencies ability to communicate and work together effectively.

### **Hurricane Isabel Swamped Emergency Plans**

*AP/Roanoke Times*, December 11, 2003

A [report](#) by the Hurricane Isabel Assessment Team found that Virginia's disaster plans, especially state and local officials ability to issue alerts and warnings, were overwhelmed by the disaster.

### **Health Officials Learn Bioterrorism Response**

*Tri-Town News*, December 11, 2003

Ocean County health officials participated in a two-day training session, which provided participants with a mix of background and technical information about National Stockpile followed by a bioterrorism drill.

### **Study: State Unprepared for Large-Scale Health Emergency**

*Denver ABC 7*, December 10, 2003

A [study](#) by Trust for America's Health graded states on ten indicators of public health and found that there have been improvements in upgrades to emergency communications and most states have initial bioterrorism plans in place.

➤ [Study Says Federal Bioterrorism Spending Not Preparing States](#), *GovExec*, Dec 11

### **Emergency Exercise Involves More Than 160**

*Garden City Telegram*, December 11, 2003

The Finney County Emergency Management Office coordinated an emergency drill to test response to a HazMat incident with freezing weather conditions.

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

### **RECENT REPORTS**

- [Posthearing Questions from the September 17, 2003, Hearing on "Implications of Power Blackouts for the Nation's Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure Protection: The Electric Grid, Critical Interdependencies, Vulnerabilities, and Readiness"](#) (GAO-04-300R), December 8
- [An Assessment: Virginia's Response to Hurricane Isabel](#), Hurricane Isabel Assessment Team, December 2003
- [Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health in the Age of Bioterrorism](#), Trust for America's Health, December 2003

### **SPOTLIGHT WEBSITE**

- [Listo.Gov](#), DHS
- [Grants.gov](#), HHS

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