



PREPAREDNESS NEWS AND INFORMATION

From FEMA's Preparedness Division

July 2, 2004

NATIONAL NEWS

[FEMA Lauds Drill at Peach Bottom](#)

Intelligencer Journal, Jun 26, 2004

Local groups got words of praise Friday when the Federal Emergency Management Agency briefed the public on Tuesday's drill at Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station. Darrell Hammons represented FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security at the noon briefing, which was held in Eden Resort. "Based on our immediate evaluations, we found no outstanding issue that would be harmful to the public within a 10-mile radius of Peach Bottom nuclear power plant in the event of an emergency," Hammons said.

➤ [The Final Report will be out in the Fall](#)

Daily Record/Sunday News, June 26, 2004

While state and Federal officials agreed Friday that Exelon Nuclear has room for improvement, the regulators tended to reach similar conclusions. Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station's operators and other offsite personnel responded well to Tuesday's Radiological Emergency Preparedness Exercise. Representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the state and Exelon Nuclear met to offer a preliminary review of the exercise.

[New York Streets to be Blocked to Secure G.O.P. Convention](#)

New York Times, June 26, 2004

New York City announced ambitious security measures yesterday for the Republican National Convention, including shutting down Midtown thoroughfares for hours each day, putting a concrete barrier around Madison Square Garden, and letting protesters get only as close as one corner of the convention site. Though city and convention officials said they would be working to reduce the inconvenience to people not involved with the convention, they acknowledged that disruptions would occur across large swaths of Manhattan.

[Utah Rescue Dogs Part of World Trade Center Follow-Up Study](#)

The Salt Lake Tribune, June 29, 2004

It has been almost three years since Utahan Nancy Hachmeister and her German Shepard, Ivey, searched through the rubble of the World Trade Center in New York for survivors. Now researchers are using medical technology designed for humans to see whether Ivey and other rescue dogs used after Sept. 11 might pay a price for their service.

[Web Site Pools Strategies for Dealing with Attack](#)

The Gazette, June 29, 2004

Large-scale terrorist attacks on American soil have given rise to the first nationwide Web site for those who form the first line of defense when disaster strikes. Information once hoarded by agencies is being shared with firefighters, police, medical personnel and others to mount the best response, whether in New York City or rural Iowa. Exclusive to first responders, the site contains an array of lessons learned and best practices for disaster preparedness and responses, based on real incidents, ranging from the tiny to the humongous.

[Interoperability: Good Locally, Bad on a Bigger Scale](#)

FCW.com, June 28, 2004

Seventy-seven percent of cities nationwide report their police and fire departments have interoperable communication capabilities, while 74 percent report they can communicate seamlessly with neighboring first responder agencies, according to a new national report. The

U.S. Conference of Mayors released its findings today after surveying 192 cities about interoperability among government agencies and first responders, obstacles toward interoperability, and funding requirements.

True Dedication: Volunteer Firefighters

The Times-Reporter, June 29, 2004

Traditionally, volunteer firefighters have lived in rural areas and were farmers, leaving their fields when fire struck and picking up where they left off once the fire was out. But things are different now. According to a December 2002 study by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, an average of four or fewer firefighters are available to fight a midday house fire in 21 percent of all or mostly-volunteer departments in communities with less than 2,500 people.

New FEMA Program to Educate Americans about Floods and Flood Insurance

PRNewswire, June 30, 2004

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency is sponsoring a campaign to educate consumers about floods and flood insurance. The campaign will include new television spots, a toll-free consumer telephone hotline, a Web site, direct mail, and more. The campaign is being administered through the National Flood Insurance Program, a program within FEMA that makes Federally backed flood insurance coverage available, and implements floodplain management and floodplain mapping. The new nationwide FloodSmart consumer campaign seeks to educate homeowners on protecting their homes and property from flooding, and on the need to understand that homeowners' insurance will not cover damage from floods.

Critics Question Federal Preparedness for Attacks on Ports

Govexec.com, June 30, 2004

Homeland Security officials said this week that the nation's waterways remain vulnerable to terrorist attacks, but indicated that the government would try to avoid shutting down ports across the country if an attack occurred. "The waterways are a concern; we're not there in a perfect security environment yet," said Asa Hutchinson, the Homeland Security Department's undersecretary for border and transportation security, during a panel discussion Tuesday hosted by George Mason University. He added, however, that DHS wants to avoid reacting to another terrorist incident the way it responded to the Sept. 11 attacks, after which airplanes across the country were grounded.

Black Kids Face Higher Risk of Fire Death: Their Chance of Fatality 400% Greater, Study Finds

Baltimore Sun, June 30, 2004

A new Federal Emergency Management Agency analysis has determined that black children under the age of 5 in Maryland were four times more likely to die in a house fire than the rest of the state's black population, a rate that was the highest in the United States. Only Illinois matched that rate, according to the FEMA analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data from 1989 to 1998. The study also found that fires were the No. 1 cause of accidental death for black children nationwide under the age of 5.

FEMA Online Class Teaches NIMS

FCW.com, June 30, 2004

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has a new online course to help first responders understand the Federal government's new National Incident Management System (NIMS). "NIMS establishes standard incident management processes, protocols and procedures so that all responders — including those at the Federal, state, tribal and local level — can coordinate their responses, share a common focus and place full emphasis on resolving the event," said Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge in a June 29 statement.

THE CONGRESS

[9/11 Panel Promises to Push for Legislation: Calling for Safety Reforms amid Election-Year Politics](#)

Star-Ledger, June 28, 2004

With release of the 9/11 commission's report just a month away, the panel fears a critical component of its legacy will be lost if Congress fails to act on its blueprint for a safer America. Members of the commission investigating the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, are so determined to see their recommendations enacted that they plan to continue pushing for the reforms as private citizens even after the panel dissolves this summer. "We recognize that many commissions have made reports in the past, and their reports have simply gathered dust in archives in Washington," Commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste said.

HEARINGS

[Commerce, Science, and Transportation](#): Hearing to examine S.2411, to amend the *Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974*, July 8, 2004

UPDATES

[Select Committee on Homeland Security](#), June 28, 2004

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

[Vigo County Will Receive More than \\$1 Million for Homeland Security](#)

Tribune Star, June 25, 2004

Vigo County will receive more than \$1 million in Federal money disbursed by the state to strengthen homeland security preparedness. Gov. Joe Kernan today announced that more than \$17.8 million has been allocated by the State Emergency Management Agency to 54 Indiana counties. "We're proud of the strong partnerships between our state and local agencies, which have helped us put these Federal dollars in the hands of our local first responders within a very short period of time," Kernan said in a news release.

[Cities Get Emergency Preparedness Lesson](#)

McKinney Courier-Gazette, June 28, 2004

A group of mayors from some of the smaller cities in Collin County got a crash course in emergency preparedness at a Friday briefing, held by the county's homeland security planner. Jason Lane explained state laws, which outline the mayor's responsibilities in a crisis and asked the rural leaders to create a plan for their city or use the plan created by the county. He later turned over the discussion to epidemiologist Janet Glowicz who briefed the mayors on avoiding an outbreak of West Nile in their cities. "The main point I want to leave you with is that in a disaster, you're in charge," Lane said. "People tend to think that once the feds (Federal government agents) get here, they're going to take care of everything, but you're still going to have to tell them what to do."

[Exercises Train Operators in Case of Major Emergencies](#)

Bowling Green, KY Daily News, June 27, 2004

Starting at noon, local amateur radio operators began monitoring their dials for distant signals after setting up temporary antennas on the hilltop. They will be listening and talking until noon today, practicing for major emergencies: disasters, storms or terrorist attacks. The idea is to see how quickly clubs can set up their equipment and reach other clubs, in case disaster takes out telephone service and brings down radio antennas used by emergency services. They brought their own generator, simulating the conditions of an actual emergency. Short-wave signals can circle the world when conditions are right, but for close-range communication they use the same VHF/UHF bands as emergency services.

Blackford Emergency Agency Leads in Preparedness

Star Press, June 28, 2004

The agency and its 31 volunteers are responsible for planning for and overseeing local disaster response. It has a trained Skywarn group that watches the skies during bad weather and maintains and manages an operations center complete with hi-tech communications and digital radio capabilities on the second floor of the Courthouse Annex. The agency also has a direct satellite feed for weather observation. The local EMA also provides emergency communications during disasters, helps with damage assessments, and provides other logistical items and equipment. Over his three years on the job, Henderson has secured about \$175,000, including \$100,000 last week, in Federal grants, mostly from Homeland Security.

Stewart's Ready to Help in an Emergency

The Saratoga, June 29, 2003

A year ago, the town's Emergency Preparedness Committee began mapping out and testing a plan for communication, evacuation, food and shelter in the case of floods, high winds, power outages, hazardous materials leaks or terrorism. Generators have been stalled at the town's community center, the designated headquarters for the plan. The Albany-Saratoga Speedway has pitched in with physical space for run-throughs of the plan, and the Ballston Spa Central School district is on board to provide buses in case of an emergency situation.

Mad Cow Testing Sparks Controversy: County Opposes Creekstone's 100 Percent Testing

Newton Kansan, June 29, 2004

At last week's Harvey County commission meeting, commissioners voted to approve a resolution in support of Creekstone Farms Premium Beef LLC, Arkansas City, lobbying the U.S. Department of Agriculture to approve 100 percent testing of the cattle it slaughters for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease. That resolution, which was introduced at the Regional Economic Area Partnership meeting, was passed in the morning. By the afternoon, the county received a few phone calls from residents who were concerned with the decision. The commission rescinded the resolution and put it on this week's agenda for further consideration.

Hospital Leaders Set Forum with Civic Group

Burlington County Times, June 29, 2004

Administrators at Lourdes Medical Center of Burlington County will address the neighborhood watch tomorrow night to discuss concerns by members about the future of the hospital. It will be the first opportunity for residents to ask Lourdes administrators about department closures and other issues raised by striking nurses. Representing the hospital will be John Nespoli, chief administrative officer, and Owen McNally, vice president of mission and outreach services.

Counties Make Requests for Spending Homeland Security Money

Tuscaloosa News, June 28, 2004

Chemical protection suits, night vision goggles, radiation detection equipment and an E-911 emergency phone system are just a few of the items requested by Alabama counties as the state prepares to divvy up about \$37 million in Federal homeland security money. Alabama Homeland Security Director Jim Walker said the state plans to spend about \$17 million of its homeland security money to help law enforcement agencies beef up communications systems so that police in one community can talk to police or firefighters in the next town.

Flood Victims Receive Federal Checks

WBAY-TV, July 1, 2004

The first checks from the Federal government arrived to homeowners flooded during recent heavy rain in Wisconsin. It took less than two weeks for seven Oshkosh homeowners to receive the checks. Both the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Small Business Administration expect to be handing out checks in the Oshkosh flood-zone area in the coming weeks.

RELATED INFORMATION

RECENT REPORTS

[Homeland Security: Performance of Information System to Monitor Foreign Students and Exchange Visitors Has Improved, but Issues Remain: GAO-04-690](#), June 18, 2004

[The Chief Operating Officer Concept and its Potential Use as a Strategy to Improve Management at the Department of Homeland Security: GAO-04-876R](#), June 28, 2004

SPOTLIGHT WEBSITES

[Citizen Corps Emergency Preparedness Documents](#), June 29, 2004

[Response Flash\(TM\) Deployment at Emergency Communications Agency](#), June 28, 2004

OPINION

[Setting Standards](#), June 28, 2004

[Contingency Planning](#), June 28, 2004

[Panel: National Alert System in Disarray](#), June 28, 2004

[FEMA Shows Good Response to Tornadoes](#), June 29, 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.