

The SIREN UPDATE

September is National Preparedness Month

National Preparedness Month | September 2009
Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed



Get A Kit

Make A Plan

Be Informed

Get Involved

For the past several years, September has been designated as National Preparedness Month by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security to remind Americans to create a disaster plan and kit, and to update them annually.

We at the Division of EMS want to encourage all of our partners in EMS around the state to be prepared with a disaster plan and kit and to pass that message on to your respective communities.

Below is a list of websites with free preparedness resources to aid in preparing for a disaster for your family, business or community:

Are You Ready? An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness (IS-22) is available in PDF format at the FEMA website www.fema.gov/areyouready/. This is a step by step comprehensive guide to aid families in preparing for disasters that walks the reader through how to get informed, develop and maintain an emergency communications plan and disaster supplies kit.

Additional disaster planning kits and information for specific populations such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and pet owners, can be found at www.ready.gov/america/publications/allpubs.html.

A list of items needed to create an emergency kit is available at www.ready.gov/america/getakit/index.html.

To help Ohio's first responders be ready to respond to organophosphate and nerve agents, the Division of EMS has prepared an online CHEMPACK continuing education course that is free of charge to EMTs and Paramedics.

The course is available 24/7. To access the course, visit <http://ohioemstraining.com>. You will need to register in order to sign in to take the course.

We truly hope that you will take advantage of these available resources and help the Great State of Ohio be prepared for whatever emergency might come down the road.

FEMA Plans to Establish Emergency 'Base Camps'

FEMA is planning to award a contract to a logistics and management company that could establish and operate one or two 'base camps' that could provide food, shelter and basic needs to approximately 300-2,000 people in each camp, in the event that the president declares a disaster or emergency anywhere in the continental U.S.



Base camp in Beaumont, TX
Photo courtesy of Patsy Lynch/FEMA

The chosen vendor must be capable of opening one or two base camps within 72 hours of receiving its task order, in case of an emergency such as a hurricane, flood, earthquake, cyclone, tornado, blizzard, avalanche, tsunami or act of terrorism, according to a Request For Information (RFI) issued by FEMA on June 3.

The story from Government Security News can be viewed at: www.gsnmagazine.com/cms/features/news-analysis/2138.html.

Changes Coming for EMS Certificate Holders and Training Institutions

House Bill 1, better known as "the Budget Bill", was signed by Governor Strickland and will go into effect on Oct. 16th. The bill includes amendments that are beneficial for our EMS and Fire partners.

EMTs and Firefighters have been asking for a number of years to have the expiration of their certificates moved to a common date and instructors have also asked for their certificates to teach to run concurrent with their certificates to practice. The language in H.B. 1 will allow the EMS Board to adopt rules to meet both of these requests.

Accredited institutions with multiple program levels that expire on different dates will also be happy to hear the Board can now establish rules that will bring those separate accreditations to a single date. Also included in the bill is the ability to extend the approval period for both accredited sites and CE sites and a broadening of the language pertaining to provisional status.

None of these changes can take place until new rules are published. In the coming months, Division of EMS staff will be working with the Board to determine the most effective way to bring about the needed changes.

As always, the Division of EMS and the Board welcome your comments as we move through the rule development process.

WWW.EMS.Ohio.Gov Undergoing Change

Last Year, a Governor's Office Directive was issued requiring all state agency Web pages to be standardized. Since that time, the Division of EMS staff has been working with the Department of Public Safety's Visual Communication's Office to standardize the EMS Web page.

The Web page is near completion and will notice a more streamlined and uniformed layout when you visit.

We recognize these changes may be frustrating to those of you who have familiarized yourselves with the current layout and who have marked your favorite links.

We ask for your patience as we launch the new Web page and address any problems that may have been overlooked in the planning stages of the project.

Our goal is to provide our Fire and EMS partners with useful information and resources. If you have items you would like to see added to our site, please feel free to contact the Division of EMS with your suggestions.

The Plain Language Guide – Making the Transition from Ten Codes

The Plain Language Guide – Making the Transition from Ten Codes to Plain Language, released in July 2008, assists emergency responders in making the transition from the use of "10-codes" to "plain language" during radio communication.

The establishment of plain language communications standards is a recommended milestone of the Office of Emergency Communication's (OEC) National Emergency Communications Plan and an objective of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The guide demonstrates how plain language improves interoperability among agencies, explains the value in using plain language, and documents the efforts, resources, and key actions required to implement plain language in an agency.

Developed with practitioner input, the guide provides a four-phased approach to the transition process, as well as best practices and lessons learned. This tool was developed through a collaborative relationship between OEC and the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility.

The guide along with downloadable OEC guidance documents is available at www.safecomprogram.gov.