



## Highlights:

[Cases of Influenza in U.S. Highest Since 2009](#)

[Payday Loan Scam Affects Emergency Services](#)

[Identifying "Black Swans" in Risk Management](#)

[USFA Releases 2012 Firefighter Fatality Report](#)

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For information regarding the EMR-ISAC visit [www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac) or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: (301) 447-1325 and/or [emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov).

# The InfoGram

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## Cases of Influenza in U.S. Highest Since 2009

Boston's Mayor [declared a public health emergency](#) this week as influenza cases reached numbers 10 times higher than they were in the entire 2011-2012 season. Hospital emergency departments from Maine to North Carolina are being overwhelmed and many are limiting visitor access to try to minimize flu spread.

Emergency services personnel come into contact with large and varied segments of the population and therefore are more likely to be exposed to the virus. Some preventative and planning actions to take:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all health care workers get vaccinated;
- Vaccinations are advised for all other emergency personnel;
- Symptomatic personnel should not report for work, reducing virus spread;
- Departments should consider the possibility of absenteeism due to illness and plan accordingly;
- Review infection control methods in place and fill any gaps;
- Remind personnel to get the flu vaccine yearly as the flu strains and vaccines change, and immunity declines over time.

The CDC maintains a [Web site for seasonal flu](#) and already has many resources available to the general public and [medical professionals](#) including maps, interactive surveillance data, prevention tips, and treatment options.

(Source: [CDC](#))

## Payday Loan Scam Affects Emergency Services

For several years the media has reported on phone scams by people attempting to coerce victims out of money by telling them they were delinquent on a payday loan. The callers were repetitive, abusive, and threatening in order to get the victim to send money. These calls are termed Telephony Denial of Service (TDoS) attacks.

The [Internet Crimes Complaint Center \(IC3\) recently reported](#) scammers are now calling employers as well, including emergency services departments. "The TDoS attacks have tied up the emergency services' telephone lines, preventing them from receiving and responding to legitimate emergency calls."

*The InfoGram is distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures.*

The IC3 did not specifically state which branch of the emergency services (if any) was being targeted with the payday loan scams, but did state [that law enforcement agencies are being targeted](#) in spoofing campaigns.

Any agencies or individuals who believe they are the target of such a campaign are encouraged to [file a complaint with the IC3](#). IC3 is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the [National White Collar Crime Center](#).

(Source: [Internet Crimes Complaint Center](#))

## Identifying “Black Swans” in Risk Management

No matter how well written, thought out, and revised an emergency plan may be, there will always be unexpected events, things that fall outside the usual range of risk to the organization or department. A [monthly series](#) in the Continuity e-Guide addresses “Black Swans” and how to manage them.

The author defines a “Black Swan” as “an unidentified or untreated single point of failure capable of unexpectedly derailing a continuity response.” The term was coined by the idea that [unlikely events can be more disruptive](#) than expected events.

The [first article](#) (PDF, 158.9 Kb) in the series addresses employee availability in an emergency situation, specifically management’s assumption that essential personnel will report for work. Ways to address this “Black Swan” include layering job duties, cross training, supporting employees’ family preparedness, and creating a responsibility to the organization within the workforce.

This is an ongoing concern in the emergency services due to the nature of the work and the vital employee skill sets necessary during fires, disasters, and medical emergencies. This article gives actionable planning ideas that can be used by management and human resources to address gaps in emergency response.

(Source: [Disaster Resource Guide](#))

## USFA Releases 2012 Firefighter Fatality Report

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) [released their preliminary statistics](#) on firefighter fatalities for 2012. Eighty-three firefighters lost their lives through line of duty deaths (LODD) last year, the same number as 2011.

These reported 2012 statistics are provisional and are likely to change as USFA contacts state fire marshals to verify the reported LODD during 2012. The final number of firefighter fatalities will be reported in USFA’s annual firefighter fatality report, expected to be available by July. Some of the significant statistics for 2012:

- 41% of the fatalities were from heart attacks, 32% from trauma;
- 60% were between the ages of 41 and 60;
- Volunteer firefighters accounted for 48% of firefighter fatalities;
- PA and NC each had 9 firefighter deaths, tying for highest.

Statistics, reports, and more information from past years are available on the [USFA Firefighter Fatalities page](#).

(Source: [USFA](#))

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