



Highlights:

FDA Approves Vaccine for Inhalation Anthrax

Impaired Driving Focus Shifts from Alcohol to Drugs

Fires and Ammunition: Noisy but Low Risk

Basic Training for Wildland Urban Interface Fires

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

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FDA Approves Vaccine for Inhalation Anthrax

The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) approved Anthrasil](#) last week to treat patients with inhalation anthrax. [Anthrasil](#) is used alongside other appropriate drugs such as antibiotics. Anthrasil will be stored in the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile for use during a health emergency.

Anthrax infects people in different ways: [cutaneous, gastrointestinal, injection, and inhalation](#). A person's symptoms depend on how it was introduced. Inhalation anthrax is rare and can happen to people working with infected animals or animal products or through the intentional release of anthrax spores. It is the most deadly form with a 55 percent survival rate with proper, aggressive treatment.

The anthrax attacks of 2001 are the most memorable recent case of inhalation anthrax. Letters sent to various media outlets and politicians caused 22 cases of anthrax. Eleven of the cases were inhalation anthrax and five of the victims died.

The [Strategic National Stockpile](#) exists to help state and local first responders and health officials “bolster their response to a national emergency,” though it isn't itself a first response tool. Training on the program is available for local health care providers, first responders, and government officials.

(Source: [FDA](#))

Impaired Driving Focus Shifts from Alcohol to Drugs

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently released two new studies to look at how the campaigns against drunk driving has fared. The results show drinking and driving is falling while drugged driving is on the rise.

The [Roadside Survey of Alcohol and Drug Use by Drivers](#) (PDF, 82 Kb) found 1.5 percent of weekend drivers had blood alcohol concentrations above the legal limit of .08, and 8.3 percent had “measurable” amounts in their systems. That first number is down 80 percent since 1973, and the second is down 77 percent in the same time period, a very significant decrease.

The same study found the proportion of nighttime weekend drivers with illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter drugs in their system was 20 percent, an increase from 16.3 percent in 2007. The 2007 study was the first time drugs were included in the testing. A second study found [drivers under the influence of marijuana](#) (PDF, 79 Kb) were about 25 percent more likely to be in a crash.

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

Law enforcement and EMS personnel especially must be aware that one in five drivers on the road is under the influence of some form of drug. While traffic crashes are generally going down nationwide, the increase in drugged driving is an alarming trend relevant to first responders.

(Source: [NHTSA](#))

Fires and Ammunition: Noisy but Low Risk

Regardless of what state you operate in, whether you are in an urban, rural, or suburban area, you will no doubt respond to a fire at some point at a location where small arms ammunition is being stored. While Hollywood may show otherwise, the risk to firefighters responding to such a fire is low.

Velocity of a round of ammunition is minor when not in the barrel of a weapon. The barrel focuses the black powder explosion, propelling the bullet through the barrel and increasing the velocity. Outside of a weapon, many rounds will not even pierce fiberboard at a distance of 7 inches.

The video "[Sporting Ammunition and the Firefighter](#)" by the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute, Inc. (SAAMI) prove through series of tests with increasing intensity how difficult it is to ignite ammunition accidentally, and how unlikely it is for ignited rounds to propagate. They even conducted a bonfire test with 28,000 rounds of mixed small arms ammunition, finding that turnout gear will protect a firefighter at a reasonable working distance.

The conclusion is that while fires involving ammunition may be noisy and disconcerting, the risk to firefighters is minor.

(Source: [SAAMI](#))

Basic Training for Wildland Urban Interface Fires

Suburban and urban fire departments are responding to wildfires at an increasing rate. This is due to a variety of factors, including the increasing spread of development around cities and drought conditions around the country. More departments have Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas in their jurisdiction, and many are lacking even the most basic training for it.

The Firefighters Support Foundation's (FSF) most recent offering addresses just that. "[Wildland/Urban Interface Fires: Structural Preparation and Protection](#)" is a 50-minute video with accompanying PowerPoint presentation geared toward company officers and firefighters more familiar with structural fire tactics. This training focuses on looking at things far ahead of the WUI fire and identifying hazards as well as ways to prepare the site:

- Note locations of power lines, septic tanks, LPG tanks, etc;
- Clear vegetation from around the structure;
- Close windows, turn off fans, disconnect gas lines, turn on exterior lights;
- Close garage door and disconnect door opener, ensuring access if you lose power.

The training also discusses apparatus positioning, situational awareness, extinguishing spot fires, and maintaining a means of egress.

(Source: [Firefighter Support Foundation](#))

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For information specifically affecting the private sector critical infrastructure contact the **National Infrastructure Coordinating Center** by phone at 202-282-9201, or by email at nicc@dhs.gov.