



## Highlights:

Radiological Material Threats and Response

Emergency Planning for People with Disabilities

Long-Term Roadway Incident Management

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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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## Radiological Material Threats and Response

Radioactive materials are used for a variety of purposes from medical treatments and testing to treating food or even identifying flaws in welded metals. While some of these materials are virtually harmless in the amounts normally used, others can cause serious illness or death if encountered unshielded. Without the proper testing equipment it would be completely undetectable until symptoms began.

In 2013, a truck carrying less than 40 grams of cobalt 60 was stolen. Officials alerted the media and public and searched for two days, finally finding both the truck and the opened container of cobalt 60. Two days after that, six people were arrested for the crime. All showed signs of radiation poisoning. Truck hijackings are common in Mexico and while the assumption was the thieves didn't know what they had, it was still possible the isotope was the target of the theft as it could have easily been sold to interested terrorist groups.

Isotopes such as cobalt 60 could be used in a radiological dispersion device, or “dirty bomb,” and would cause more long-term damage due to their longer half-lives. How secure they are kept depends on the country and type of material; security measures like alarms on vehicles, armed protection, and “secure” parking and rest stops are not standard practices even here in the United States. Many experts believe [it's likely terrorists would attempt to get the radiological material for a dirty bomb domestically](#), not bring it over the border.

Local police, fire and EMS response to such an incident may be limited to receiving the initial report, medical care, and support of the federal specialty teams who are trained to handle these incidents. It's likely the FBI will manage the incident, including coordinating these special teams. Departments interested in developing radiation detection capabilities may investigate the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) [Operations Support Directorate](#).

(Source: [DNDO](#))

## Emergency Planning for People with Disabilities

One in five people in the United States reported to have a disability in the 2010 census. Those with mobility restrictions often must [rely on others for assistance](#)

[during emergencies](#), placing them in an uncomfortably vulnerable position during an evacuation, for example. There is a fear not only that someday no one will be there to help, but also that there may be a situation making it impossible to successfully escape, with or without help. People are also more likely to disregard disaster evacuation orders if they have a disability.

[Major disasters in recent years](#) show the high costs when plans fail to address these issues and the [legal ramifications](#), and cities and states are addressing this issue more fully to better protect their citizens. [Phoenix is one example](#), revamping its emergency operations plans while focusing on those with “access and functional needs” and contacting community organizations and local families for help to make sure they cover as many contingencies as possible.

There are a number of resources available for governments interested in doing the same. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) updated their guide “[Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for People with Disabilities](#)” and have a number of [other resources](#) for this population.

Emergency management planners can review the [American Red Cross](#) and [Ready.gov](#) resources and use them during outreach efforts. The [Department of Health and Human Services](#) has training available focusing on federal civil rights laws. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) site houses resources for both individuals and emergency responders.

Many states also have information sites geared toward people with disabilities, and some states and municipalities (such as [Chicago](#)) have voluntary registries for people who may need assistance during emergencies; check your state or city websites.

(Source: [NFPA](#))

## Long-Term Roadway Incident Management

The Responder Safety Learning Network unveiled a new online training, “[Planning for the Long-Term Event](#),” focusing on traffic incidents lasting more than two hours. These types of incidents can have far-reaching ripple effects and are challenging to manage.

Major roadways are often restricted or diverted during long-term incidents, changing local traffic patterns and affecting a much larger area than the initial incident did. This can interrupt school bus schedules and emergency response to other incidents, and back traffic up in many connecting roads for miles. Better incident and traffic management can help minimize these effects.

All online training modules through the Responder Safety Learning Network are free and focus on traffic management and scene safety. Modules are self-paced, allowing individuals to complete courses as their schedule allows. Check back often for new modules.

(Source: [ResponderSafety.com](#))

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