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Flooding Resources for Public Health

We've had at least three instances of extreme flooding responsible for numerous deaths in the past two months. Homes were washed away in [West Virginia](#) in June, while an estimated 20,000 people had to be rescued in [Louisiana](#) just this week. In [Ellicott City, Maryland](#), floodwaters carved caverns out of sidewalks and roads. In these instances, heavy rains brought historic floods that went far beyond what was expected, overwhelming response agencies.

Mother Nature has no problems throwing us curveballs. Other lesser instances of flooding, though minor compared to the events discussed above, still are a serious issue to life and health. All jurisdictions, even those not prone to flooding, should have plans on hand to deal with the issue and need to ensure all facets of response and recovery are addressed.

[The Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange \(TRACIE\)](#) has a number of flood-related health resources that may be helpful to jurisdictions currently experiencing flooding and those jurisdictions planning for flooding. The [Technical Resources](#) page covers a broad range of healthcare emergency preparedness topics, including the [Natural Disasters Topic Collection](#) with a section on [Flooding – Lessons Learned](#) and [Flooding – Plans, Tools, and Templates](#).

They also have numerous [individual resources on flooding](#) in the Resource Library, which is connected to the National Library of Medicine Disaster Lit database. Accessing the resources in the Information Exchange does require a free, simple [Registration](#), as it is a secure environment.

(Source: [HHS ASPR](#))

New Anti-Human Trafficking Materials Available

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security recently introduced new web-based educational resources to support its Blue Campaign against human trafficking.

One of the more difficult aspects of spotting and stopping human trafficking is that it is so hidden. It can and does happen in our communities, yet remains nearly invisible to us and we easily explain away the [indicators](#) of this highly-profitable crime.

The [new resources](#) include a short video and several infographics that detail the differences between human smuggling and human trafficking and talks about the three different types of human trafficking: sex trafficking, forced labor, and domestic servi-

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tude. The site also tells of [several recent cases from across the country](#), describing the conditions the people were subject to and how they were eventually found.

This new campaign will target areas where human trafficking is active, including parts of Arizona, Nevada, and North Dakota. The Blue Campaign website also offers [online awareness training](#), [resources for law enforcement](#), and instructions on how to [report a tip](#). Fire, EMS, public health, and law enforcement personnel are in a unique position to catch these modern-day slave traders in the act and help their victims.

(Source: [DHS Blue Campaign](#))

When You Get Blank Stares....

There is nothing quite like teaching a training module, giving a press conference, presenting before a municipal board, or in some other way speaking to a group of people and finding out later that your message just did not come across. What's worse is if someone received the message completely skewed but believes it is correct, which can have many unpredicted consequences.

It's important to learn to recognize when your message isn't being communicated completely or clearly. This may be little more than getting a confused look, or someone asking a question on something you thought you'd carefully covered. We've all been in a situation where an instructor or speaker paid little attention to the confusion of their audience and know the frustration that causes. Take a lesson from their mistake and learn to read your audience.

This translates to electronic messaging as well. People are not shy about pointing out problems with online messaging; take notice of the comments people are making. Yes, some people make negative comments just for the sake of doing it, but you can usually tell the difference between the troublemakers and the genuinely confused. Clear up any confusion early, be clear in messaging, and make it obvious the clarification is coming from official channels. For more help, see the free Federal Emergency Management Agency training "[Effective Communication](#)."

(Source: [FEMA](#))

Webinar: Private Sector Access to Disaster Sites

Managing who has access, and what level of access, to disaster sites is an important part of the planning process. The upcoming webinar "[Entry Approved: A Review of Coordinated Access for Critical Personnel to Disaster Sites](#)" sponsored by the Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) will cover this top with a focus on private sector access.

[Healthcare Ready](#) will review current policies and programs that address private sector access to disaster sites and examine why this remains a challenging problem. The webinar will also go over current public sector access programs, private sector experiences, recommendations for changes, and established best practices.

This webinar is open to members and representatives of the Healthcare and Public Health Sector community and all related subsectors. Please feel free to distribute widely to your coordinating partners and associates.

Join the webinar on Tuesday, August 30 from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern. The dial-In number is 202-774-2300 and the access code is 67411014. For more information, see [Public Health Emergency](#) website, and contact CIP@hhs.gov with questions.

(Source: [ASPR](#))

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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.