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The U.S. Fire Administration maintains the **Emergency Management and Response – Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)**.

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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Healthcare Ready Helps Medical Supply Chain

The one time when it is critical for healthcare facilities to have a strong supply chain is during and after a disaster, but that's when it's often the most unstable. Transportation disruption, limited fuel access, staffing shortages, and restricted access to damaged areas all cause delays in delivery of important medical supplies and medications.

[Healthcare Ready](#), formerly Rx Response, works to strengthen and support those supply chains, bringing the public health and private sector together to focus on ways to clear a path forward through problems. It provides support through supply chain management, exercises, pandemic preparedness, and disaster access.

For example, one pharmaceutical company worked with Healthcare Ready after Hurricane Sandy to get their delivery drivers credentialed so they were allowed to deliver in the affected area. Something like this is in the best interest of medical facilities, as a shortage in important medications or supplies can mean life or death to patients.

Government and private sector partners interested in learning more about Healthcare Ready membership. In addition to members-only resources, [Rx Open](#) works to help connect individuals with open pharmacies in affected disaster areas and their [blog](#) to keep interested parties up to date on capabilities and activities. Individuals can also [request access to InfoCenter](#), their online information-sharing forum.

(Source: [Healthcare Ready](#))

Next-Generation Incident Command System

The Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate (DHS S&T) has made available the information sharing tool [Next-Generation Incident Command System](#) (NICS) for first responders worldwide.

NICS is a web-based communications platform responders can use on-scene and at developing incidents to contact remote experts for assistance in real time. Examples might include topographic experts and university researchers. This also allows the experts to monitor the situation and offer resources and information if it is pertinent.

In development for several years, NICS is being used by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Emergency Management Victoria (Australia), and a number of organizations during the 2013 Rim Fire in Yosemite National Park.

NICS code is available through two online venues: The United States Government's

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open source code repository, [GitHub](#), and the Worldwide Incident Command Services Corporation, where NICS is called [RAVEN](#). It will be available this fall on the Geospatial Information Infrastructure (GII) on the [Homeland Security Information Network](#).

(Source: [DHS S&T](#))

USAR Team Use of Social Media During Floods

Social media is a great tool for getting preparedness messages out before and during an emergency. Eventually, you may start to get messages from people asking for help or rescue. This is exactly what happened during the [Louisiana Task Force 1 \(LATF-1\) Urban Search and Rescue Team](#) during the flooding in Louisiana recently.

LATF-1 was deployed on August 14th for water-based search and rescue. They received more than half a dozen messages via Facebook Messenger for help or rescue, and leadership decided to respond to all messages and pass all information on to the Operations Section Chief of the Incident Management Team.

First responder agencies can learn from the other things LATF-1 faced through social media during their deployment and the actions they will take in the future:

- List no personal contact information on the public page;
- List appropriate contact information the public can use to request help;
- Pre-script responses and have an automatic response to Facebook messages;
- Alert followers of an activation within 24 hours.

(Source: [EMS1.com](#))

Managing the Dead in Disasters

Managing the living – and keeping them that way – is probably the primary focus of emergency preparedness and management. In a large-scale disaster, however, you may need to manage a large number of fatalities. Failing to plan for such an event can cause public health problems and unnecessarily increase stress and emotional pain.

Collecting and processing remains is a multi-agency job. Public health offices need to partner with the coroner's office, funeral homes, and others, and these relationships should be well established before they are needed. The federal [Disaster Mortuary Operations Team](#) (DMORT) is available to assist with processing and victim identification, and they do supply temporary morgue facilities as a backup. This team should only be one facet of a plan; local offices usually handle collection of the deceased.

There are several resources available to assist in comprehensive planning:

- "[Mass Fatality Management Guide for Healthcare Entities](#)" (PDF, 5.51 Mb);
- "[Capability 5: Fatality Management](#)" (PDF, 363.5 Kb);
- "[Mass Fatality Incident Planning: Why Mass Fatality Plans Don't Always Work](#),"
- "[Managing Mass Fatalities: A Toolkit for Planning](#),"
- "[Mass Fatality Management](#),"
- "[Emergency Management and Mass Fatalities: Who Owns the Dead?](#)" (Abstract only; full article available on Interlibrary Loan. Contact your local library).

In addition, many states, large cities, and hospitals have mass fatalities plans available online that could be used as a guide when working on your own. An internet search for "mass fatality management" will bring back some good resources.

(Source: [County of Santa Clara](#))

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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.