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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.

The InfoGram

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Fire Response to Civil Disorder, Protests, and Riots

Fire is used in many ways, sometimes as a weapon. Recent and historical violent protests in the United States and elsewhere show fire used to sow mayhem, incite fear, and destroy property. Sometimes it is fairly [minor sports-related “celebrations.”](#) but the number of high-profile demonstrations in the past several years coupled with the discordant climate we’re currently seeing should prompt department leadership to brush the dust off their plans for managing calls during protests, civil or otherwise.

The most important thing regardless of circumstances remains keeping personnel safe. Firefighters are used to being viewed as the “good guys,” coming in like the cavalry, putting out fires, saving people from burning buildings, generally being welcomed. Not the case in a riot or protest. In August, [firefighters were shot while putting out riot-related fires in Milwaukee](#), and last year [rioters threw cinder blocks at Baltimore’s trucks](#) and knifed charged hose lines, not caring if they were the “good guys.”

Most firefighters don’t get training on what to do if a mob suddenly turns on them, how to respond mass violence, or other life-threatening circumstances related to protests and riots. Firefighters are also deeply opposed to leaving a structure burn if it is salvagable, but that might be required for life safety. Deciding how much you’re willing to risk is a discussion leadership should have well before it becomes necessary.

It is also important to plan and prepare for both peaceful and violent protests. We celebrate the right of peaceable assembly regularly. Treating a peaceful protest as a violent act is a violation of civil rights. Sometimes that line is fine, however. This should be taken into consideration when writing plans and preparing for scheduled events.

The Firefighters Support Foundation training “[Fire/EMS Response to Civil Unrest](#)” shows why urban and rural communities should be concerned with this, the need for mutual aid plans, and working with local emergency managers and law enforcement.

Another option is to contact departments within your state or region whom you know have dealt with this issue and see if they will share their plans with your department. Consider meeting with them, talking about your community’s needs, and getting advice on aspects you may not be considering.

(Source: [FSF](#))

Police Officer Mental Health After Mass Violence

The horrors first responders face during response to mass violence is often nothing compared to what they must deal with after it’s cleaned up. Michael Kehoe, retired

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

police chief of Newtown, Connecticut, says “many chiefs are not prepared to deal effectively with the intense scope...of the aftermath of these events, and many chiefs are unaware of the impact such events will have on their communities and the officers in their agencies.”

The U.S. Department of Justice has teamed with the National Alliance on Mental Illness on the report “[Preparing for the Unimaginable: How chiefs can safeguard officer mental health before and after mass casualty events](#).” This guide, specifically written for law enforcement leadership, serves as a roadmap to help law enforcement agencies plan to manage officer wellness in the aftermath of a tragedy, from dealing with the media to coordinating with other agencies around mental health.

Join Chief Kehoe and experts in the field for an upcoming webinar on Tuesday, November 1st from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Eastern to discuss the report and how to put mental health measures into practice before and after mass casualty events. Those interested are asked to [register for this webinar](#).

(Source: [NAMI](#))

Utilities Get a New Tool Against Solar Storms

The Department of Homeland Security’s Science and Technology Directorate (DHS S&T) recently released a new [Online Geoelectric Field Calculation Tool](#) to be used by utilities to plan and prepare for solar storm events.

All other sectors rely on the Energy Sector’s ability to function and maintain services. Solar storms can be powerful enough to knock out service and, depending on the storm, they could be out of commission for a while. Emergency managers at electrical utilities may include this new tool into their planning, ensuring the grid keeps humming.

DHS S&T is also working on a real-time forecasting tool, which is not yet complete and will be transitioned to the National Oceanic and Aerospace Administration (NOAA) [Space Weather Prediction Center](#) by the end of this year. To learn more about the effects of space weather, see the [Solar Storm Mitigation Fact Sheet](#).

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

National Fire Academy Resident Program

The [National Fire Academy](#) (NFA) holds six-, ten-, and two-day residential courses at its campus in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and off-campus courses throughout the country. Courses are geared toward middle- and top-level fire officers, fire service instructors, technical professionals, and representatives from other allied professions including law enforcement and EMS.

Operated by the U.S. Fire Administration, the NFA has 270 total courses under topics such as fire/arson and explosion investigation, fire prevention, EMS, incident management, command and control, hazardous materials, information management, and wildland urban interface (WUI).

The application period for the 2017 second semester (April 1st – September 30th, 2017) is currently open and will close December 15th, 2016. Those interested in courses should review the online course catalog and read “[Eight Tips for Completing a Successful NFA Application](#)” (PDF, 256 Kb) before filling out the [application](#) (PDF, 780 Kb). All applicants must have a [Student Identification Number](#) (SID).

(Source: [NFA](#))

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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**.