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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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Managing HIPAA During Disasters, Part 2

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy rules still apply during disasters. During such times, it is normal to want to relax the rules; however, breaches of protected health information (PHI) are serious and must be reported by all medical providers covered by HIPAA, even during emergencies.

A breach happens when PHI is compromised through prohibited use or disclosure under the Privacy Rules, which can happen more easily in the aftermath of a disaster when things are more hectic and patient tracking becomes an issue. Also, healthcare facilities may suffer a breach entirely without intent or warning if their facility is damaged and records are swept away by winds or water.

PHI breaches must be reported to affected individuals; the secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS); and the media (if the breach affects more than 500 residents of a jurisdiction). Breaches by business associates must also be reported. Breach notifications follow specific criteria depending on the breach and who was affected; detailed information can be found on the [HHS Breach Notification Rule website](#). Lost or stolen electronics (i.e., laptops) containing PHI also require breach notifications.

Medical facilities should ensure HIPAA is covered in disaster plans and exercises to minimize breaches. HHS offers more help via the “[HIPAA for Professionals](#)” section of its website. The American Dental Association offers a good summary of [breach rules and natural disasters](#) applicable to any medical facility, as well as a [breach notification decision tree](#). The American Academy of Family Physicians guide “[Disaster Response and Recovery](#)” (PDF, 183 Kb) also covers breach protocol. Finally, review HIPAA breach protocol with your facility’s legal counsel or information security personnel.

(Source: [HHS](#))

National Professional Development Summit

The [National Professional Development Summit \(NPDS\)](#), scheduled for June 14-17, 2017 at the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, will feature presentations related to fire training and resources, higher education, and fire prevention and protection within the scope of professional development.

The summit is open to those active in fire and emergency services professional development, including those connected to regionally accredited academic fire programs, fire and EMS training, fire associations, fire prevention and protection, and fire marshals. Attendance is free.

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

In addition to presentations, there will be two staff rides. The first will be to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to discuss contemporary training and management issues in the context of the battle's strategic operations. An alternative staff ride scheduled for the same time will visit Shelter Systems in Westminster, Maryland, and will feature a facility tour and information about truss and laminated heavy timber construction.

Those not taking either staff ride can elect to attend an eight-hour certificate course provided by the National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium and West Virginia University. This class will cover response to gaseous-fueled, electric-drive, biofuel, and hydrogen vehicles.

The symposium, staff rides, and certificate course are first-come, first-served. Lodging and scheduled bus transportation to and from Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) airport are provided.

To register, download the [General Admissions Application Short Form \(FEMA Form 119-25-2\)](#) (PDF, 677 Kb). Applications must be received by May 5, 2017.

(Source: [US Fire Administration](#))

“Until Help Arrives” Program

After every major natural disaster or terrorist event, stories circulate of regular people helping those with life-threatening injuries before help arrives, often saving their lives. One example of this is the Boston Marathon Bombing aftermath where we saw vivid images of bystanders helping save the lives of people who lost limbs from the blast.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in collaboration with other federal partners announced the “[Until Help Arrives](#)” program, developed to educate and empower the public to take action and provide lifesaving care before professional help arrives. Generally, people are hesitant to step in and help. Jurisdictions can use the videos, web-based and in-person training, and other resources to encourage people to take action.

The National Academies of Science reports trauma as the leading cause of death for Americans under the age of 46. The lives of these people may depend on witnesses stepping in to help provide initial care. FEMA's program helps give victims of trauma a better chance of survival, a goal shared by many emergency response agencies.

(Source: [FEMA](#))

NFA Seeking Students for Pilot Course

The National Fire Academy has recently revised its 2-day “[Decision Making for Initial Company Operations](#)” (PDF, 231 Kb) course and is looking for students interested in participating in a pilot delivery of the new course materials.

This course focuses solely on structural firefighting and is designed to develop decision making skills in new company officers or firefighters with similar responsibilities. It covers the organization of and roles within the Incident Command System, and would be a good review for experienced company officers as well.

The pilot offering scheduled for June 24-25, 2017 will be held at National Fire Academy Campus in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Those interested must [submit an application](#) (PDF, 677 Kb) on or before May 15, 2017. For more information contact Richard Sexton at Richard.Sexton@fema.dhs.gov.

(Source: [NFA](#))

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