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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.

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Internal Crisis Communications Lessons Learned

A recent Forbes magazine article discusses five communications guidelines for internal communication learned from the Zika health crisis. Effective and timely crisis communication is just as important for the employees of an agency or business as it is for the public or customers. This kind of messaging is flexible by nature and should change based on the crisis, the audience and the message needing to be delivered.

[“Five Communication Lessons Learned in the Wake of the Zika Health Crisis”](#) discusses things communications teams can do now to shore up their organizational crisis communications methods:

- Build the communications team now, before a crisis.
- Identify reliable sources and dependable subject matter experts.
- Create a tiered notification system for internal messaging.
- Establish employees’ roles; address employee safety and security.
- Conduct timely updates based on frequent crisis monitoring.

If done right, these methods can help your organization create templates for internal crisis communication that can be used in the future, enabling you to spend more time actually dealing with the crisis instead of repetitively creating messaging from scratch. By doing this, employees will also know how information will be shared and when, which will put them more at ease and enable them to better do their jobs.

(Source: [Forbes](#))

Cooling Season Brings Fire Dangers, Too

Fires caused by portable heaters, fireplaces and furnaces get lots of attention in the fall and winter months, and rightly so as they cause a lot of life and property loss. We rarely talk about summer fires caused by air conditioners and electric fans, but these also cause their share of damage and loss of life.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimated 7,400 reported home structure fires caused by air conditioning and fans in 2010. These fires injured 249 people, killed 29 people and caused \$207 million in property damage. More detailed statistics can be found in the NFPA report [“Home Fires Involving Air Conditioning, Fans or Related Equipment.”](#)

Fire departments should be aware of this fire risk during summer months, especially

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at the beginning of summer when home owners in much of the country first start up their air conditioning systems. The majority of these fires are caused by electrical or mechanical failure and are preventable. It is important for home and business owners to get their air conditioning systems on a regular maintenance and inspection schedule. This would be a good public safety outreach opportunity, especially within the aged population.

(Source: [NFPA](#))

New Training on Virtual Currency

For many of us, the idea of virtual online currency like [Bitcoin](#) still seems like something out of science fiction, but people are using it every day to buy things like cars or pizza. People keep them in virtual wallets, can buy them online and pay no taxes on them. Bitcoins are used to buy things anonymously, which is very appealing to criminals because it makes dealing in drugs, prostitution and other illegal activities harder to trace.

Investigating crimes involving virtual currency requires a new skillset and an understanding of how they work. The National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C) recently released an [online training course on virtual currency](#). It covers various types of virtual currency, including the difference between decentralized and centralized currencies, with a strong focus on Bitcoin: what it is, how it is stored, and Bitcoin-specific investigative tips and techniques.

The course is 30-minutes and includes a certificate of completion after passing the post-test. Individuals must have an NW3C online learning account and be employed by a law enforcement organization to access the no-cost training.

Additional cyber-related resources are available on the [Law Enforcement Cyber Center](#) Web site.

(Source: [National White Collar Crime Center](#))

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Online Revised

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has revised and reformatted the [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#) (HMGP) online content. The user-friendly online tools and resource materials will help visitors easily locate general information about the program. Also, best practice stories are now available in both written and video formats.

The redesign work is being done in two phases. The first phase, the HMGP webpage, is complete and prompts visitors to select a category of interest – individual, state or local government or federally-recognized tribe. In each section there is an easy-to-use navigation tool to access specific information about fact sheets, job aids, loss avoidance studies, program and project information.

The second phase of the redesign will revise the grants specific information for [Pre-Disaster Mitigation \(PDM\)](#) and [Flood Mitigation Assistance \(FMA\)](#) and consolidate the tools and resources in more defined ways. The redesign aligns and consolidates information to allow visitors to use the site more intuitively.

(Source: [FEMA](#))

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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**.