Emergency Management and Response - Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

The InfoGram

Hepatitis concerns for first responders

First responders are at higher risk for exposure to hepatitis viruses and there are many reports of viral hepatitis being contracted from accidental needle sticks, CPR and contact with bodily fluids during medical calls or through violence. It is important for fire, EMS and law enforcement personnel to know the risks, symptoms and how to protect themselves from exposure.

Hepatitis is most often caused by a virus and results in inflammation of the liver. Symptoms include jaundice, fatigue, dark yellow urine, fever, loss of appetite, gastrointestinal distress and abdominal pain. There are five identified types of viral hepatitis classified by letters A-D. Only hepatitis A, B and C are common in the United States, and only strains A and B have vaccines. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has detailed information on the different strains.

Because of the high risk of occupational exposure, many departments or jurisdictions are opting to offer vaccinations to first responders, but preventing exposure is the first step to protecting yourself. Ways to limit your risk:

- Use proper PPE, such as gloves, masks and goggles that help block possible means of exposure.
- Dispose of soiled PPE properly.
- Wash hands thoroughly and regularly.

You should consider getting vaccines for hepatitis A and B whether your employer provides them or not. The International Association of Fire Fighters has informational pages on hepatitis A, B and C, as well as several other diseases first responders are at higher risk for, on its Infectious Diseases Resource website.

(Source: CDC)

DEA releases 2017 National Drug Threat Assessment Report

The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) released the "2017 National Drug Threat Assessment (NDTA) Report," (PDF, 9.7 MB) an updated look at the drug abuse issues and domestic and international drug trafficking threats facing United States.

Unsurprisingly, the DEA lists opioids and controlled prescription drugs as serious public health and safety threats, as they are overshadowing other drugs commonly abused such as methamphetamine, cocaine and new psychoactive substances. Other findings:

- People abuse controlled prescriptions more than cocaine, heroin, MDMA, methamphetimine and PCP combined.
- Fentanyl is increasingly being mixed with diluents and sold as heroin, often without any heroin present in the mix.
- Drug poisoning deaths are the leading cause of injury death in the United States and have outnumbered deaths by firearms, traffic crashes, suicide and

Highlights

U.S. Fire Administration

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homicide every year since 2011.

- Cocaine availability and use increases as production increases in Columbia.

See the full report for more information on drug threats as well as issues related to the illicit drug industry such as gangs and organized crime.

(Source: DEA)

New Blue Alerts warn of threats to law enforcement

Last week, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) added a new Blue Alert option to the nation's Emergency Alerting System. Blue Alerts will inform the public of threats to law enforcement (PDF, 151 Kb), provide information on suspects who have harmed or threatened law enforcement officials and give details about missing officers.

The new dedicated Blue Alert event code gives state and local agencies the ability to send warnings through multiple communications mechanisms. This includes wireless communications via the Wireless Emergency Alert System, which would work in a similar way as the Amber Alerts people receive directly to their cell phones.

Originally signed in 2015, the law is named after New York Police Department officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, who were killed in an ambush shooting in 2014.

(Source: FCC)

Testing reveals cybersecurity issues in 32 out of 33 public safety apps

A joint government-private sector collaborative project recently tested 33 public safety apps for vulnerabilities. They found 32 of them had security and privacy weaknesses, and 18 had significant critical flaws.

Several Department of Homeland Security (DHS) offices, the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials and Kryptowire, LLC, worked on the pilot "Securing Mobile Applications for First Responders" program, which had two main purposes:

- Improve security of public safety mobile apps.
- See if there is need for a security testing protocol for public safety apps.

Some of the vulnerabilities enabled remote hackers to record audio and gave them access to the camera, contacts and personal data, along with various other critical flaws that could be exploited. The vulnerabilities affected both Android and iOS devices.

The pilot project worked with companies and developers to identify and correct problems in the apps. So far, 14 of the mobile apps are fixed. For more detailed information, see the DHS Science and Technology Directorate report.

(Source: DHS S&T)

DHS and the FBI encourage recipients of this document to report information concerning suspicious or criminal activity to the local FBI office and also the State or Major Urban Area Fusion Center.

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.**

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.