

The InfoGram



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Space weather basics for first responders

Space weather can be beautiful when it causes the well-known [aurora lights](#), but it can also be deadly if it affects services during an emergency. In this five part series, you will get an overview of three types of space weather, how they can affect communications, the power grid and other critical infrastructure, and how to prepare.

Space weather affecting the Earth is monitored and reported daily by the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Space Weather Prediction Center \(SWPC\)](#). NOAA SWPC rates space weather on an [intensity scale](#) from 1 to 5. A 1 event can cause minor damage such as minor degradation of radio signals. An event with a rating of 5 causes extreme to catastrophic damage. An example of an extreme event is a radio blackout lasting hours or longer.

The three types of monitored space weather are:

- [Solar Flares \(Radio Blackout\)](#) hit Earth with no warning and typically impact over-the-horizon communications.
- [Solar Radiation Storms](#) give approximately 10-20 minutes notice. Satellites are the most vulnerable systems.
- With a [Geomagnetic Storm](#), typically there are 15-96 hours of warning before impact with earth's atmosphere, but they can cause the greatest damage.

These types of space weather will be explored further in the next few weeks to provide more clarity on how they can affect emergency operations and the jobs of first responders.

NOAA provides [emergency management specific predictions](#), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency provides space weather preparedness information at [Ready.gov](#).

(Source: [NOAA](#))

CISA letter to Emergency Services Sector discusses partnerships

The Department of Homeland Security [Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's](#) (CISA) Assistant Director released a [letter to the Emergency Services Sector](#) (PDF, 211 Kb) this week highlighting a few of CISA's current partnership activities.

CISA is the lead federal agency to secure the nation's critical infrastructure from physical and cyber threats. The Emergency Services Sector plays a key role in this, and CISA will be working with stakeholders to support risk mitigation and help secure physical and cyber infrastructure.

One such endeavor is the [Crisis Event Response and Recovery Access](#) (CERRA) Framework to help manage access into restricted areas during an emergency. Disasters do not respect jurisdictional lines and managing access permissions for public and private sector responders can be problematic. The CERRA Framework can provide needed guidance and is intended to supplement existing guidance.

CISA also has Protective Security Advisors and Cybersecurity Advisors, located all over the country. These security specialists are available to all members of the

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U.S. Fire Administration

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

Emergency Services Sector to assist with exercises, security assessments, special event security planning, training and more. [Contact your regional PSA for more information.](#)

(Source: [CISA](#))

Public health planning for flooding events

Spring rains and snowmelt are almost upon us as we head toward warmer weather. Some locations are already experiencing flooding conditions and hope 2019 will not be a repeat of 2018's record rainfall levels.

All jurisdictions, even those not typically prone to flooding, should have plans on hand to manage [flooding's impact to public health](#), which can continue for a long period and cover a wide range of issues.

The [Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange](#) (TRACIE) has a number of flood-related health resources that may be helpful to jurisdictions currently experiencing flooding and those jurisdictions planning for flooding. The Technical Resources page covers a broad range of healthcare emergency preparedness topics, including the [Natural Disasters Topic Collection](#) with sections on [Flooding – Lessons Learned](#) and [Flooding – Plans, Tools, and Templates](#).

It is a good idea to spread the word about potential flood-related health issues to the general public. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) offers resources on [flooding health risks that can be shared](#) through social media and news outlets. Public health agencies should strongly consider this as part of their public outreach in the days before a flood hits.

(Source: [TRACIE](#))

Webinar: Communications for a Nuclear or Radiological Disaster

Join the CDC's Emergency Partners Information Connection (EPIC) for the upcoming webinar "Communications for a Nuclear or Radiological Disaster."

One of CDC's top communication experts from the National Center for Environmental Health will discuss the misunderstandings and the reality of radiation exposure, how a nuclear event would affect people, what actions to take and avoid during a nuclear event and how to communicate about this topic. Connection details:

- Webinar scheduled for Wednesday, February 27 at 1:00 PM Eastern Time.
- <https://zoom.us/j/980304069>. No registration necessary.
- Dial: US: +1 646 876 9923 or +1 669 900 6833
- Webinar ID: 980 304 069

[See the EPIC website](#) for recordings of past webinars, access its continuing education training and to sign up for the EPIC Newsletter.

(Source: [CDC](#))

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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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**.