



Hoosier Responder

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Superstorm Sandy Response lets Indiana Display District Concept

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Indiana proved that its disaster response task force program not only works, but that it's also flexible, when it provided out-of-state aid for Hurricane Sandy.

The state's concept for mutual aid relies on its 10 Homeland Security Districts. Each district has a self-sustaining task force — it includes incident command and public safety functions, among others — that can be asked to respond both within Indiana and out of state. While fairly

new, the concept has been used twice in real-world responses, most recently to provide mutual aid to the East Coast during Hurricane Sandy.

Earlier this year, Emergency Management interviewed Joe Wainscott, executive director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, about the District Response Task Force program. "The impetus behind this was to be able to create a public safety surge into an area that's been affected by a disaster, to

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From the Director's Chair-Executive Director Joe Wainscott

Great accomplishments: Thanks for all your hard work

I want all of you to know how much of an honor it has been for me to have had the privilege of working with all of you, our partners, in raising the bar of public safety across Indiana. I hope that you are as proud of our collective progress and accomplishments as I am. It has been heartening to see responders from every corner of the state, who previously did not even know one another, come together to plan, prepare and respond to the needs of Hoosiers like never before. Local, district, state and private sector, you all made that possible because you chose to work together

and foster relationships that have paid great dividends. Because of our efforts, Indiana has received national and international attention and recognition. Together we have come through some very trying times, but still served Indiana well. It has not been without struggle, but working together and being focused on doing the right things have led to tremendous results...in large part because of you and your willingness to do the hard work. I expect and know that each of you will give the next director and our new Governor that same level of

commitment so that our work together these past 4 ½ years might be sustained and strengthened so that Indiana's public safety may rise to the next level to keep the citizens of Indiana safe and secure. Nothing can diminish the immense pride I have in you and what together we have been able to accomplish for our citizens. Please do all you can to make the transition seamless and successful, as I know you will. Again, thank you for everything. •



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augment and support the local affected public safety folks, support the incident commander, provide additional resources and then for a variety of needs,” he said. Each task force is composed of five functions: law enforcement, fire suppression, emergency medical services, a Type III Incident Command Team, and a service and support element. The idea behind the concept is that a complete team can be sent to help an area — or as was shown during Sandy, one part of the task force can be called upon and in some cases merged with the same function from another district to form a strike team.

“Basically a task force brings a small jurisdiction size of public safety force to help them through the disaster time frame,” said Randy Collins, district programs branch director for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

Collins said the state participated in six Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) requests during Sandy, including:

- an ambulance strike team/EMS task force was sent to New Jersey, which included members from multiple District Response Task Forces;
- an incident management assistance team, made up of mostly state employees and augmented by district personnel, went to Maryland; and
- District 7’s incident management team went to New York.

The ambulance strike team was a first for Indiana’s task force program — members from five task forces combined to form one EMS task force.

While the idea to pluck certain functions from a task force instead of sending a complete unit was

envisioned when the program was developed, this was the first time it was done.

“New Jersey needed ambulances, so that’s what we did,” said Jeff Houston, commander of District 4’s task force, which was one of the five responding task forces. “We picked out the EMS element from the various districts and pulled those out and combined them into one full task force.”

The EMS task force arrived in New Jersey just before Hurricane Sandy impacted the state. Collins said Indiana was the first state to respond to the EMAC request and get the requested resources traveling east.

“From the standpoint of one of Indiana’s 10 districts and their task forces, this was a great opportunity to show everybody within the state of Indiana that the district concept works,” said Houston, who also is the EMS director for Franciscan St. Elizabeth Health in Lafayette, Ind.

Although the task forces are back in Indiana, the work continues as lessons are identified.

Houston said the EMS task force identified many takeaways from Sandy. He said EMAC requests are fairly new to personnel at the district level, and he now has a better understanding about what an EMAC is and the paperwork it requires.

Houston also kept track of things that need to be tweaked, including developing a better equipment list and knowing where things are located.

“That’s a growing pain — and it’s a good growing pain,” he said. “It can only get better the next time we are asked to deploy, whether that’s within the district, within the state or out of state.”

Houston said one of the big issues

was communications — Indiana’s radios were incompatible with those used in New Jersey, making it difficult to talk with people working in the field. Houston said they will look into how that can be worked around next time. A possible solution could be bringing equipment that can patch into another state’s communications network.

At the state level, over the next three months, officials will be incorporating lessons learned and best practices from all the task forces into state guidance. The revision comes not only after Sandy, but also after the wrap-up of a three-year cycle during which each District Response Task Force participated in a full-scale exercise, said Collins. During the exercises, each task force mobilized, completed an exercise and then demobilized. “That was kind of the finale of the initial start-up process, so that was really the impetus of the changes,” he said.

For example, a key change will be in how the state reimburses districts. Collins said it was originally based off FEMA guidance, but didn’t factor in Indiana’s fiscal processes. Another change will help the incident management team and tactical resources, like police and fire, better interface.

Collins said that going forward the leadership representatives of the tactical resources will complete either the FEMA all-hazards strike team leader course or the all-hazard division group supervisor course to create consistency throughout the incident command structure.

Despite these changes, one of the biggest takeaways for Indiana was proving that the program works. “It shows your local elected officials that

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CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

Despite a relatively calm winter last year and a deceptively warm beginning to December this year, the National Weather Service is predicting a season consistent with average Hoosier temperatures and snowfall amounts. Emergency response personnel and Hoosiers should be prepared for cold, icy and dangerous travel conditions.

One of the best resources for keeping informed about hazardous road conditions is the IDHS travel advisory status map. This tool is updated in real time with information about county travel conditions as reported by each county emergency management agency.

The link to the map is easily found at GetPrepared.in.gov.

Since every county actively participates in providing updates about current travel advisory status, this online map provides a one-of-a-kind opportunity to evaluate conditions across

the entire state.

Furthermore, recent changes in the statutory language for the travel advisory warning levels provides unified terminology to help eliminate the confusion caused by previously disparate warning level systems across the counties.

Under the three-tiered system in Indiana, the first travel status level is a **travel advisory**, which tells drivers that weather conditions may make travel difficult. The second level is a **travel watch**, which advises only essential travel on the roadways. The highest level is a **travel warning**, which means travel may be restricted to emergency personnel only.

The Indiana Department of Transportation recognizes that a rise in automobile collisions usually accompanies the first winter storm, especially if snowy or icy conditions occur after a long period without hazard-

ous road conditions.

Accordingly, part of being prepared for winter travel should include checking the statewide travel advisory map before venturing onto roadways.

We should also be encouraging our constituents to keep a few essential items in their vehicle. A small shovel or other tool for digging wheels out of the snow, flashlight and emergency blanket are a few of the most basic items to keep in every vehicle.

It is a good idea to keep at least a half tank of gas in vehicles at all times during winter months to keep fuel lines from freezing.

For more information on winter travel safety, including printable fact sheets you can share with others in your community, visit getprepared.in.gov. ●

FRANKLIN DONATION GIVES PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICIALS TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

An old waterslide from the Franklin City Parks Memorial Pool will be refurbished, painted and mounted at the Search and Rescue Training Center at Camp Atterbury.

Lilian Hardy, Indiana Department of Homeland Security Training Center Manager, first heard of the opportunity over the summer when one of her students mentioned that the Memorial Pool had a slide that they were willing to donate to any interested organization.

The waterslide has been standing for 27 years and far surpassed the twenty year life expectancy. It had been available for donation for three years.

The tower and stairs will be refurbished and used to train technical rescue and Search and Rescue personnel in high-line rope techniques between the two existing towers at Camp Atterbury. This technique is similar to what rescuers on September 11th carried out.

The removal and set-up process was coordinated by the US Navy Seabees and the Johnson County Sheriff's Department. All involved received a certificate of commendation from John M. Buckman III with IDHS for their untiring work and positive attitudes in poor weather conditions. ●



The Franklin City Parks Memorial Pool slide being taken down for use at Camp Atterbury.

THE 2013 GREAT CENTRAL U.S. SHAKE OUT EXPECTED TO MAKE HISTORY

The 2013 Great Central U.S. Shakeout will be the largest preparedness event in central U.S. history. The Shakeout involves millions of people through a broad-based outreach program, partnership with media and public advocacy by hundreds of partners.

The event will be held February 7, 2013 at 10:15 AM local time, when schools, businesses and other organizations will participate in the drill. Registered participants will

receive information on how to plan their drill and how to talk with others about earthquake preparedness.

All organizers ask is that participants register and, at a minimum, practice “drop, cover and hold on” at 10:15 a.m. Damage affecting more than 40 million people could cripple Indiana if Hoosiers aren't prepared for an earthquake. To participate, visit www.shakeout.org/centralus and pledge participation from your

family, school, business or organization. •

The Great
Central U.S.
**Shake
Out**™

VOLUNTER FIRE CHIEF BUCKMAN RETIRES

After serving as fire chief for 36 years, John Buckman III has retired from the German Township Volunteer Fire Department in Vanderburgh County. He joined the department in 1970.

Buckman decided at the age of 17 that he would be a firefighter and remembers his first run, a brush fire. Since then, he has presented on leadership, recruitment and training among many other topics in all 50 states and each province of Canada and also in China, has been a member of and served many organizations, authored and co-authored books and even won Fire Chief Magazine's 1996 Fire Chief of the Year from a pool of candidates from all over the world.



Buckman still intends to be a member of German Township and go back to fighting fires. He will continue to work in Indianapolis as State Fire Training Director. •

PROJECT MEASURES EMERGENCY CHILDCARE

Every year, about 30 million children are treated in emergency rooms throughout the United States. The National Pediatric Readiness Project, a partnership between the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) and the Emergency Medical Services for Children program (EMSC), have created a project to ensure effective care for all children in every emergency department.

“This project seeks to ensure children everywhere in the United States will have access to emergency care in every community; thereby linking them with the right resources and the right care at the right time despite the severity of their illness or injury,” said Stephanie Fahner, Indiana EMSC Program Manager.

The readiness assessment is based on “The Guidelines for the Care of Children in the Emergency Department” published in the October 2009 issue of *Pediatrics*. According to Fahner, global benefits of this project include: improved state level disaster preparedness,

day-to-day readiness to care for children in emergency departments, improved patient safety standards, and the ability to link children to the right level of care in a timely manner.

Indiana hospitals will begin assessment in March 2013. Only hospitals with emergency departments can participate. Hospitals in Indiana that voluntarily participate will receive a one year free subscription to PEMSsoft, an online pediatric decision making tool. Participating hospitals will also receive an immediate pediatric preparedness score, along with a gap analysis report and suggested areas for improvement.

“This project offers a unique secondary quality improvement opportunity for hospitals to access the free online toolboxes which align with their gap analysis report, providing them with free materials to designate and develop a quality improvement plan,” said Fahner.

For more on the National Pediatric Readiness Project, visit www.pediatricreadiness.org•

INDIANA DEPLOYED TO HELP AID IN HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

Hoosiers played an important part in responding to Hurricane Sandy and helping people on the East Coast.

Led by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, nearly 200 state and local responders were deployed, including two separate state Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT).

“Indiana was one of the first states to answer calls for help from the East Coast in response to Hurricane Sandy and the Nor’easter that devastated the region,” said Joe Wainscott, director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. “Indiana is very fortunate to have such capable and dedicated emergency response professionals who are willing to go above and beyond their daily call of duty to assist our neighbors during this disaster.”

On Saturday, October 27, Indiana began seeing requests for resources to aid with evacuation and response. IDHS immediately increased staffing at the State of Indiana Emergency Operations Center to reach out to partners within the state to evaluate resources that could be deployed to assist.

Included were a state IMAT to Maryland, two All-Hazards Incident Management Teams (AHIMT) to New York and Maryland, and five Emergency Medical Services Teams to New Jersey.

During the deployment, the IMAT and AHIMTs were merged and sent to Long Beach, New York. The EMS Strike Teams returned home in early November, followed by the

IMAT and AHIMT on November 11. Both the IMAT and AHIMT helped manage the overall incident for local jurisdictions. The EMS teams provided medical care.

A second IMAT was deployed to replace the existing team in the City of Long Beach. The team was split into two groups. One managed the incident, and the other assisted with donation and volunteer coordination. The team returned to Indiana on November 24, after spending the Thanksgiving holiday in New York.

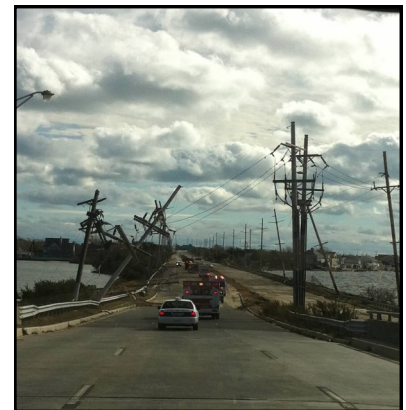
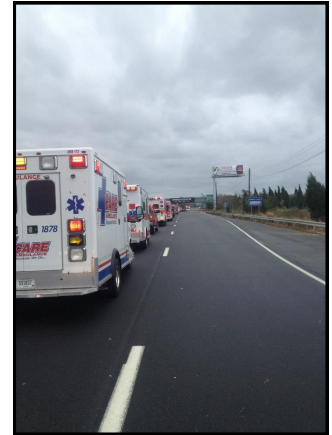
Jaren Kilian with the Clay Fire Department, was one of the first to be deployed to the east coast as an EMS function.

“Every day we were reminded that we got more out of the experience than what we gave. If we had the opportunity to return, we already have our bags packed and are ready to go back to work,” said Kilian.

Those deployed included public safety professionals from IDHS, Indiana University, IDHS Districts 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana State Police, Indiana Office of Technology, Indiana Department of Labor, Integrated Public Safety Commission, Department of Correction, and the Family Social Services Administration.

“The team’s deployment to the east coast provided valuable learning experience that can be brought back to Indiana to use for future disasters,” said Randall Collins, deployed with the first IMAT team and IDHS District Services Branch Director. “These members faced

challenges and had to make decisions in a high stress environment.” ●



NEW BUSINESS VENTURES WHERE CHEMICALS WERE ONCE STORED

Once home to a large stockpile of VX nerve agent, Scott Pet Products Inc. announced plans on December 4th to relocate operations from Oklahoma to Newport Indiana thus creating up to 80 new jobs by 2014.

The company is the second to invest in the newly established Vermillion Rise Mega Park which once housed the U.S. military's Newport Chemical Depot. During the 1990s, the topic of VX disposal caused much concern

among citizens in nearby communities. The initial plans were to incinerate the agent in 1994. The army and local response agencies created the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) in response to the public outcry to help educate and protect the community in the unlikely event of an accident involving the nerve agent.

An alternative solution, neutralization, was carried out in 2008 to dispose and eliminate the nerve agent. Currently, there are only two remaining stockpiles in Kentucky and Colorado. Each community provides residents with important emergency preparedness information through CSEPP and the program will remain in place until all stockpiles are completely destroyed in accordance with international treaties and national policy. •

WEATHER RADIOS DISTRIBUTED TO AT-RISK HOOSIERS

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) partnered with local emergency management agencies to give away close to 8,500 all hazards alert radios to at-risk Hoosiers throughout the state.

“The advanced knowledge all-hazards alert radios provide about coming thunderstorms, floods, tornadoes and other dangerous weather conditions give residents warning to seek shelter before a storm,” said IDHS Executive Director Joe Wainscott. “We are pleased at the opportunity to again make this valuable early warning tool available to more Hoosiers who might not otherwise be able to afford it.”

The radios have been distributed to Emergency Management Agencies across the state. Economically disadvantaged Hoosiers, including residents of mobile homes, are being targeted to receive these radios. Mobile homes and similar structures offer only minimal protection against

severe weather and other life-threatening natural and man-made disasters, so frequently the best course of action is evacuation to a stronger, safer building such as a community center or other public facility.

Federal grant sources funded the purchase and distribution of these radios.

IDHS has distributed more than 23,000 radios over the last four years and has provided weather radios to public schools in Indiana. IDHS has plans to continue the radio distributions in the future. IDHS encourages everyone who is able to purchase an all hazards alert radio, to do so. They can be purchased for about \$30 or \$40 online and at many retail outlets.

All-hazards alert radios disseminate more than 60 emergency alerts such as hazardous weather and other local area warnings, including up to date

weather information broadcast directly from the National Weather Service. In the event of a power outage or an evacuation, backup battery power allows the radios to remain operational.

Most all-hazard radios require a Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) code number in order to limit the receipt of emergency messages to a specific geographic area. The list of Indiana counties and their corresponding same codes are available at <http://www.weather.gov/nwr/CntyCov/nwrIN.htm> •



The 2012 NOAA radios distributed throughout the state of Indiana.

EMERGENCY OFFICIALS TRAVEL 24 HOURS TO AHIMT CONFERENCE

Four emergency management officials from the Mariana Islands, located in the north-west Pacific, travelled to Indianapolis the week of December 3rd through the 7th for the All-Hazards Incident Management Team Conference.

The four travelled to learn about specific emergency management tools for sustainment as an island. One goal learned at the conference was the need to be self sufficient and sustainable for seven days instead of the usual 48-72 hours. Unlike the United States, the Marianas face typhoons, tsunamis and volcanic action in addition to earthquakes and other natural

disasters. The islands are part of the U.S. Geological Survey’s monitoring sites for these types of activities. “It’s a big challenge for us to stay stabilized,” said Joaquin Omar, Director of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Emergency Management Office. (EMO) The EMO holds annual exercises, one of which is a 36 hour operational all-hazards exercise. Outreach programs include various monthly messaging topics with National Preparedness Month in September being the islands biggest program. “Hopefully when we get back home we will have a specific training for

all individuals and leaders,” said Omar. “We’ll be ready to assist our citizens in the event of a real disaster.” ●



(Left to right) Jeridena Crisotomo-EMO Planner, Christopher Tomokane-EMO Assistant Safety Officer, Robert Thompson- Staff Sergeant in the 20th Army Air Corps during WWII serving in the Mariana Islands, David T. Chargualaf-EMO Manager. (Back) Joaquin Omar- Deputy Special Assistant/Director EMO.

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the concept does work — that when your folks come to you and want to sign up and get that training and deploy with equipment and personnel — that the payback that they get is usually tenfold because of the experiences that these folks bring back with them,” Houston

said. “So for the state of Indiana, it’s something that has been a long time building, but now we have proved more than once that it works very well. And the other states need to do it.”

But one of the biggest benefits from the task force program was unintentional: The training and

planning meetings have brought people together to create relationships across counties and areas of practice. “The way that it has built relationships was totally unanticipated, but is probably the No. 1 benefit of the program,” Collins said. ●

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