

# THE PREPAREDNESS REPORT

The Center for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response

Volume 6, Issue 13 | March 28, 2008

ELEVATED THREAT LEVEL

## Public Health Agencies Test CDC Health Alerting System: **New**

**GOVERNMENT HEALTH IT** On March 10, 2008, Government Health IT reported that the CDC is helping states launch the CDC Alerting Service (CDCAS), an automated, cross-jurisdictional system that will let states reliably broadcast public health alerts to thousands of public health officials. The CDC recently completed a CDCAS pilot project with Michigan and Indiana and the three are now working to fully install CDCAS. Another eight states are meeting with CDC to prepare for implementation. CDCAS is a component of CDC's nationwide Public Health Information Network. "There's a lot of interest within the states in implementing this," said Robb Chapman, CDC program manager for PHIN Communication and Alerting. "And they're very, very eager to get moving." For more information, please visit <http://www.govhealthit.com/online/news/350254-1.html>.

## FEMA Announces that the National Response Framework (NRF) is in Effect: **New**



On March 21, 2008, FEMA announced that the NRF, successor to the National Response Plan goes into effect on Saturday, March 22, 2008. On January 22, 2008, the NRF was initially released following an extensive process of outreach and coordination between the Department and key stakeholders representing federal, tribal, state and local governments, non-governmental agencies and associations, and the private sector. The NRF was posted in the *Federal Register* for sixty days, as required by law. Now that the timeframe has passed, the NRF goes officially into effect. The NRF focuses on response and short-term recovery, articulates the doctrine, principles and architecture by which the nation prepares for and responds to all-hazard disasters across all levels of government and all sectors of communities. The NRF also focuses on preparedness and encourages a higher level of readiness across all jurisdictions in a streamlined document that is less bureaucratic and more user-friendly than its predecessor. To read this article in full, please visit [http://www.domesticpreparedness.com/Updates/Government Update/Federal Emergency Management Agency Announces that the National Response Framework \(NRF\) is in Effect](http://www.domesticpreparedness.com/Updates/Government Update/Federal Emergency Management Agency Announces that the National Response Framework (NRF) is in Effect).

## Avian Influenza: **New**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the cumulative number of confirmed cases of avian influenza H5N1 as of March 25, 2008, is 373 cases and 236 deaths.

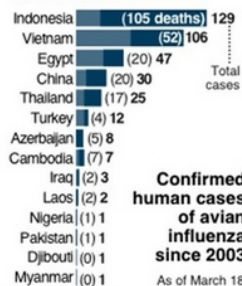


On March 25, 2008, CIDRAP reported that recent pandemic influenza response exercises have helped the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) improve its tools for making policy decisions quickly, according to senior CDC officials. Before a large-scale exercise conducted earlier this month, the agency set up a "planning cell" of leaders who were insulated from the need to respond immediately to events so they could think carefully about policy issues raised by the emergency, officials said. In the exercise, on March 11th and 12th, the new group made a noticeable impact on the CDC's ability to make decisions, according to Dr. Richard Besser, director of the CDC's Coordinating Office for Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response. "One thing I was struck by was that we did a much better job of reaching decisions quickly, and it's critical that in a crisis we do that," Besser said in a recent interview about the results of the exercise. For more information on the parameters and outcomes of this exercise, please visit <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/mar2508exercise-jw.html>.

- On March 20, 2008, CIDRAP announced that a progress report on pandemic preparations by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) says the US government has stockpiled enough prepandemic H5N1 influenza vaccine for 13 million people, more than double the number listed in the previous report, issued last July. The report also states that the government plans to release a new version of its pandemic vaccine allocation plan in coming months, after considering comments at a series of recent meetings and forums. The vaccine, based on a clade 1 virus isolated from a Vietnamese patient in 2004, was approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in April 2007. Although no one knows how well it would work against an emerging pandemic strain of H5N1, HHS officials hope it would provide some protection to those most at risk for exposure in the early months of a pandemic. To learn more about the vaccine, please visit <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/mar2008panupdate.html>.

### Bird flu incidence

Indonesia, Vietnam and Egypt have had the most cases of bird flu since 2003.



SOURCE: World Health Organization AP

On March 18, 2008, the Ministry of Health in Viet Nam announced a new case of human infection of H5N1 avian influenza, which was confirmed by the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology (NIHE). The case is an 11-year old male from Thanh Liem district, Ha Nam province. He developed symptoms on March 4, was hospitalized on March 9 and died on March 14. He had contact with sick and dead poultry prior to his illness. Control measures have been implemented, and close contacts have been identified. All remain healthy and will continue to be monitored. Of the 106 cases confirmed to date in Vietnam, 52 have been fatal. For more information, please visit [http://www.who.int/csr/don/2008\\_03\\_18/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2008_03_18/en/index.html)

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## US DHHS Region I (New England) Emergency Planning Office (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response – ASPR)

### The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Publication Focuses on Security Personnel

Security personnel (i.e., guards) stand to benefit from a new publication by OSHA entitled **Preparing and Protecting Security Personnel in Emergencies**. This publication addresses emergencies involving hazardous substance releases and provides guidance for employers and their security personnel who may be involved in the emergency response. Printed copies can be obtained by calling OSHA's publications office at (202) 693-1888.

The following resources are identified to assist your preparedness activities:

#### New/Highlighted Resources:

Federal Stafford Act Disaster Assistance: Presidential Declarations, Eligible Activities, and Funding, January 28, 2008  
<http://openrcs.com/document/RL33053>

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) use for public health and medical emergency response and recovery operations  
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/planning/emac>

Public Health Emergency Law and Forensic Epidemiology CD-ROM, Version 3  
To learn more about the courses or to order a free CD-ROM, visit  
<http://www2a.cdc.gov/phlp/phel.asp>

The US National Response Team WMD Subcommittee is proud to announce completion of 25 biological and chemical Quick Reference Guides (QRGs), which are available by visiting [www.nrt.org](http://www.nrt.org) and looking under Hot Topics and Current Events.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Selects Schools to Host New Centers of Excellence  
[http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr\\_1204061890\\_079.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xnews/releases/pr_1204061890_079.shtm)

Emergency Evacuations from Major Cities, Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University  
<http://www.innovations.harvard.edu/spotlight.html?id=801&preview=1>

National Disaster Response: FEMA Should Take Action to Improve Capacity and Coordination between Government and Voluntary Sectors. GAO-08-369, February 27.  
<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-08-369>  
Highlights  
<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d08369high.pdf>

A correspondence course to provide an overview of the new National Response Framework.  
<http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIVeb/IS/IS800b.asp>

## Seasonal Influenza: **New**



During the week of March 9-15, 2008, widespread activity was reported by Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming; regional activity was reported by Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia; and local activity was reported by the District of Columbia. To read this report in full, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>.

## Mobile Field Hospital Exercise Planned in Connecticut: **New**



Credit: CDC

On April 2-6, 2008, the Bethel Emergency Consortium will be hosting a Mobile Field Hospital Triage Site Functional Exercise. The Consortium will be setting up the 25 bed Mobile Field Hospital component stationed in Danbury as a triage center adjacent to the Bethel Health Care Facility starting on April 2nd. They plan to triage patients through the facility using pandemic influenza case definitions starting on April 5th. In support of this major effort on their part, DEMHS Region 5 Health and Medical Services (ESF-8)

Subcommittee will be conducting two ancillary exercises: a Functional Communication and Resource Coordination exercise on April 3rd and a Tabletop exercise addressing the issues surrounding the use of the mobile field hospital and how Unified Command principles can be used to support its operation on April 4th. Additional exercises including an April 3rd Regional Functional Communication and Resource Coordination Exercise, an April 4th Regional Tabletop Exercise, and an April 5th Mobile Field Hospital Triage Site Functional Exercise will take place. If you have questions concerning the exercises, and how you can participate, please contact Charles Brown at 860-727-9874 or [cbrown@cadh.org](mailto:cbrown@cadh.org).

## Smallpox Administration Training Classes to be Offered in Connecticut



Smallpox vaccination capacity is still a very important part of public health and emergency preparedness. Connecticut's Train-the-Trainer program will be starting up again, with workshops to be held throughout the state and posted on the Upcoming Events Banner on TRAINConnecticut. This training is necessary as the smallpox vaccine is administered using a bifurcated needle, which is distinctive from any other vaccine administration technique.

Information regarding the new smallpox vaccine ACAM2000™ will also be included. The training session is designed to prepare licensed healthcare professionals with the ability to administer vaccines to become Smallpox Vaccinator Trainers. This is a two-part training course: Part A is on-line and is a prerequisite to register for Part B, a hands-on workshop. Upon completion of the entire training, participants will be prepared to plan and deliver their own Smallpox Vaccinator Training sessions within their local area or hospital. If you would like to host a hands-on workshop or need support hosting your own workshop, please contact Monica S. Rak, R.N., at (860) 509-7995 or [monica.rak@ct.gov](mailto:monica.rak@ct.gov) for additional information.

## Use of MedKits to Augment Rapid Distribution of Antibiotics after Anthrax Attack

On March 13, 2008, the Clinician's Biosecurity Network (CBN) reported that following an anthrax attack, many lives could be saved by timely distribution of antibiotics to exposed populations. Today, all states have plans to receive, store and distribute antibiotics from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). However, because of the enormous challenges that accompany rapid mass distribution of antibiotics, few localities, if any, are prepared to manage such an undertaking within the required timeframe during an emergency. Therefore, multiple strategies are needed to ensure that the opportunity to save lives is not missed. To learn more about the results of the Emergency MedKits Evaluation Study, the first study to evaluate the feasibility of the current distribution strategy, please visit <http://www.upmc-cbn.org/>.

## FEMA Strengthens Preparedness Levels



On March 14, 2008, officials from DHS's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced the transfer of specific preparedness administrative and operational authority roles from FEMA Headquarters to the FEMA Regional Administrators. This transfer of responsibilities will significantly enhance FEMA's capability to develop a national preparedness system. This transfer of authority impacts personnel associated with the Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program; Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program; Community Preparedness; Assistance to Firefighters Grant program; Continuity of Operations; and Regional Investment Officers. "To meet the responsibilities and follow the tenets of our vision for the new FEMA, we must integrate these programs with those already existing in FEMA and extend their implementation through robust regions to improve stakeholder networks and coordination," said FEMA Administrator David Paulison. For more information, please visit <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=42934>.

## YNH-CEPDR Website Has Changed



As of April 1, 2008, previews for our online course offerings will be available and will include selected screens from each course, a full outline of the course table of contents and three sample quiz questions. Users with approved access to courses will still have full access to complete versions of their assigned courses, as well as their transcripts and certificates. Those interested in enrolling in the current course offerings may do so by visiting <http://ynhhs.emergencyeducation.org>. We are excited to be bringing our users more diverse offerings, as well as other Website improvements in 2008! For more information, please contact us at (203) 688-5000 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).

## Positions Available at YNH-CEPDR

YNH-CEPDR has openings for an Evaluation Specialist and Network Development Specialists. Please contact YNH-CEPDR at (203) 688-3224 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org) for more information, or apply online at <http://www.ynhhscares.org/>.

## Disasters around the World: **New**



US Flooding  
Credit: AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast

On March 25, 2008 the Associated Press (AP) reported that volunteers armed with sandbags held back water springing up from under a rural levee Tuesday as the White River continued its highest surge in a quarter-century through eastern Arkansas. The National Weather Service issued a flash flood warning during the morning for rural Prairie County north of Interstate 40 after spotters noticed the levee had "sand boils", water passing under the earthen barrier and appearing on the side like a muddy spring. By the afternoon, 100 volunteers held back the flow by building sandbag barriers for the water to be held in, creating pressure to stem the tide. After heavy rains last week, major rivers overflowed, inundating north and central Arkansas and driving people from their homes and businesses. Almost half the state (35 counties) was declared a disaster area. For more information, please visit <http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/weather/03/25/severe.flooding.ap/index.html?ref=newssearch>.



Flood Evacuees  
Credit: AP Photo/Dan Gill

On March 19, 2008, the AP reported that flooding forced hundreds of people to flee their homes and closed scores of roads across a wide swath of the nation's midsection as a huge storm system poured as much as 12 inches of rain on the region. Four deaths were linked to the flooding in Missouri, a search was under way in Texas for a teenager washed down a drainage pipe, and two people were missing in Arkansas after their vehicles were swept away by rushing water. The National Weather Service posted flood and flash flood warnings from Texas to Pennsylvania on March 19. For more information about the severe storm conditions across the United States, please visit [http://www.weather.com/newscenter/topstories/031908\\_missouriflood.html?from=hp\\_news](http://www.weather.com/newscenter/topstories/031908_missouriflood.html?from=hp_news).

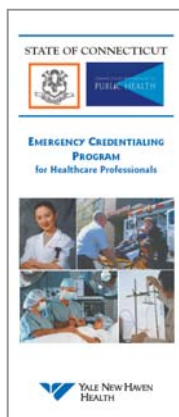
## Federal Agencies Respond to Midwest Floods: **New**



FEMA's David Paulison  
Credit: AP Photo/Tom Gannam

On March 21, 2008, President Bush declared a major disaster in Missouri and ordered federal aid to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning this week and continuing. FEMA is supporting the immediate response to these floods, and the U.S. Coast Guard is assisting with search and rescue missions. More danger from flooding, compounded by record rainfall and melting snow, may occur as many rivers crest well above flood stage in the next days. Other FEMA regional response coordination centers in surrounding states have also been activated. To learn more about FEMA's response to the midwest flooding, please visit <http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>.

## Welcome to Spring



As we anticipate the end of winter and look forward to spring, our awareness of severe weather, so common at this time of the year, is piqued. The recent tornado that struck downtown Atlanta, while relatively small, had the potential of causing damage and injury on a massive scale in the densely populated area. In the event of unforeseen severe weather, large numbers of casualties could quickly overwhelm hospitals in the area, and resource needs would drastically increase for trained healthcare personnel. The State of Connecticut Emergency Credentialing Program for Healthcare Professionals is a program of pre-credentialed hospital disaster volunteers from many disciplines who have offered to respond when a natural or human-made event overwhelms a facility, region or state. Volunteers who agree to assist are given facility and event-specific "just-in time" training to assist them to function in their new setting, and volunteers are covered for liability and workers' compensation. Please visit our web site at [www.ct-esar-vhp.org](http://www.ct-esar-vhp.org) to learn more about this program. Enrollment is completed online, and basic disaster related education is provided. If you have any questions, please contact us at [ecp@ynhh.org](mailto:ecp@ynhh.org), or call Joseph Filakovsky, DNP, APRN, Emergency Credentialing Program Coordinator, at (203) 688-4468.

## Regional Practical and Train-the-Trainer Hazmat Courses Bring Area Hospitals Together: **New**



Credit: USAID

Eighteen participants from seven hospitals attended a regional training session of **EM220: Best Practices for the**

**Protection of Hospital-Based First Receivers, Operations Level** hazmat and decontamination course recently held at Middlesex Hospital in Middletown, Connecticut. Additional offerings were hosted by Norwalk Hospital, Norwalk, Connecticut, as well as Danbury Hospital, Danbury, Connecticut which were open to regional acute care hospital participants. The four-hour course, led by instructors Deborah Smith, David Burich and Samantha Kopp, included a hazardous material identification exercise, practice in donning and doffing of level C personal protective equipment and a decontamination exercise. This was followed by an additional two-hour train-the-trainer session which prepared participants to return to their institutions and train additional staff in the course material. The regional approach allowed participants the opportunity to share ideas and best practices, while learning in a collaborative environment. For information on bringing EM220 to your hospital or region, please contact Deborah Smith at [Deborah.Smith@ynhh.org](mailto:Deborah.Smith@ynhh.org).

## Protecting the Healthcare Workforce



Ensuring that all of your staff know how to protect themselves during a disaster in which they may be exposed to a

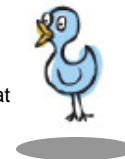
chemical, biological or radiological substance is an important factor in their decision to come to work and fulfill their role in a disaster and to your facility's ability to provide ongoing healthcare services. OSHA requires that employees performing certain functions complete training programs that prepare them to don and doff appropriate levels of personal protective equipment (PPE) and recognize when such precautions may be necessary. YNH-CEPDR has developed a comprehensive suite of courses that address these OSHA requirements and provides an effective method to train your staff in proper PPE procedures. Whether your need is for fit testing N95 respirators or operations-level PPE and decontamination training for your decontamination team, YNH-CEPDR has a solution for your organization. For more information, please contact [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).

## Don't Forget to CHIRP!

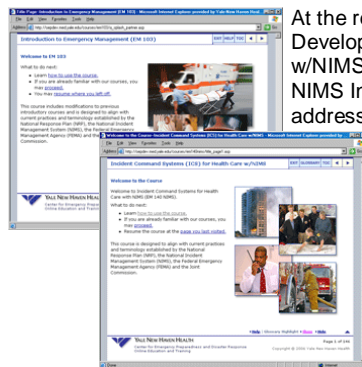


Flu season is definitely upon us, and YNH-CEPDR wants to remind you to CHIRP.

YNH-CEPDR has developed educational tools suitable for distribution to your employees, volunteers, patients and visitors that describe personal infection control practices that can help keep them flu-free. For more information, please contact [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).



## Education and Training Courses



At the request of the Bioterrorism Training and Curriculum Development Program of DHHS, the YNH-CEPDR EM 103 w/NIMS and EM 140 w/NIMS courses were reviewed by the NIMS Integration Center. These courses provide a solution to address elements 9 through 11 of the NIMS Implementation Activities for Hospitals and Healthcare Systems.

**These courses meet all of the required objectives defined by the NIMS National Standard Curriculum Training Guidance, as demonstrated on the YNH-CEPDR NIMS Competency Crosswalk, which may be accessed at**

[http://www.ynhhs.com/emergency/YNH\\_CEPDR\\_NIMS\\_CompetencyCrosswalk.pdf](http://www.ynhhs.com/emergency/YNH_CEPDR_NIMS_CompetencyCrosswalk.pdf). **EM 103 w/NIMS and EM 140 w/NIMS were approved as being NIMS compliant for healthcare education and training**

**requirements by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health and the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.** To download a brochure, please visit [http://www.ynhhs.org/emergency/NIMS\\_Brochure-Final.pdf](http://www.ynhhs.org/emergency/NIMS_Brochure-Final.pdf). For more information, please contact us at (203) 688-3224 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).



### EM 120: Best Practices for the Protection of Hospital-Based First Receivers.

Information topics include: special threats from specific agents; levels of biological, chemical and radiological protection and isolation; various levels of respiratory protection; principles of decontamination; decontamination procedures; mental health concerns regarding decontamination; and personal safety issues regarding decontamination. For more information, please contact us at (203) 688-3224 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).



### EM 121: N95 Respirator and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Training for Healthcare Workers.

Information topics include: reasons for respirator and personal protective equipment (PPE) use; proper methods for inspecting, donning and doffing a respirator and PPE; the effective use of a respirator and PPE; and common errors made in PPE and N95 respirator use. For more information, please contact us at (203) 688-3224 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).



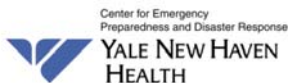
**EM 122: N95 Respirator Fit Tester Training.** Information topics include: identifying the need to conduct the N95 respirator fit test; conducting a fit test for N95 respirator use; and performing proper inspection and disposal of respirators. For more information, please contact us at (203) 688-3224 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).



### EM 220: Best Practices for the Protection of Hospital-Based First Receivers, Operations Level.

Information topics include: preparation for healthcare workers, such as emergency department clerks and clinicians, who are assigned to work in the contaminant-free areas but who may need to identify possible risks associated with unannounced patients; preparation for healthcare workers with designated roles for contaminant removal or who will be working in areas that are considered to be contaminated (training includes proper use of protective equipment); and preparation for hazardous materials specialists, including radiation safety officers. For more information, please contact us at (203) 688-3224 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).

## Programs and Services



YNH-CEPDR is committed to developing and delivering effective and scalable services that advance healthcare planning, preparedness and response for emergencies and disasters. YNH-CEPDR offers the following services to hospitals, other healthcare delivery organizations, emergency management professionals, the business community and others.

- **ASSESSMENTS:** Hazard Vulnerability Analysis, Business Impact Analysis and Gap Analysis
- **PLANNING:** Emergency management plans, emergency operations plans and business continuity plans
- **EDUCATION and TRAINING:** Course development and course delivery in various modalities (including web-based)
- **DRILLS and EXERCISES:** Design, development, facilitation and evaluation

For additional information about these services, please contact us at (203) 688-3224 or [center@ynhh.org](mailto:center@ynhh.org).

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
04.03.08 and 04.04.08	<i>Save the Date</i>	Emergency Preparedness for Facilities: Basic Preparedness Training for Corporate HQ, Public, Commercial, Educational, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Banking, Hospitality, Airport and Related Business Sectors  <i>Emergency preparedness conference sponsored by Controlled Vehicle Access System (CVAS) and Homeland Defense Journal</i>	Homeland Defense Journal Training Center Arlington, VA  For more information, please visit <a href="http://www.homelanddefensejournal.com/html/Emergency-Preparedness_April08.html">http://www.homelanddefensejournal.com/html/Emergency-Preparedness_April08.html</a> .
04.08.08 and 04.09.08	<i>Save the Date</i>	2008 Annual Emergency Preparedness Conference  <i>Emergency preparedness conference sponsored by Joint Commission Resources (JRC)</i>	Hilton Alexandria Mark Center Alexandria, VA  For more information, please visit <a href="http://www.jcinc.com/5/Programs2008/">http://www.jcinc.com/5/Programs2008/</a> .

## Upcoming Training and Education

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
05.06.08 to 05.08.08	<i>Save the Date</i>	Hazardous Materials Officer Training  <i>Training conference sponsored by the State of Maine Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management and the Maine Emergency Management Agency</i>	Central Maine Commerce Center Augusta, ME  For more information, please visit <a href="http://www.smrrc.org/">http://www.smrrc.org/</a> .
05.13.08 To 05.15.08	<i>Save the Date</i>	WMD Incident Management/Unified Command (MGT 313)  <i>Sponsored by the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, and conducted by the Texas Engineering and Extension Service Emergency Services Training Institute</i>	Radisson Airport Hotel Warwick, RI  For more information, please contact Michelle SanSouci, 401-946-9996

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Preparedness Report Archive: <a href="http://www.yalenehavenhealth.org/emergency/commu/archives.html">http://www.yalenehavenhealth.org/emergency/commu/archives.html</a>			
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[hhs.soc@hhs.gov](mailto:hhs.soc@hhs.gov) • (202) 619-7800 • <http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/>