



Preparedness and Planning

Unpredictable Weather Brings Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Risks

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is urging residents to be aware of the [risks of carbon monoxide poisoning](#) when using alternative sources of power during an outage. Due to recent weather-related power outages, Michigan residents are asked to be extra vigilant as they compensate for the lost power. If not used safely, gas-powered generators, kerosene heaters or other alternative heating or power sources can cause carbon monoxide poisoning. Residents are encouraged to seek shelter with friends, family, or at a community shelter as a safer alternative.

Keeping Food Safe during an Emergency

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing [recommendations](#) to those affected by severe storms and tornadoes. USDA is hopeful that this information will help minimize the potential for food-borne illnesses due to power outages and other problems that are often associated with severe weather events.



Telecommuting Bill Passes House

On June 4, the [House passed a bill](#) that would permit many federal employees to telecommute at least two days every two weeks. Under the bill, federal agencies would be required to create and implement policies to enable eligible employees to work from home or away from their regular office as long as telecommuting did not hamper their performance or interfere with agency operations.

\$1 Billion for Preparedness

On June 3, HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt announced that the department has made available nearly [\\$1.1 billion](#) to continue assisting public health departments, hospitals and other health care organizations to strengthen their ability to respond to public health and medical emergencies as a result of a terrorism attack or naturally occurring event. In Michigan, these funds support the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) hospital preparedness and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) projects statewide.

OSHA Offers Guide to Stockpiling Masks, Respirators

The U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), has introduced workplace health guidelines to help businesses understand their pandemic influenza risks and what they need to do to prepare. The 47-page document offers advice for all types of work settings, from retail stores to hospitals and encourages employers

News

New Region 6 BT Coordinator

We welcome Jaime Crouch as the new Region 6 Bioterrorism (BT) Coordinator. Jaime joins Kent County Emergency Medical Services on June 23. See [page 4](#) for more information.

Rabies Cases Rise in Michigan

State health officials say they are discovering rabies in more animals this year than at any time since the late 1950s. So far in 2008, there have been twenty positive cases, including twelve bats and six skunks. See [page 5](#) for further information.

Salmonella Taints Tomatoes

The Food and Drug Administration is alerting consumers nationwide that a salmonellosis outbreak appears to be linked to consumption of certain types of tomatoes. See [page 5](#) for details.

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to stockpile respirators and facemasks because of the likelihood that they will run short during an influenza pandemic. OSHA will accept comments about proposed recommendations until July 8. [Comments](#) can be submitted on-line.

Research Report Released on State Public Transportation

The report, *National Cooperative Highway Research Program Research Results Digest #326: State Public Transportation Division Involvement in State Emergency Planning, Response, and Recovery*, published in May 2008, describes the extent to which the public transit divisions within state departments of transportation (DOTs) are involved in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery activities. The report notes that a key role for public transportation may involve providing evacuation for persons with special



needs and also notes that in order to ensure public transportation is integrated into the emergency management process, both the public transportation division of the state DOT and the transit agencies must be integrated into the emergency planning process at the local and state level. [The report](#) finds that the involvement of state DOT public transit divisions in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery varies from state-to-state.

Health Disasters and Risk

“ISDR-Biblio 3: Health, Disasters and Risk” supports the theme of the 2008-2009 World Disaster Reduction Campaign. The report contains literature on health and disaster risk; disaster and emergency management, health facilities and services, environmental impact on health, climate change effects on health, mental health, mitigation and preparedness, public health, water and sanitation, and gender and health. [The report](#) can be found at online.

Building Disaster Resilient Communities

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) published *Building Disaster Resistant Communities: Good Practices & Lessons Learned*. This publication is the result of joint efforts of the emerging Global Network of NGOs for disaster risk reduction. The publication showcases the essential roles played by NGOs in addressing disaster risks at the local community level and is aimed to stimulate more interest in the subject from donors, policy makers and other stakeholders. [The report](#) can be found online.

Small Towns Purchase Terrorism Insurance

Small rural and suburban communities — some with few structures taller than a good-sized maple tree — might be unlikely targets for terrorists, but many of them are protecting their police stations and water towers with [terrorism insurance](#). The extra coverage is relatively inexpensive — for a small village it can amount to less than \$100 a year — and in many cases it’s a standard feature of government insurance pools. But some question whether it is necessary.

Communications

FEMA Aggregator for Cell Phone Alerts

On May 30, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) agreed to be the [aggregator for a national alert and warning system](#) for cell phone users. FEMA will perform as unified aggregator for the Commercial Mobile Alert System under a framework created by the Federal Communications Commission. The alert system, mandated by Congress in the Warning Alert Response

Network Act, will allow federal, state and local emergency alerts to be sent by authorized senders. FEMA, as the aggregator, will verify the authenticity of the alerts and pass them to commercial mobile phone providers, who will pass them on to their subscribers.

New Consensus Statement Offers Nation's First Blueprint for Disaster Preparedness in Minority Communities

The Drexel University School of Public Health's Center for Health Equality, along with twenty-five other public and private organizations, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, released the nation's first detailed blueprint for public health disaster preparedness in minority communities across the country. The [consensus statement](#) and accompanying guiding principles cite the historic inattention and neglect around the needs of minority communities and proposes broad guidance, identifying priorities for integrating culturally diverse communities into public health preparedness planning and implementation. It stresses that coordination in working with these communities is key to success, and concludes that their active involvement and engagement is essential to their understanding, participation in and adherence to public health preparedness and response actions. Coinciding with the release of the consensus statement is the launch of the National Resource Center on Advancing Emergency Preparedness for Culturally Diverse Communities. The Center, an initiative of the HHS Office of Minority Health and the Drexel University School of Public Health's Center for Health Equality, is the nation's first online clearinghouse and information exchange site designed to help eliminate disparities for culturally diverse communities across all stages of an emergency.

Natural Disaster PSAs and Podcasts

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and Podcasts provide timely messages about what you can do to protect yourself and your family during a natural disaster. New PSAs about keeping food, water, and prescription drugs safe during and after a disaster have recently been added to [the webpage](#).



New CDC COTPER Website

The Coordinating Office for Terrorism Preparedness & Emergency Response (COTPER) helps the nation prepare for and respond to urgent public health threats by providing strategic direction, coordination, and support for all of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's terrorism preparedness and emergency response activities. They have launched a [new website](#) to help in those efforts.

Shelter Assessment Tools

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Environmental Health is pleased to announce the release of the [Environmental Health Shelter Assessment Tool](#) and associated resources on the CDC Emergency Preparedness and Response website. The tool and resources can be accessed online.

Pandemic Planning

Public Comment Sought on PanFlu Draft Guidance Documents

Until July 3, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is requesting [public comment](#) on the following documents:

- Interim Guidance on the Use and Purchase of Facemasks and Respirators by Individuals and Families for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness
- Proposed Guidance on Antiviral Drug Use During an Influenza Pandemic
- Proposed Considerations for Antiviral Drug Stockpiling by Employers In Preparation for an Influenza Pandemic

Emergent Biosolutions Acquires New Flu Vaccine Technology

Emergent Biosolutions purchased a cell-based influenza vaccine technology from Protein Sciences Corporation. This vaccine technology could be used for seasonal and pandemic influenza. Instead of using chicken eggs to incubate vaccines, this new method uses insect cell cultures. The 2007 clinical trial information is available from the [*Journal of the American Medical Association*](#). The complete [press release](#) is available online.

Indonesia Delays Notification of H5N1 Cases

Indonesian Health Minister, Siti Fadilah Supari, announced that they will only report the death toll from H5N1 avian influenza A virus once every six months. Indonesia is one of the hardest-hit countries in the world, with thirteen deaths this year. More information on Indonesia's new policy can be obtained from the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy ([CIDRAP](#)) [website](#).



Control of Pandemic Flu Virus on Environmental Surfaces in Homes and Public Places

This [fact sheet](#) explains how cleaning and disinfecting surfaces in homes and public places (like schools) can help to prevent the spread of pandemic influenza (flu). Recommended practices include using good hygiene practices, cleaning/disinfecting hard surfaces in homes and schools, using recommended laundry practices, and using recommended waste disposal practices.

Surveillance

Evolution of H7 Avian Influenza

Since 2002, H7 strains of influenza virus have caused both highly pathogenic (HPAI) and low pathogenic (LPAI) avian influenza outbreaks in poultry in North America and Eurasia. To date, almost all human cases of H7 infection have manifested as conjunctivitis, rather than as respiratory infection. Now, [a study](#) provides evidence that recent H7 strains from Canada and the northeast U.S. have acquired host binding receptors with an increased affinity for the type of binding sites found in the human respiratory tract. This adaptation of viral attachment sites to human respiratory tract receptors is thought to be an essential step in the evolution of a pandemic virus. The researchers also found that at least one H7 strain is now able to spread efficiently between ferrets, which have receptors similar to those in humans.

Regional News

New Region 6 BT Coordinator

It is with great pleasure that we introduce the new Kent County Emergency Medical Services (KCEMS) Region 6 Bioterrorism Coordinator, Jamie Crouch. Jamie comes to KCEMS with a Bachelor of Science in Business Management, and a diverse background in safety and emergency management. Most recently, Jamie worked for Metro Health Hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where for

the last five years he has been their Safety Officer developing, educating and implementing disaster mitigation strategies. Jamie has been an active member of the Region 6 Bio-Defense Network Coalition, collaborating with many Regional Partners, as well as the Chair of the Steering Committee for the MMRS Program in Grand Rapids. Jamie has a Firefighter I & II certification and is licensed as a Medical First Responder (MFR) with the State of Michigan. Jaime will begin his new duties on June 23, 2008.

Other News

Rabies Cases on Increase

State health officials say they are discovering rabies in more animals this year than at any time since the late 1950s, and most of the positive rabies tests involve bats. Rabies (from Latin rabere-to rage) is an acute infectious disease of the central nervous system caused by a Rhabdo virus. It generally persists in nature as a salivary gland infection of carnivorous animals. The virus is usually transmitted from animal to animal and from animal to man by a bite (exposure). All warm-blooded animals are susceptible. Once signs of illness appear, rabies is 100% fatal; however, proper post-exposure treatment is nearly 100% effective. See the [Michigan Emerging Infection Disease website](#) for more information.



Tomatoes Implicated in *Salmonella* Outbreak

The Food and Drug Administration is [alerting consumers](#) nationwide that a salmonellosis outbreak appears to be linked to consumption of certain types of raw red tomatoes and products containing raw red tomatoes. The bacteria causing the illnesses are *Salmonella* serotype Saintpaul, an uncommon type of *Salmonella*. The specific type and source of tomatoes are under investigation. However, preliminary data suggest that raw red plum, raw red Roma, or raw round red tomatoes are the cause. At this time, consumers should limit their tomato consumption to tomatoes that have not been implicated in the outbreak. These include cherry tomatoes, grape tomatoes, tomatoes sold with the vine still attached, and tomatoes grown at home.



Counterfeit Drugs and Travel

[Counterfeit drugs](#) present a worldwide public health problem that is difficult to measure. While counterfeiting occurs throughout the world, experts think that it is most common in developing countries and countries with few or no rules against making or distributing counterfeit drugs. The World Health Organization estimates that 10% to 30% of medicines sold in developing countries may be counterfeit, and some studies conclude that the percentage may be even higher.

Training & Education

Date/Time	Event	Location
Online	<p>Survey Design and Methodology for Public Health</p> <p>This seven-week, online, mentored course will provide an overview of the methods for designing, implementing and interpreting a survey to meet program and research objectives in the public health field. Participants will learn to select a proper sample, limit sources of error and format a valid questionnaire for gathering survey data. The course is intended for public health practitioners who may use survey instruments in their work and desire formal training in this area. Visit the Michigan Public Health Training Center website for more information.</p>	Online
Jun. 17-18, 2008	<p>Prepare Train-the-Trainer</p> <p>Prepare the long-term care workforce with knowledge and competencies to deal with natural disasters and other public health emergencies. Readiness, recognition, and multidisciplinary response to disasters and emergencies. Educate core trainers. Produce an effective long-term care workforce able to treat older adults in such emergencies. Alert the public health system of emergencies. Resources for continuing disaster preparedness education. Evaluating the program's impact. There is no charge for attending this program. See the informational flyer for details. Register now as seating is limited.</p>	Lansing
Jun. 18, 2008 8am-1:30pm	<p>Basic Disaster Life Support</p> <p>This five-hour course is designed to develop commonality of approach and language and to improve the care and coordination of response in WMD disaster and public health emergencies. For more information, including registration information, please visit the Region 2 South website.</p>	RESA Auditorium 5454 Venoy Road Wayne, MI 48184
Jun. 25, 2008 8am-4:30pm	<p>A Mass Fatality Response: When a nightmare comes true</p> <p>This one-day conference will help participants list the different types of disasters and disaster trauma, define a mass fatalities response, describe the chaos of a mass fatalities incident and the need for a systematic method of managing the incident, and explain the need for teamwork during a mass fatalities response. Seating is limited, and registration closes June 13. Visit the Region 3 Healthcare Preparedness Network website for more information, including registration details.</p>	Dow Event Center 303 Johnson Street Saginaw, MI 48607
Jul. 6-25, 2008	<p>Graduate Sessions in Epidemiology Courses are for all public health professionals and anyone interested in health research. One- and three-week courses are available in a range of topics. Distance learning courses available for the Fundamentals of Biostatistics, and the Fundamentals of Epidemiology. CME credit is available.</p>	The Univ. of Michigan School of Public Health 109 Observatory St. Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Date/Time	Event	Location
Jul. 8-10, 2008	<p>Great Lakes Border Health Initiative (GLBHI) Conference</p> <p>This two-day conference is an opportunity for public health, clinical, food protection and emergency management professionals along the international borders of Canada and the United States to gather and discuss ongoing collaborative work regarding infectious disease surveillance. See the GLBHI website for more information.</p>	Ann Arbor, MI
Jul. 9, 2008 8am-4:30pm	<p>Public Information Officer 101</p> <p>Participants will learn the responsibilities and challenges of the PIO role; Written messaging skills; Verbal messaging, press conference skills; The media perspective. Seating is limited, and registration closes June 27. Visit the Region 3 Healthcare Preparedness Network website for more information, including registration details.</p>	Dow Event Center 303 Johnson Street Saginaw, MI 48607
Jul. 23-24, 2008	<p>Emergency Planning for Special Needs Populations</p> <p>This two-day course covers the unique concerns for organizations responsible for the care of "special needs" groups in disasters. This course will expand on the concepts covered in the prerequisite Independent Study 197 by discussing definition of "special needs populations" and highlighting the planning elements of mass care, sheltering, and evacuation.</p>	Lansing



Photo by Robert Sawtelle



Photo by Renee Brooks



Mailing Address:
Office of Public Health Preparedness
Capitol View Building - 201 Townsend Street - Lansing, MI 48913
(517) 335-8150 — <http://www.michigan.gov/ophp>



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