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Resilience Report

Brief insights and the latest innovations in emergency management and health security.

Continued COVID-19 surges can't stop us from finding beauty and life in unexpected places (like a tree shipped across the country!). This week on Resilience Report we cover full hospitals and morgues but also webinars and parks full of resilience and art.



Recent COVID-19 Trends.

The country continues to exceed all kinds of metrics with regards to the COVID-19 surge across the country. Hospitals are fuller and daily new case counts are higher than at any point since the pandemic began. You can read about other COVID-related trends [here](#).

New Mask Mandates.

In the wake of sharply rising case counts, several state governors have changed course on [mask mandates](#). The governors of Iowa and North Dakota issued their states' first mask mandates this week, while the governor of Montana expanded the state's mask rules.

Fire Season Continues in California.

A fast-moving brush fire hit the town of [Walker, California](#), on the California/Nevada border. It started on Tuesday, fueled by strong winds, and has so far resulted in one death and destroyed at least 80 structures.

Mental Health Training and Technical Assistance.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has some great training and technical assistance resources for managing the mental health impacts of the pandemic, including some upcoming [webinars](#).

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT: MASS FATALITY PLANNING

Every week, we'll dedicate space for a hot topic that we think is especially important for emergency managers to read. This week we're focusing on the worst-case scenario that can arise during a disaster: fatality management. Planning for the possibility of a mass fatality event can help reduce the strain on the healthcare system and support the resilience of the people caring for the dead.

The unfortunate reality of some disasters is that they may result in many casualties. Fortunately, there are resources that can help design thorough and respectful systems to care for the victims and those who care for them.

- The [Mass Fatality Management Guide for Healthcare Entities](#) supports facilities that face patient surge after any disaster by aiding in the development of a detailed plan.
- As a go-to resource, unsurprisingly ASPR TRACIE has a topic collection on [fatality management](#) and an entire section devoted to [COVID-19 mass fatality management](#).
- Some disasters include concerns about safety risks to people caring for the dead. COVID-19 has prompted [OSHA guidance for postmortem care workers](#).
- People working in death care are often inaccurately perceived as immune to grief and compassion fatigue. [CSTS resources](#) emphasize the importance of supporting the resilience of all healthcare employees.

Expert Suggestions on Mass Fatality Planning

Did you know that there are CONSTANT staff who are experts in fatality management? Here are their tips and suggestions when planning and preparing for this possibility:

- **Suggestion #1:** Mass fatality planning is not just a Medical Examiner and Coroner responsibility. It encompasses hospitals, human services, law enforcement, federal law enforcement, public health, and others. Building connections beforehand and planning together can ease the strain in the midst of a response.
- **Suggestion #2:** Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices can consider training personnel outside of their agency for force multipliers. For example, trained human services employees can help run victim information centers while National Guard partners could assist in setting up mobile morgue tents.
- **Suggestion #3:** During a mass fatality event proper storage can become an issue. To ensure decedents are well cared for and preserved, consider using heavy-duty disaster storage bags and increase space by reviewing the capacity of existing facilities and examining possible mobile morgue capabilities.
- **Suggestion #4:** A fatality surge can disrupt the entire system for managing decedents and delay processing them out of a hospital or body collection point. Determine the maximum amount of time storage units can hold remains and plan for alternatives to maintain them for longer.

Need help with mass fatality planning? Shoot us an [email](#).



Rock Wonderland.

Almost every day since the pandemic started in the U.S., people from all over the country have been sending “art rocks” to a family in Grapevine, Texas, who then place the rocks along the [Parr Park Rock Art Trail](#).

An Unexpected Find In The Christmas Tree.

Workers discovered an [adorable tiny owl](#) in the branches of the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree as they were setting it up. The owl was taken to the Ravensbeard Wildlife Center in Saugerties, NY to recover.

A (Different) Thanksgiving to Remember.

For a lot of us, Thanksgiving will look a little different this year. This [NY Times article](#) has great ideas for how you can still feel together as a family without anyone needing to travel.

We're Here to Support You

If you need help with mass fatality planning, vaccine planning, COVID-19 AARs, EOC surge staff, or anything in between, shoot us an email at scott@constantassociates.com. We are here to help.



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