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Resilience Report

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

This week's Resilience Report explores FEMA's changes to hazard mitigation planning that were announced through updates to the State and Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guides. With May being a busy month for recognition, we also highlight National Hurricane Preparedness Week, Wildfire Awareness Month, Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, National Nurses Week, National Hospital Week, and Mother's Day. Finally, we explore the latest implications of COVID-19 on health security.



National Hurricane Preparedness Week

- We're approaching the conclusion of [National Hurricane Preparedness Week](#), but you can still take an opportunity to listen to [FEMA's podcast episode](#) with the FEMA Administrator, Deanne Criswell, and the National Hurricane Center Director Ken Graham – recorded live from the National Hurricane Conference last month. And while the 'start' of the Atlantic hurricane season is June 1st, here is a [summary of storms](#) that have been named prior to June over the past seven years. Meanwhile, with researchers forecasting that climate change will produce more "superstorms" (i.e., Hurricane Dorian), some climate scientists believe that "[Category 6](#)" should be added to the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale.

COVID-19's Broader Implications

- As COVID-19 new daily infections continue to ebb and flow, scientists continue to broaden research and recommendations in the health security field. A study published on *Nature* last week finds that climate change will accelerate [zoonotic spillovers](#). Earlier this month, the Bipartisan Commission on Biodefense provided recommendations to Congress on how to [put an end to pandemics](#) within the next decade. And, bioethicists ponder the [pros and cons](#) of giving people COVID-19 for science.

Wildfire Awareness Month

- The month of May also marks [Wildfire Awareness Month](#), and for a particular day of recognition, tomorrow is [Wildfire Community Preparedness Day](#). Despite this day being in May to mark the beginning of the wildfire 'season,' fire ecologists describe how [climate change](#) has increased the length of this 'season.' And, while the USGS announced a new federal partnership that can [advance predictive models of wildfire behavior](#), the AccuWeather's 2022 Wildfire Forecast points to drought spurring [another intense wildfire season](#).

Emergency Management Round Up

- In other EM news, an article from American University views the [Titanic sinking](#) from an emergency management perspective; the State of Texas has adopted a [supply-chain map](#) that identifies critical pipelines and facilities to stabilize the power grid in the event of a disaster; the NOAA will map [urban heat islands](#) in 14 U.S. cities; and a new study argues that [risk models for earthquakes](#) overlook an important element – the behavior of tectonic plates changing post-earthquake.



Every issue, we'll dedicate space for a topic that we think is especially important for emergency management professionals to read. On April 19, 2022, FEMA released its updated [State](#) and [Local](#) Mitigation Planning Policy Guides. Effective April 19, 2023, we describe the changes in the policies and available resources below:

- The [summary of changes](#) to state updates include but are not limited to: requirements that plans consider equity and climate change impacts; that the process includes a broad range of partners, community lifelines, climate change experts, and state agencies that support underserved communities; and that the Fire Management Assistance Grants and the High Hazard Potential Dams programs are incorporated.
- The [summary of changes](#) to local updates include but are not limited to: requirements that the effects of climate change are considered in the risk assessment; that plans align with other FEMA mitigation programs such as the Community Rating System, flood risk mapping program, and the National Flood Insurance Requirement; and that a broader range of stakeholders is used to inform planning, including organizations that support underserved communities.
- FEMA posted [FAQs](#) to support the updates that answers questions such as when changes will be effective and what jurisdictions in the process of mitigation plan updates and/or in Approvable Pending Adoption status should do.

- FEMA will be holding a webinar series on the updates to both policies – May 10, 2022 for [states](#) and May 12, 2022 for [local jurisdictions](#).
- The changes initiated from a collaborative effort between state and regional partners, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and more. Read a [summary report](#) that synthesizes the over four hundred (400) comments received on the mitigation planning policy updates.

Recommendations for Your Next Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Knowing where to start to get information for your local or multi-jurisdiction HMP can be overwhelming. Below, we compiled resources and recommendations to get you started, featuring case studies from communities across the U.S.

- **Recommendation #1 – Expand your methods for community engagement to maximize participation:** Local jurisdictions seeking approval for their LHMPs or MJHMPs have to engage in a public participation process. However, the effectiveness of such participation processes will vary. Using a multi-layer approach, as described in a case study of [Knox County, TN](#), can strengthen how the mitigation plan is informed by the community. This may include integrating outreach into already planned community events via an information booth, partnering with local organizations to have them disseminate outreach materials, and/or hosting community workshops and open houses for direct dialogue.
- **Recommendation #2 – Take advantage of available tools and resources to inform hazards and risks:** USGS has extensive [earthquake hazard](#) modeling available, the NOAA has coastal county snapshots, flood exposure mappers, sea level rise viewers, and more for use, the Arizona State University Center for Emergency Management maintains the Spatial Hazard Events and Losses Database for the United States ([SHELDUS](#)), etc. On the local side, the State of California's [MyPlan](#) map service helps emergency managers with creating custom maps for their mitigation plans. Using available data can help planners to better define their hazards and the probability of hazard events occurring.
- **Recommendation #3 – Create a mitigation strategy that is feasible and actionable:** A goal of hazard mitigation planning is to commit to implementing the mitigation strategy identified. However, it can be difficult to develop a meaningful mitigation strategy given limited resources and capabilities. A [case study](#) from Ringgold County, IA shows how capability assessments can be used to ensure that the actions outlined in the mitigation strategy truly solve a problem or address a need within available resources.



Celebrating our Hospital Heroes

- [National Nurses Week](#) kicks off today with [National Hospital Week](#) following on Sunday. On behalf of CONSTANT, thank you to our hospitals, health systems, and health care workers for all that you do!

Mother's Day

- To celebrate the mother figure in your life, here are some [gift ideas](#), a list of [activities](#) to do, and more about the [history](#) of the day of recognition. Happy Mother's Day to all of the mothers across the world.

The World of Sports

- It's another busy weekend in sports. The NHL [Stanley Cup Playoffs](#) continue, the [WBNA 2022 season](#) begins today, [Darlington Raceway](#) will host this weekend's NASCAR races, and the [2022 NBA Playoffs](#) continue to progress through conference semifinals.



We're Here to Support You

If you need help with disaster preparedness, COVID-19 AARs, or anything in between, shoot us an email at donna@constantassociates.com. We are here to help.

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