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Upcoming Issue in July 2012 The Facts About FEMA



The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. FEMA employs 7,474 people across the country that work to support federal partners, state, tribal and local officials, the private sector, non-profits and faith-based groups, and the general public during a disaster.

2012 Upcoming

July
FEMA: What is it?

August
What School is Starting Again?

September
National Preparedness Month

October
Fire Prevention Month

November
Reverse 911

December
Preparedness Kits

City of Santa Barbara

Get Ready Santa Barbara! Explore Emergency Management in 2012



FACTS ABOUT DHS



Homeland Security

DHS stands for the Department of Homeland Security. The Department Secretary is a Presidentially appointed position, currently held by Secretary Janet Napolitano. DHS is the newest Federal Department and was created in direct response to the September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center via the 2002 Homeland Security Act, though it was not until March 1, 2003 that DHS officially opened its doors. Creating DHS involved reorganizing many Federal agencies (over 22 of them) that were previously either their own Federal Department, such a FEMA, or under other Federal Departments. Though DHS's top priority is preventing terrorism in the United States, the department encompasses several other agencies that handle a range of responsibilities. DHS has five missions that it pursues: preventing terrorism and enhancing security, securing and managing our borders, enforcing and administering our immigration laws, safeguarding and securing cyberspace and ensuring resilience to disasters.

DHS accomplishes these missions with the help of the seven different Federal agencies that it oversees. They are:

- * Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – supports citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. More [here](#).
- * Customs and Border Protection (CBP) – one of the DHS's largest and most complex components, with a priority mission of keeping terrorists and their weapons out of the U.S. It also has a responsibility for securing and facilitating trade and travel while enforcing hundreds of U.S. regulations, including immigration and drug laws. More [here](#).
- * Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – principal investigative arm of DHS and the second largest investigative agency in the federal government. Their primary mission is to promote homeland security and public safety through the criminal and civil enforcement of federal laws governing border control, customs, trade, and immigration. More [here](#).
- * Secret Service– federal law enforcement agency mandated by Congress to carry out dual missions: protection of national and visiting foreign leaders, and criminal investigations. More [here](#).
- * Transportation Security Administration (TSA) – protects the Nation's transportation systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. More [here](#).
- * Citizenship and Immigration Services – oversees lawful immigration to the United States. More [here](#).
- * Coast Guard (USCG) – one of the five armed forces of the United States and the only military organization within the DHS. More [here](#).

Together, these agencies work to keep all citizens of the U.S. safe.

Disaster Facts: Heatwaves

With summer coming the temperatures are sure to soar. Many people don't think of heatwaves as disasters but they are. A heatwave occurs when temperatures are excessively warm for two or more consecutive days in a row. They can often, but not always, be accompanied by increases in humidity.

Heatwave facts:

- * The heat index is the temperature the body feels when the effects of heat and humidity are combined. Exposure to direct sunlight can increase the heat index by as much as 15° F.
- * Heatwaves can be more deadly in big cities. Many building materials used in the development of urban areas actually absorb heat and stay warm even after temperatures drop.

The U.S. has seen several heatwaves over the last century, such as the extreme heatwave that occurred in Chicago in July of 1995. Over the course of six days, hundreds of people died due to heat related illnesses in and around the Chicago area. There are three types of heat illness: heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stroke is the most severe and can be fatal if treatment is not sought immediately. It occurs when a person's internal temperature control ceases to function.

Safety tips during a heatwave:

- * Drink plenty of fluids, preferably water, and avoid drinks with alcohol, excessive sugar or caffeine in them
- * Eat small meals and eat more often
- * Avoid being outdoors during the hottest part of the day which is approximately 1-5pm.
- * Wear loose-fitting, lightweight and light-colored clothing. These types of clothes are more breathable, more comfortable, and absorb less of the sun's rays.
- * Ensure animals have proper shelter out of direct sun and sufficient water. Check on them frequently
- * Never leave children or pets alone in enclosed vehicles. The temperature inside a car usually far surpasses that of outside the car.
- * Check on family, friends and neighbors who do not have air conditioning, who spend much of their time alone or who are more likely to be affected by the heat.
- * Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath, or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.

Heatwaves are not only detrimental to people and pets but they also dry out foliage and brush putting areas affected by heatwaves at higher risk for wildfires. For more information on heat waves and preparedness tips check out the Red Cross website [here](#) or the CDC's website site [here](#).

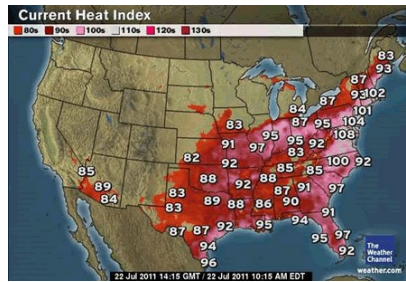


Photo from The Washington Post

Did You Know: Texas City Disaster

April 16, 1947 was a devastating day for the residents of Texas City, Texas. At the docks, the French Liberty ship *Grandcamp* was having cargo loaded. The ship was set to carry several types of cargo including tobacco, drilling equipment, small ammunition, cotton, sisal twine and approximately 3,200 tons of ammonium nitrate in the form of fertilizer. A small fire broke out and though the crew tried, they were unable to contain it. The ship's captain, in an attempt to save the cargo, gave the order to cut off oxygen to the fire by battening the hatches and closing the vents but the fire quickly began consuming the ship. Soon firefighters arrived as did on-lookers, drawn by the orange smoke billowing from the ship.



View of the smoke from Galveston, TX. Photo from the Texas City Firefighters Local 1259

Approximately 1 hour after the fire began, the ship exploded. The blast created a 15 foot wave which decimated parts of the harbor and a shockwave that knocked two small planes flying overhead out of the sky. Fiery fragments of the ship rained down over the port and the small town, some falling as much as a mile away.

Over the next 18 hours the town struggled to provide aid to the hundreds of injured and put out the many smaller fires the initial explosion had created. The nightmare was not over however, early the next morning, the ship in the adjoining slip, the *High Flyer*, which was also carrying 1,000 tons of fertilizer, as well as sulfur, exploded after being ignited by the burning remains of the *Grandcamp*.

Over 450 people were killed as a result of the explosions that day, including several ship workers and volunteer firefighters that responded to the initial fire. Disasters like these have contributed to the creation of modern-day safety mechanisms such as hazardous materials placards which are used when shipping most types of hazardous materials. To read more about this disaster, [click here](#).

City of Santa Barbara Office of Emergency Services



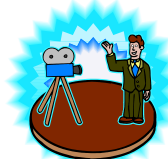
OES is on the web!

<http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/OES>

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City News— New EOC Informational Video

City TV 18 has been working with the City's Office of Emergency Services (OES) in creating an informational video. The purpose of the video is to give a glimpse of other first responding agencies in the City that are not visible to the citizenry. The men and women of the Emergency Operations Center are also considered first responders and activate to serve as support to the City field crews such as Police and Fire. The EOC staff also work with the field crews in getting out timely and accurate emergency information.



The video can be viewed by the public in June 2012 or on the OES website at www.santabarbaraca.gov/oes.