

# THE HOOSIER RESPONDER

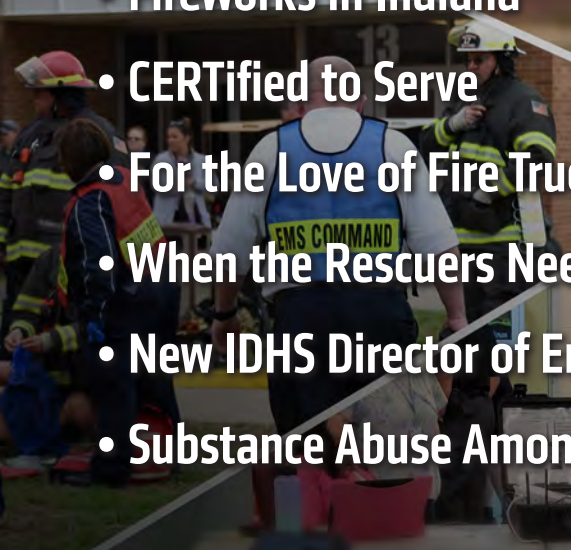
JUNE 2021



All in a Day's Work:  
Emergency Managers  
Serve in Many Ways

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Fireworks in Indiana
- CERTified to Serve
- For the Love of Fire Trucks
- When the Rescuers Need Rescuing
- New IDHS Director of Emergency Management
- Substance Abuse Among First Responders



# CONTENTS

Fireworks in Indiana	03
EMA Honors Pandemic Helpers	04
Legislative Recap	05
CERTified to Serve	06
COVID-19 Updates	07
Emergency Managers Serve in Many Ways	08
For the Love of Fire Trucks	10
CyberStart America Winners	12
Telling the Stories of Hoosiers During 9/11	13
Fire Investigators Use New Technology	14
Updated EMS Commission Policy	15
When the Rescuers Need Rescuing	16
New Director of Emergency Management	17
First Responder Substance Abuse	18
Recovery Reckonings	19
In Memoriam	19
Low-Head Dam Safety	20
PEM Program Update	22
Upcoming Trainings	23
Upcoming Events	24

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The recent FEMA vaccination clinic in Gary successfully vaccinated thousands of people for COVID-19. The event started strong in April, and the first few weeks kept a swift pace of vaccinations for those vulnerable populations in the area. But, as expected, things started to taper off over time. The same can be said about popular spots like the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and local grocery stores and pharmacies.



Vaccine hesitancy is a real concern across the country. As a lifelong first responder, I can tell you the public safety community mirrors the public at large, with some first responders either not interested in getting a vaccine or in a wait-and-see mode as the effort continues.

A February article for the "Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine" reported a survey of 3,100 first responders revealed more than half were "uncertain or reported low acceptability of the COVID-19 vaccine" as of September 2020, before vaccine distributions began. Additionally, age, race, ethnicity, marital status and job ranking impacted the results.

For the record, I see vaccines as a critical and necessary tool to fight this pandemic. I am fully vaccinated, and I encourage everyone to protect one another from COVID-19 via vaccines.

That said, I continue to hear a variety of reasons some first responders remain hesitant. I'll ask you to consider some of these recent data points:

- In the year since COVID struck, it is now the third leading cause of death in the U.S. after cancer and heart disease (two significant threats to public safety personnel).
- 98.5 percent of the COVID deaths in Indiana occurred in those who were not vaccinated, as well as 99.2 percent of the infections and 99.6 percent of hospitalizations (as of May 20).
- COVID deaths in the U.S. have surpassed all the U.S. troop deaths from World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War combined.

These comparisons are real, and they are everywhere. Being aware of risks every day on the job is part of the mission of dedicated public safety personnel. While it is true we risk our lives to save others, we do not need to take unnecessary risks during the process. Would we run into a burning building without a breathing apparatus?

A March article in the "Journal of Emergency Medical Services" said it like this: "Rather than looking at (vaccines) as PPE to keep us safe, getting the vaccine is more like the water in our handlines or the epinephrine in a syringe. It is a way that we can protect the vulnerable people we come in contact with (including in our personal lives)."

It is not about us individually; it is about the greater good for society. I hope you will keep an open mind when determining how you can best contribute to this mission to protect the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Cox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Steve Cox  
Executive Director

# FIREWORKS IN INDIANA

Summer is nearly here and with that comes fireworks season. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security and the State Fire Marshal want to remind everyone that while fireworks can brighten up events, practicing safety can help keep the festivities going longer. See all the tips on the [IDHS Fireworks Get Prepared page](#).



## WHEN CAN FIREWORKS BE SET OFF?

**MOST DAYS (NOT HOLIDAYS)**



*\* Check with local officials as local ordinances may further restrict usage.*

**JUNE 29 - JULY 3**



**JULY 4 (INDEPENDENCE DAY)**



**JULY 5 - JULY 9**



**NEW YEARS EVE**



*Red times are protected by Indiana law and are not subject to local ordinances.*

## SAFETY TIPS TO SHARE

- Never let children handle, play with or light any fireworks without adult supervision.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- When setting off fireworks, use a clear, open area and keep the audience a safe distance away.
- Do not attempt to make or alter any fireworks.
- Only light one firework item at a time.
- Never attempt to re-light or fix a “dud” firework.
- Have a fire extinguisher, water supply, hose or bucket of water nearby.
- Use extreme caution when lighting fireworks in the wind.
- Keep spectators where the wind is blowing away from them.
- Never smoke or drink alcoholic beverages while handling fireworks.
- Never aim, point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Sparklers burn at extremely hot temperatures, from 1200 to 1800 degrees Fahrenheit. Glow sticks make an excellent, safer alternative to sparklers, especially for young children.



**CLICK HERE**  
for more  
safety tips!

**If you are responsible for putting on a fireworks show, please WATCH our new video on guidelines and requirements to keep people SAFE.**

Left to right: Steve Cox, Lance Bella, Richard Bohan, Matt Melton, Angelina Valente, Ellen Reed and Mark Carlo.



## PORTER COUNTY EMA HONORS PANDEMIC HELPERS

The Porter County Emergency Management Agency presented awards to three volunteers and a full-time employee for exceptional service to their community during the COVID-19 pandemic. A special ceremony was held May 26.

Porter County EMA Director Lance Bella gave Meritorious Service Medals to volunteers Richard Bohan (adjunct professor), Matthew Melton (IT/electronics technician) and Angelina Valente (psychologist), who were furloughed from their regular jobs at the start of the pandemic.

“They immediately started coming in to work with us, logging 10-12 hours every day — for almost three months,” said Bella. The three volunteers logged more than 2,500 hours of service to the county, coordinating the operation of the Emergency Operations Center and optimizing its equipment, gathering and analyzing intelligence,

distributing PPE and emergency supplies to responders, assisting the Salvation Army deliver emergency supplies to the elderly and creating social media posts to inform the public. Not only that, when the county bought a 3D printer, the volunteers made sizing tools to allow residents to create masks for every first responder in the county who wanted one.

Ellen Reed, the agency’s administrative assistant, was honored for volunteering extra hours and joining in the all-

hands-on-deck operations, unloading semi trucks of supplies and equipment and becoming a forklift operator to help the team, for example.

“With all four, all the hours we worked, they never asked why they had to work so long. They always asked what needed to be done next,” said Bella. “We would have never been able to accomplish the things our mission called for without these individuals’ heroic efforts. I will never forget what they did for us and for our county.”



IDHS Director Cox receives a certificate of appreciation from Porter County EMA Director Lance Bella.

# 2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP

The 2021 Indiana legislative session concluded in April with several pieces of new legislation that will impact first responders. Below are four bills highlighted in the February issue of the Hoosier Responder that passed through and were signed into law. Unless otherwise noted, all laws take effect July 1, 2021.



[HEA 1033 – Residency of Police Officers and Firefighters](#) – Removes the requirement that a police officer or firefighter cannot live more than 50 miles away from the county in which the police department or fire department is located.

[HEA 1002 – Civil Immunity Related to COVID-19](#) – Includes a provision that EMS personnel that provide certain emergency medical services to an emergency patient are not liable for an act or omission in providing those services unless the act or omission constitutes gross negligence or willful misconduct.

**There were several other bills not previously highlighted, but which may be of interest to the first responder community:**

[HEA 1001 – State Budget](#) – Appropriates more than \$19 million for the Secured School Safety Grant for each year of the biennium and appropriates \$100,000 in FY22 for the Mobile Integration Healthcare Grant Fund.

[HEA 1032](#) – Expands the number of places at which a baby box may be located.

[HEA 1115 – Interfering with Public Safety](#) – Provides that a person who enters a marked-off area after having been denied entry by a firefighter commits interfering with public safety. (Under current law, the offense is committed only if the person is denied entry by an emergency medical services provider or law enforcement.)

[HB 1270 – Department of Homeland Security](#) – Establishes a fire chief executive training program to provide training to newly appointed fire chiefs.

[SEA 232 – Exposure Risk Diseases](#) – Adds any variant of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), including coronavirus disease (COVID-19), to the list of diseases considered an exposure risk disease for purposes of emergency and public safety employee death and disability presumed in the line of duty. The designation is retroactive to January 1, 2020.

[HEA 1118 – Mobile Integrated Healthcare Programs and Safety Plans](#) – Allows a representative of a mobile integrated health care program or a representative of a mental health community paramedicine program to request a patient's individualized mental health safety plan from a psychiatric crisis center, psychiatric inpatient unit or psychiatric residential treatment provider if certain conditions are met.

[HEA 1230 – Safe Haven 911](#) – Provides that a parent may give up custody of a child by calling 911 and staying with the child until an EMS provider arrives to take custody of the child.



# CERTIFIED TO SERVE

It is not uncommon for emergency responders to become outmatched by the volatile, taxing conditions created by a disaster, whether due to the scale or the length of a response. When this happens, a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) becomes an asset for emergency management agencies to have available.

CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to citizen volunteer training and organization emergency responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks. After being established as a national program in 1993, there are now [more than 2,500 local CERT programs across the U.S.](#) and approximately 600,000 trained volunteers.

As of May 2021, more than 40 CERT groups exist throughout Indiana, all of which are managed and uniquely organized by county EMAs in a way that best fits their community's emergency response needs.

Alethea Pascascio-Gordon, CERT representative for IDHS, is the designated coordinator for Indiana's CERT program. For EMAs interested in starting a CERT, Pascascio-Gordon is available to provide guidance,

resources and other types of helpful support.

"The goal is not just creating CERT programs, but also helping EMAs successfully sustain and enhance them over

*(continued on next page)*

## TEEN CERT

Although CERT members must typically be 18 or older, it's also possible to involve teens in CERT, instilling a strong appreciation for safety prior to adulthood. One such program is in place in Putnam County, where the Teen CERT program was established in 2015.

In Putnam County, teens must be recommended by a sponsor, either someone who is already a CERT member or someone currently working locally in emergency response. The teens attend the same CERT Basic course as all other members but are paired with mentors to help them grow in the CERT program.

This year, there are three teen members, and they are involved in nearly all projects coordinated by Putnam County CERT. They have participated in COVID-19 vaccine clinic support, damage assessment missions and search and rescue.

"There are a lot of youngsters who want to be doing something other than the day-to-day," said Sarah Owen, Putnam County CERT chief. "There are youth out there who are really civically minded, and this gives them an avenue to help the community and learn safety and other practical skills in a diverse group setting."

time,” Pascascio-Gordon said. “There are many counties that lack budget assistance, and in those situations, we can provide equipment and other resources from the state’s inventory.”

Indiana EMAs interested in starting up their own CERT can find inspiration from established teams throughout the state.

Lake County’s CERT, organized and led by the Lake County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, actively involves its 12 members in training opportunities that teach basic disaster response skills, such as performing ground searches, securing areas and tying different styles of knots that can be used in search and rescue or patient transport.

“There’s so many things trained civilians can do to provide assistance during a disaster,” said Robert Walker, director of the Lake County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency. “Even if you don’t have any public safety experience, CERT is a great way to learn lifesaving skills and support your community when it needs help the most.”

In southern Indiana, Gibson County EMA’s CERT group recruits new members by training staff members from local factories, businesses and churches. In the past, Gibson CERT members have performed damage assessments and search and rescue and they also have visited local fairs, festivals and car shows to help provide first aid to spectators.

“CERT teaches individuals the knowledge of how to care for themselves, their families and their community during the events of a disaster,” said Stephanie McKinney, deputy director for Gibson County EMA. “CERT training is also an effective way to lessen the anxiety for people who get nervous and panic during a disaster.”

Counties interested in developing a CERT program can learn more about the process and requirements on the [IDHS website](#). Also available is the new CERT Connection Newsletter, a resource to learn more about best practices and how communities across the state implement their programs.

## COVID-19 UPDATE FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

### VARIANT UPDATE

Currently, four major variants exist in the U.S., all of which have been found in Indiana. The CDC is tracking a significant number of variants and has moved to a [new, more robust dashboard](#) to provide an in-depth look at the data. Historical data through April 11, 2021, can be found [online](#).

### LOCAL REGULATIONS

In early May, the CDC indicated individuals who were two weeks out from their final vaccination shot could resume normal activities without wearing masks or socially distancing. However, Hoosiers should continue to follow local restrictions and honor business masking requirements.

Beginning on April 6, 2021, county health departments, in conjunction with local elected officials, determine capacity restrictions and mask orders for their communities. Reach out to local health officials for more information and clarification on community and county restrictions.

### GETTING A VACCINE

The Indiana Department of Health continues to house all important vaccine updates online at [ourshot.in.gov](#). All individuals over the age of 12 are now eligible to schedule vaccination appointments. Visit the page to view the COVID-19 vaccine dashboard and access answers to frequently asked questions.

Note: As of publication, only the Pfizer vaccine has Emergency Use Approval (EUA) for individuals between ages 12 and 17. To review EUA information for each of the vaccines currently available in the U.S., visit the [FDA website](#).



# ALL IN A DAY'S WORK: EMERGENCY MANAGERS SERVE IN MANY WAYS

## *Am I an EMA right now or police officer?*

That was the thought running through Sheri Gaillard's mind as she drove to follow a tornado in northern Indiana. The county dispatch had sent her to chase it, and since Gaillard serves as a part-time police officer and the Pulaski County EMA director, it was a valid question.

Gaillard, like many Indiana emergency management agency directors, plays multiple roles for Hoosier communities, blurring the lines among local public safety agencies. About a dozen EMA directors in the state are part-time, and in smaller counties, EMA directors often wear multiple hats due to population and budget constraints, said Sharon Gerlach, Local Support Section chief for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).

"Most EMAs are people who either have a public safety background or have a strong

servant's heart and want to better their communities," Gerlach said, adding that IDHS supports EMAs with resource requests and tracking, grant opportunities and dedicated liaisons who help answer questions, provide guidance and offer support during any disaster or event.

EMA directors often share titles like floodplain manager, 911 coordinator, ADA coordinator, health preparedness coordinator, EMS director, taskforce leader, LEPC chairperson and even deputy coroner — just to name a few. Strong backgrounds in the emergency sector and the ability to develop working relationships are common.

"That is a primary reason local EMA directors are so critical in emergency response," said Mary Moran, director of emergency management for IDHS. "They know the right people to respond quickly and effectively, and IDHS

works closely with them when additional resources are needed to protect people or property."

Randy Miller's father worked in disaster services for the American Red Cross, so he grew up responding to people's needs on their worst days. He also has degrees in public safety and emergency management and volunteered for four years for Ripley County EMA before becoming the director. Even still, the transition was baptism by

*(continued on next page)*



Sheri Gaillard, part-time police officer and full-time EMA director.



fire: He was hired as director at the beginning of the pandemic. Three weeks later, his county had a tornado blow through, followed by a hazmat incident a few weeks after that. Many of the agencies did not know him yet — and vice versa.

“Those were long hours,” Miller said. “We didn’t have those relationships yet, but I got to know them quickly.”

Ripley County EMA’s director position is part-time, so Miller continues his full-time job as a firefighter in Ohio. His days as EMA director change on a rotating basis to accommodate his firefighting schedule. When he is not available, part-time employees step in along with active volunteers, as needed.

As a part-timer, he finds some tasks take a little longer, and sometimes there are trainings he cannot attend, but he describes it as hard work but worthwhile. Regardless of full-time or part-time, Miller said, there are many challenges inherent in the position, and the experience in his multiple positions enhances his EMA work.

“Each role absolutely helps. With the EMA, I work a lot with public safety agencies such as fire, EMS or police, so I understand where they’re coming from or what their needs will be during a disaster event,” Miller said. “With firefighting, I help with emergency operations plans for my entire township and serve



Randy Miller, EMA director (standing right) and firefighter.

as a liaison to the Hamilton County [Ohio] EMA, which has a much bigger population and has everything on a larger scale.”

Ohio County EMA Director Laura Walston is also the county 911 director, president of the county EMS service and an officer for the Indiana chapter of the National Emergency Number Association.

Walston also still serves as a firefighter/EMT, though she does not have the time for that much nowadays. As the 911 director, she oversees an 11-person team of dispatchers and makes sure the emergency systems and equipment are working properly. She handles both 911 and EMA duties on a daily basis, though some days she may do more work in one role than the other.

It can be a lot when there is an incident happening, Walston said, but both roles flow into each other, as she knows who to contact depending on the emergency. Also, being in 911 communications helps her work on quality control on the EMS side.

Gaillard, the Pulaski County EMA director, started in EMS before getting into law enforcement and emergency management. Similar to Walston, she performs her dual duties for different agencies on the same day. Twice a week, she does shifts at the Kewanna Police Department after spending a full day as the EMA director. As a chief deputy officer, she takes on both administrative and patrol duties.

“I love what I do. I’ve done it for so long, I can’t imagine not doing it,” Gaillard said.

Being an EMA director means working closely with first responder agencies, and Gaillard says this leads to those in the field feeling like a big family. The relationships prove helpful; for instance, her EMA has a drone that often is requested to help police agencies in criminal investigations. She is the visual observer (not pilot), because she understands what is going on.

“You just know everybody,” Gaillard said.



“The most stirring symbol of man’s humanity toward man that I can think of is a fire truck.”  
—Kurt Vonnegut, Indiana author

## FOR THE LOVE OF FIRE TRUCKS

Fire trucks come in all sizes and colors, with different sounds or special capabilities. From hand-powered pumps on wagon wheels to [soon-to-be fully electric rigs](#), the fire truck is an ever-present yet ever-evolving source of pride and interest to both young and old Hoosiers.

Indiana has more than a handful of fire museums filled with historical fire equipment and vehicles, located in Jeffersonville, Indianapolis, Valparaiso, Lafayette, Terre Haute and elsewhere.

Fort Wayne firefighter Dennis Giere is on the board of directors for the Fort Wayne Firefighters Museum, a nonprofit that preserves the area’s firefighting history and shares its collection with the community on a regular basis and at

special events. Why visitors are interested in fire apparatus is near indescribable to him.

“It’s just *in them*,” Giere said, noting that many grew up in the fire service. A lot are out-of-town firefighters or families whose children want to be firefighters. Of course, the biggest draws to the museum are the antique fire trucks and apparatus, which stand out from the kinds seen on the road today.

“It’s just neat to see how far we’ve come. Some were pulled or pumped by hand, others were steam-powered drawn by horses and the ones today are mechanical, but they all do the same thing and have the same purpose; it’s just how the apparatus got there and how it operated that are different,” Giere said.

Like the fire museums, members of the Indiana chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of Antique Motor Fire Apparatus in America (SPAAMFAA) collect and share their passion for fire trucks. Most of them are firefighters, used to be firefighters or have family in the fire service, so they grew up going to fire truck shows, also called musters. For many, seeing the old trucks is about nostalgia, reconnecting with their fire service family or about sharing the love of the hobby with others, according to chapter president Jeff Henry.

Henry himself is a former volunteer firefighter. While a cadet during his teenage years, a local firefighter (“Grandpa”) became a father figure to him, and Grandpa had a collection of fire apparatus that Henry says

*(continued on next page)*



kept him out of trouble, as he would visit and play with the old trucks and cars in his free time.

Now Henry owns several fire trucks of his own, and he and other collectors from the club put on events, like hosting SPAAMFAA's 2019 national muster in Jeffersonville, Ind., which drew nearly 100 trucks and featured some of them pumping water from the Ohio River. The members also support other events and causes, like parades or children's firefighter-themed birthday parties. For children who get to ride a fire truck, it is a special experience.

"In their minds, they're racing to a four-alarm fire," Henry said, noting that children love the old trucks' bells or sirens, in addition to the trucks being so big and shiny. "What a great thing to light up someone's life for a few moments!"

Salesman Chris Allen's work often includes travel, and earlier in his career, his young son would ask what the fire trucks looked like wherever he was in the state on a business trip. Instead of just describing them, Allen started to take photos to show when he got back home. Eventually his friends wanted to see the photos too, and to make sharing easier, Allen started a website. Fast-forward



In mid-May, the Revolutionary Technology concept fire truck made a stop in South Bend, where firefighters were given a tour.

17 years and what started as a father-son bonding experience turned into a popular website ([IndianaFireTrucks.com](http://IndianaFireTrucks.com)) that became a major hobby.

Allen now has multiple contributing photographers helping with the site, and together Allen estimates they take more than 30,000 photos annually of fire apparatus throughout Indiana. Followers of his website have been inspired to start websites in their own states, like [KentuckyFireTrucks.com](http://KentuckyFireTrucks.com) and [KansasFireTrucks.com](http://KansasFireTrucks.com). Not only that, but Allen's work also caught the attention of the Fishers Fire Department, which invited him to become its civilian on-scene fire photographer.

"Sometimes I start to feel like I'm part of the brotherhood, but I'm not. I'm just a guy who takes pictures of cool trucks," Allen said.

The site has had more than 47 million visits since 2004. Allen hears stories from agencies who have used his site to window-shop for trucks they might want to purchase or see how another similar department sets up its vehicle lineup.

He notes that while many of today's fire trucks are starting to look the same, some find ways to stand out and tell a story, like those of Chesterfield-Union Township in Madison County, whose yellow vehicles sport graphics of the state flag and even vintage department photos and a local Civil War regiment painting.

"We can all rally around a cool truck and our local agency. Everyone wants to share that. No matter who you are, you're proud of your trucks," Allen said.



## INDIANA STUDENTS WIN SCHOLARSHIPS THROUGH NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY COMPETITION

Seven Indiana high school students recently earned the title of “National Cyber Scholar” and a \$2,500 scholarship after winning a 48-hour cybersecurity competition designed to elevate aptitude in combating cyber threats.

Nearly 30,000 students from across the U.S. participated in this year’s CyberStart America competition, which culminated with the National Cyber Scholarship competition. Of the total participants, only 5,000 advanced to the national competition, including 11 from Indiana.

Of the 11 from Indiana who qualified for the national competition, seven finished in the top 540 to earn the “National Cyber Scholar” recognition and a \$2,500 scholarship for the U.S. college of their choice.

The recent [Colonial Pipeline hack](#) underscores how critical it is to train the next generation in cybersecurity. The U.S. has a significant shortage of qualified cybersecurity professionals. According to a [recent study](#), in order to properly defend U.S. infrastructure from attack, the country needs to train more than 3 million cybersecurity professionals.

[CyberStart America](#) is a free national program for high school students, aiming to uncover hidden cyber talents and to identify and develop the next generation of cyber superstars. CyberStart’s immersive, gamified learning platform can take students from zero cybersecurity knowledge to possessing the skills necessary to compete in a national-level Capture the Flag challenge in a matter of weeks.

Congratulations to all the winners and participants!

### INDIANA WINNERS

Leanne Alsatie - University High School of Indiana: Carmel

Isabel Goodwin - Park Tudor School: Indianapolis

Oren Jensen - Carmel High School: Carmel

Devin Singh - Marquette Catholic High School: Michigan City

Anonymous - Carmel High School: Carmel

Anonymous - Zionsville Community High School: Zionsville

Anonymous - Penn High School: Mishawaka

*Note: Students listed as "Anonymous" have chosen not to have their name published in this list.*



# A DAY TO REMEMBER: TELLING THE STORIES OF HOOSIERS DURING 9/11

This September marks 20 years since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States. Almost 3,000 people were killed, including 400 first responders who were on scene in New York City. Thousands more responders and survivors have developed 9/11-related cancer and other illnesses, adding to the number of line-of-duty deaths.

Numerous first responders from Indiana helped at the sites of the terrorist attacks, and many more responders and emergency management personnel worked hard here in the Hoosier State to protect life and property. Some may even have entered the career field because of 9/11.

To pay homage to Hoosier men and women who played an important role in and after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security will be publishing a special 9/11 20th Anniversary edition of The Hoosier Responder later this year. The Public Affairs staff also will be working on related media projects to help tell the stories of Hoosiers during the trying times of September 2001.

If you have a story to share, please go to [Remembering 9/11](#) and let IDHS know.

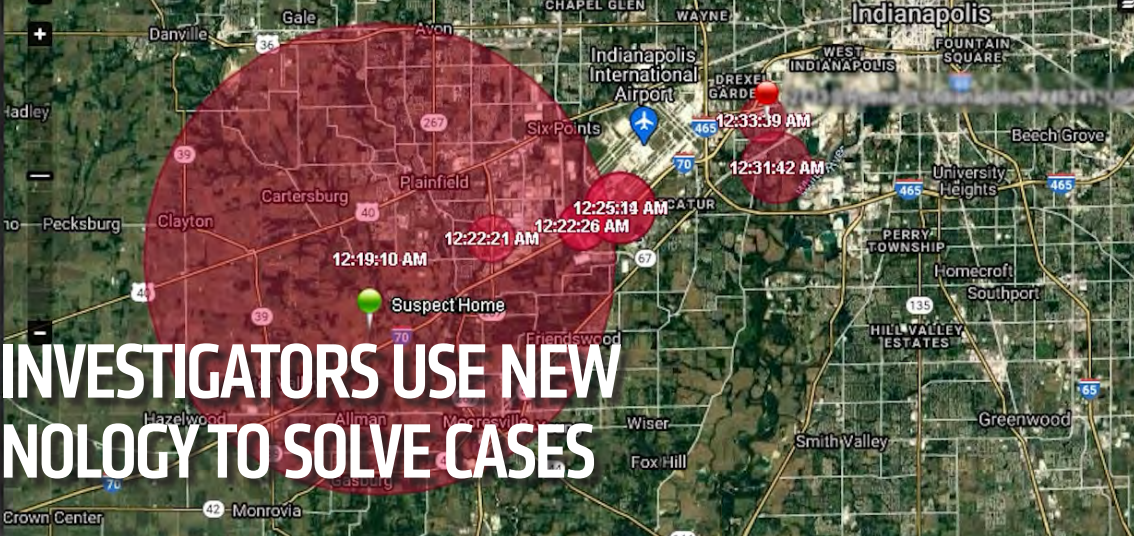
## 9/11 20TH ANNIVERSARY REMEMBRANCE PROJECTS

IDHS wants to hear your 9/11 story.

- Did you travel to New York, Pennsylvania or Washington, D.C., in response to the terrorist attacks?
- Were you serving as a first responder or in emergency management in Indiana on Sept. 11, 2001, and the days after?
- Did 9/11 influence your choice to enter a first-response or emergency management career?
- Did you respond on 9/11 as a member of the military or National Guard and later enter the field of public safety in Indiana?
- Do you know of a K9 or K9 handler from Indiana that helped respond on 9/11?
- Did you participate in the response as a member of a Volunteer Organization Active in Disasters (VOAD)?
- Do you know someone who fits one of these categories, or do you have another 9/11 story with an Indiana connection that needs to be told?
- Is your organization planning a 9/11 20th Anniversary event?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, go to [Remembering 9/11](#) and let IDHS know.

# FIRE INVESTIGATORS USE NEW TECHNOLOGY TO SOLVE CASES



On a cold Tuesday in February, Wayne Township Fire Department was dispatched to a house fire in Indianapolis. After the fire was extinguished, investigators with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) were brought in to assist in identifying the cause and origin. It was determined the fire was not just an accident - it was intentionally set.

“We applied for a search warrant to help assist Wayne Township with their investigation,” said Joe Tanasovich, a fire investigator with IDHS. “Through that we were able to get some evidence that helped us close the case.”

The evidence in question: phone records. IDHS used the search warrant to obtain cell phone records of the suspect, which helped track the location of the suspect from his home to the scene of the crime at the time it occurred.

“The suspect was accused of arson and burning his estranged girlfriend’s residence,”

Tanasovich added. “They had a falling out. Her house was vandalized and later burned. With the cell phone data we were able to link him to both the vandalism and the arson.”

Tracking a person through cell phone data is just one of many tools that fire investigators can use when attempting to determine the cause of a fire. Investigators are using technology more to aid in their investigations these days. In this case, when confronted with the evidence, the suspect confessed to the crime.

“I poured the gas on the path,” the suspect admitted. “I lit a couple of matches, and then the fire spread to the house.”

The confession may not have come without the overwhelming evidence collected by hardworking fire investigators. Their dedication to finding the truth is a victory for justice.

“It’s a domestic violence situation,” Tanasovich commented. “It’s sad, but it’s common. It’s really important that we get in front of it because these are types of situations that can become very dangerous for the victim.”

And that is what it is all about. Safety is paramount when it comes to the lives of fellow Hoosiers, and thanks to the hard work of IDHS fire investigators, this case is closed.



See the confession happen in this [exclusive video!](#)

# UPDATED EMS COMMISSION POLICY: ORGANIZATION RENEWALS



In April, the EMS Commission approved a [policy of sanctions for EMS provider organizations](#) that submit their provider organizations certification renewals late.

All EMS provider organizations including BLS non-transport, BLS transport, ALS non-transport, ALS transport, supervising hospitals and training institutions fall under this new policy.

All EMS organizations have applicable rules requiring recertification applications be **submitted at least sixty (60) days before the expiration**. This rule permits IDHS time to review the application fully, perform any verifications necessary, request additional information to complete the application (which commonly occurs) and issue the new certification to the provider organization in a timely manner.

Many provider organizations are not submitting until the last week or even after their expiration with no consequences or reason to comply with the EMS rules.

## NEW POLICY

- Once a provider organization is expired without a renewal issued, the provider organization shall cease all EMS operations.
- Tiers of sanctions:
  - Submitting between 30 and 60 days prior to expiration will result in a censure.
  - Submitting between eight (8) and 29 days prior to expiration will result in a censure with a \$50 civil penalty.
  - Submitting seven (7) days or less prior to expiration will result in a censure with a \$100 civil penalty.
  - Recertification applications submitted up to 60 days AFTER the expiration date will be processed but will result in a censure with a \$250 civil penalty.

**This new policy will be enforced beginning with the October 1, 2021, expiration cycle.**

Neither the EMS Commission nor IDHS look to impose sanctions but hope this policy will increase awareness of the problem and ensure better compliance with deadlines already in place.

The goal remains integration of the provider organizations into Acadis where renewals can be processed online and certifications accessible, such as with individual certifications. When this occurs, more information will be released.

Questions may be addressed to [dhscertifications@dhs.in.gov](mailto:dhscertifications@dhs.in.gov).



# WHEN THE RESCUERS NEED RESCUING

On an early fall morning of 2015, an unexpected turn of events devastated Sullivan County EMS. Just after shift change, an ambulance plugged into shoreline power caught fire underneath the hood. The fire spread from the ambulance, up to the ceiling and eventually to the other vehicles and throughout the building.

“You never think something like this is going to happen. It’s just something you don’t plan for,” said Sullivan County EMS Director Kenny Bogard.

Everything inside the building was a complete loss. Three ambulances and all the

equipment and paperwork within were destroyed, putting the agency out of commission.

But crews weren’t off the road for long. As soon as word got out, calls from area ambulance services started rolling in. Teams from surrounding counties staged on standby in different sections of Sullivan County in the event emergency calls came in while the agency was unavailable.

“I was so impressed with the response from surrounding providers. When they found out what happened, they offered everything from trucks to equipment and supplies, right

away without worrying about cost,” Bogard said.

Only two and a half hours after the fire destroyed everything, Terre Haute Fire Department arrived with a loner ambulance so that Sullivan County EMS could continue serving the community. Sullivan County EMS continued to use this loner ambulance for five months until it was able to acquire two new vehicles in April 2016.

The Sullivan County commissioners, insurance company and the state worked hard to expedite all the paperwork and requirements to get the agency back on the road

*(continued on next page)*



New station fully operational May 13, 2021.



Three new ambulances back in service.



with their own ambulances as quickly as possible.

“The state was ready to jump in and help in any way they could and issued temporary certifications for the ambulances to get them back on the road,” said Stan Frank, IDHS EMS district manager.

After temporarily relocating operations to the Sullivan County Fairgrounds, the station was fully rebuilt in 2017 on the site where the fire occurred. As of May 13, 2021, Sullivan County EMS is back to operating with three fully capable ambulances. Now, Sullivan County is hoping to expand its service to provide better coverage for the community, hoping to run two full-time paid ambulances in the near future.

“I’m glad to see another county-based service growing and serving their community. It was really nice to see EMS come together as we always do to help each other out,” Frank said.

Through all the hardships, paperwork and long hours getting back in service and fully equipped, Bogard credits the support of everyone who helped along the way as being the driving force.

“We couldn’t have gotten back on the road without all the support from our partners,” Bogard said. “We truly felt the Hoosier hospitality and we are so thankful.”

## MEET THE NEW IDHS DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

When she was a child, Mary Moran dreamed of becoming a police officer. By the time she finished her bachelor's degree, she had two young daughters, and decided that course was not the best choice for her family, pivoting to another form of public safety – disaster mitigation and recovery. In April, the 21-year veteran in emergency management was named the new Director of Emergency Management for Indiana.



Moran started as a program coordinator in mitigation for what was then the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA). Not long after, 9/11 changed the fabric of the country and emergency response. It also changed Moran’s goals, strengthening her resolve to protect and serve Hoosiers through emergency management and driving her to obtain a master’s degree in emergency management from Indiana University in 2015.

Over the course of her career, Moran has served as the state hazard mitigation officer, mitigation branch chief and most recently as the state recovery officer. Her passion for emergency management, public safety and building a better world every day drives her current goal, to revitalize the relationship between state and local emergency management programs. She feels that building the lines of communication will drive forward the development of a unity of purpose toward a more resilient Indiana.

When not at work, Moran loves plants and crafts of all kinds. She also is an avid reader, always looking for recommendation for a great book.

# WELCOME



# SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG FIRST RESPONDERS

An estimated 30 percent of first responders develop behavioral health conditions during their time of service - including depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) - a rate much higher than the general population. Two-thirds of those individuals also have a substance use disorder.

Earlier studies point to the possibility that alcohol use is one way that first responders cope with job-related stress. The higher prevalence of depression or post-traumatic stress injuries are additional risk factors for alcohol dependence and misuse in

first responders who deal with stressful situations daily.

Rates of binge drinking and heavy alcohol consumption are higher among firefighters, as much as double the average rate of the general population. An estimated 50 percent of firefighters report excessive drinking, and 33 percent engage in binge or other problematic drinking behaviors. New programs and treatment methodologies, focusing specifically on the needs of first responders, continue to be put into practice.

There are numerous locations nationwide that focus on

responders, and in April, the first substance abuse program specifically for Indiana responders was opened. Operated through [Recovery Centers of America at Indianapolis](#), the program separates responders from others seeking treatment to preserve anonymity.

The [IDHS website](#) also provides resources related to behavioral and mental health and where to look for help. Individuals struggling with depression, dealing with substance abuse or concerned about a colleague can access information resources and assistance.



# RECOVERY RECKONINGS

## INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

FEMA, through its partnership with the state of Indiana, has activated the Funeral Assistance Program in response to the COVID-19 disaster, otherwise known as DR4515. Through this program, FEMA is making financial assistance available to families who have suffered the loss of a loved one due to the pandemic. Individuals whose applications are approved could receive up to \$9,000 per funeral in financial reimbursement. To learn more about this program's eligibility and documentation requirements, visit the [FEMA Funeral Assistance FAQ page](#).

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

The IDHS Public Assistance (PA) Program is still working with statewide PA applicants in response to DR4515, and the application period specific to this disaster event continues. Organizations that have yet to submit their COVID-19 response expenses for possible PA reimbursement still have time to do so. To begin the process of building a project application, visit the FEMA Grants Portal website. For more information on the PA program, visit the [IDHS PA Program webpage](#).

Any questions related to the program, or related to DR4515, can be directed to IDHS PA staff at [pa@dhs.in.gov](mailto:pa@dhs.in.gov).

# IN MEMORIAM

Former State Fire Marshal and lifelong public servant Roger D. Johnson died on April 16, 2021. During his firefighting career, Johnson was an inspiration and mentor to many in public safety.



Starting as a volunteer and working his way through the ranks of the fire service, Johnson eventually became State Fire Marshal in 2004 under Gov. Mitch Daniels. Johnson was a devoted advocate for enhanced training and public education related to fire safety.

Known for more than his career in the fire service, Johnson was incredibly personable and loved to tell stories. He brought many people together and brightened any room he walked into, according to friends and colleagues across the state.

"All Hoosiers are better off because of Roger Johnson's commitment to life and safety for all of Indiana. He will be greatly missed," said current State Fire Marshal Joel Thacker.

# NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY UPCOMING TRAININGS

Did you know, the National Fire Academy [regularly posts classes with immediate vacancies on its website](#). Classes are free of charge and open to career and volunteer fire and EMS personnel. For those selected to attend, the National Fire Academy provides lodging and reimbursement for travel. Attendees and their organizations are responsible for the attendee's time and payment for meals.

Currently there are vacancies for Safety Program Operations R0154. [Learn more and apply online](#).

- |                                     |                       |                |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| • Safety Program Operations (R0154) | 7/18/2021 - 7/23/2021 | Emmitsburg, MD |
| • Safety Program Operations (R0154) | 8/15/2021 - 8/20/2021 | Emmitsburg, MD |
| • Safety Program Operations (R0154) | 8/29/2021 - 9/3/2021  | Emmitsburg, MD |

# LOW-HEAD DAM SAFETY

## Backwash

## Boil

## Escape Route

## Low-head Dam

With more than [150 low-head dams cataloged in Indiana](#), local emergency management officials and response agencies are encouraged to share information about low-head dams, where they are and how best to avoid them.

### RECREATIONAL SAFETY

A reoccurring theme of dam-related deaths is that victims had been recreating nearby and were unaware of the power of the water, especially when the water level was up, which only enhances dangerous water velocities and the risk of unseen obstructions. The churning action below low-head dams is dangerous for swimming, boating, fishing and other water recreational activities. When recreating in a natural body of water, such as a

river, be aware of the distance from any low-head dams.

Always wear a personal flotation device when recreating in a natural body of water. If recreating near water, bring ring buoys, boat cushions or one-gallon milk jugs filled halfway with water and tied to 50 feet of rope. Using any of these items can help retrieve a person caught in a low-head dam without putting a rescuer in danger.

### IF CAUGHT IN A LOW-HEAD DAM

It is nearly impossible to escape the recirculating current of a low-head dam without assistance. If caught in the boil of a low-head dam, tuck your chin into your chest, draw your knees up and wrap your arms around them. By doing so,

conditions may push you out of and away from the hydraulic current, along the streambed. After swimming away from the current, try to swim along the face of the dam towards the nearest bank.

If you see someone trapped in a low-head dam, call 911 immediately. Whether on shore or in a kayak or other boat, do not jump in to save the person, and do not approach the current. Stand on the bank and shout encouragement to the individual until help arrives.



View the Interactive Map of Low-Head Dams in Indiana.

# MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE MARSHAL



That bright light you see ahead is not just because the recent Indy 500 officially kicked off summer in Indiana. We also are moving forward from this pandemic, with a brighter future for all of us.

For the Training Section at IDHS, that means a return to normalcy regarding in-person training and the state's commitment to offering specialty training in high demand by the first responder community. The past year significantly handcuffed our ability to expand the training course catalog as planned, but our staff has been far from idle, holding a multitude of virtual exercises and planning a robust offering for 2021 and beyond.

The pandemic allowed time for IDHS to listen to constituents and explore the demand for training across Indiana. We have heard you loud and clear and are working hard to ramp up offerings as we speak.

A primary focus for public safety training this fall will be dedicated to emergency managers. Training that is specific to the role of county EMA has been lacking in recent years, and IDHS has committed to strengthening these offerings. In partnership with the Emergency Management Alliance of Indiana (EMA), staff is developing EMA training that covers the basics of the role as well as emerging threats such as cyberattacks.

Furthermore, the Indiana Fire and Public Safety Academy has some exciting partnerships coming online that will benefit first responders. The new MADE@Plainfield facility is near completion, and a hands-on training location nearby is being finalized now. Both will enhance what IDHS and the Academy can do to give first responders the training they need to remain effective and safe.

With Independence Day right around the corner, we also are at the height of the fireworks season. First and foremost, the operator must have applied for and received a permit from IDHS for a public fireworks display. The online application can be found at [dhs.in.gov](https://dhs.in.gov) by searching for "fireworks" in the search function. Additionally, Indiana law requires the local fire chief to physically inspect each site before launch, so that the operator and the public safety community have a good understanding of the operation in case of an emergency. These steps are critical to ensuring a safe and enjoyable event. You also can find a detailed fireworks training module online on Acadis.

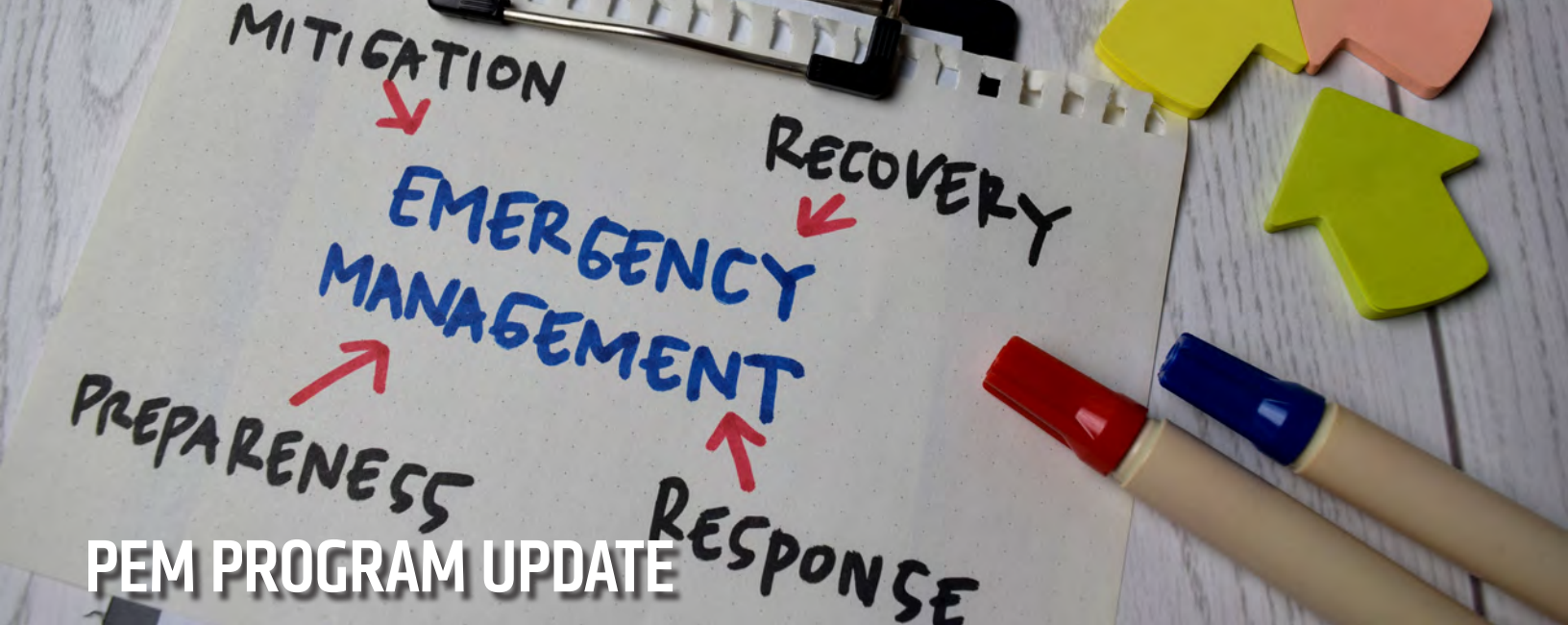
The entire agency looks forward to serving you fully very soon (hopefully face to face). Enjoy the summer and do your part to be safe and healthy.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel Thacker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Joel Thacker  
Indiana State Fire Marshal





## PEM PROGRAM UPDATE

With the state returning to pre-COVID normalcy and the increase of participants in our in-person classes, we are excited to release the much-anticipated schedule of the FEMA National Emergency Management Basic Academy courses for 2021. These courses must be completed to obtain the state Professional Emergency Manager (PEM) certification. Hotel accommodations will be made available on a first-request basis for a limited number of people that live further than 50 miles from the training location. Registration is available in the [Acadis Portal](#).

<b>08/16 - 08/20</b>	<b>L101 Foundations of Emergency Management</b>	<b>HENDRICKS COUNTY</b>
<b>08/30 - 09/01</b>	<b>L105 Public Information Basics</b>	<b>PULASKI COUNTY</b>
<b>09/07 - 09/08</b>	<b>L146 HSEEP</b>	<b>HENDRICKS COUNTY</b>
<b>10/04 - 10/06</b>	<b>L102 Science of Disaster</b>	<b>ELKHART COUNTY</b>
<b>10/12 - 10/13</b>	<b>L103 Planning: Emergency Operations</b>	<b>HENDRICKS COUNTY</b>

### All 11 Independent Study Courses must be completed before submitting an application for L101

- IS 100: Introduction to the Incident Command System
- IS 120: Introduction to Exercise
- IS 200: ICS for Single Resources
- IS 235: Emergency Planning
- IS 240: Leadership and Influencing
- IS 241: Decision Making
- IS 242: Effective Communication
- IS 244: Developing and Managing Volunteers
- IS 700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction
- IS 800: National Response Framework, An Introduction

More information about the requirements for PEM certification can be found at: <https://www.in.gov/dhs/files/Professional-Development-Worksheet-2020.pdf>

# UPCOMING TRAININGS

## JUNE

06/12	Water Cadaver Search Techniques for K-9s	BRAZIL
06/14 - 06/16	ICS 300 - Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	BLOOMINGTON
06/14 - 06/16	ICS 300 - Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	WINAMAC
06/17 - 06/18	ICS 400 - Advanced ICS Command & General Staff	BLOOMINGTON
06/26	Advanced Air Scenting Techniques for K-9s	BRAZIL

## JULY

07/16	Advanced Water Cadaver Search Techniques for K-9s	BRAZIL
07/18	K-9 Credentialing Test-Water Cadaver	BRAZIL
07/18 - 07/23	Safety Program Operations (R0154)	EMMITSBURG, MD
07/24	Ground Search I (Technician)	BRAZIL

## AUGUST

08/02 - 08/03	Decision-Making for Initial Company Operations (F0457)	PLAINFIELD
08/14 - 08/15	Best Practices in Community Risk Reduction	PLAINFIELD
08/15 - 08/20	Safety Program Operations (R0154)	EMMITSBURG, MD
08/29 - 09/03	Safety Program Operations (R0154)	EMMITSBURG, MD
08/31 - 09/01	Fire Investigation: First Responders (F0770)	PLAINFIELD

Register for all classes on the [Acadis Portal](#), except for Safety Program Operations (R0154).  
Learn more and [apply for it here](#).

### INTELLIGRANTS TRAININGS

With the grant application cycles beginning, the IDHS Grants Management team is committed to providing technical assistance to county and local partners. A hands-on training series, focusing on IntelliGrants and federal grant applications, is coming in July.

Hybrid events will have both in-person and online capabilities for attendance. The sessions will include a training presentation, a question-and-answer period, as well as timeslots for one-on-one, in-person technical assistance.

### HYBRID OFFERINGS

07/06	Jackson County
07/08	Elkhart County
07/13	Adams County
07/15	Sullivan County
07/19	Madison County
07/21	Decatur County
07/27	Montgomery County

### ONLINE-ONLY OFFERINGS

07/23 and 07/26

Search for “Federal Grant Trainings” in [Acadis](#) to register and choose a timeslot for technical assistance.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## NATIONAL FIREWORKS SAFETY MONTH

**OBSERVED: JUNE 2021**

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an estimated 10,000 fireworks injuries were treated at hospital emergency departments nationwide in 2019, and 12 individuals died. Damage to legs, hands and fingers accounted for more than half of the injuries. Before the summer festivities begin in your community, share some fireworks safety tips so everyone can stay safe.

For more on fireworks safety, visit [GetPrepared.in.gov](https://www.getprepared.in.gov).

## NATIONAL PET PREPAREDNESS MONTH

**OBSERVED: JUNE 2021**

The entire household should be prepared for an emergency, and that includes pets. Use the hashtag #PetPreparedness on social media to share ways your county is celebrating Pet Preparedness Month and encourage residents to plan ahead for their pets' safety.

For pet preparedness tips, check out the [GetPrepared.in.gov](https://www.getprepared.in.gov).

## POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH

**OBSERVED: JUNE 2021**

This June, the National Center for PTSD encourages individuals to complete a small daily task to help raise awareness about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). IDHS offers a mental health training for first responders on Acadis that helps them recognize PTSD symptoms in themselves, fellow responders and the individuals they are helping. Consider sharing information on social media about the symptoms and how individuals can receive treatment.

For more information about PTSD, visit [www.ptsd.va.gov](https://www.ptsd.va.gov) or visit the [IDHS behavioral health page](#).



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## NATIONAL CPR AND AED AWARENESS WEEK

**OBSERVED: JUNE 1–7, 2021**

The American Heart Association sponsors the annual National CPR and AED Awareness Week to raise awareness about how CPR and AED skills can help save someone's life. Consider organizing a CPR training course in your community as one way to raise awareness about the risks of cardiac arrest. For more information about National CPR and AED Awareness Week, visit [cpr.heart.org](https://cpr.heart.org).

You can also see how to perform CPR in this [IDHS video](#).

## NATIONAL LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

**OBSERVED: JUNE 21–27, 2021**

An average of 49 individuals in the U.S. are killed each year by lightning strikes and hundreds more are injured. Taking immediate shelter during a thunderstorm is the best way to avoid injury, and continued education is credited as the reason for the low fatality numbers. Share lightning safety information before a thunderstorm occurs to help keep the entire community safe.

Visit [GetPrepared.in.gov](https://GetPrepared.in.gov) for more information about lightning safety.

## NATIONAL HEATSTROKE PREVENTION DAY

**OBSERVED: JULY 31, 2021**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration warns Americans to "Look Before You Lock." The national campaign warns family members, guardians and caregivers that leaving a child in a vehicle for a prolonged period during the summer months can quickly become fatal. In as little as 10 minutes, children can suffer from heat stroke. Consider sharing heat stroke prevention tips on social media to participate.

Visit [GetPrepared.in.gov](https://GetPrepared.in.gov) for information about extreme heat safety. For additional ways to share information in your community, visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov).

*The Indiana Department of Homeland Security works 24/7  
to protect the people, property and prosperity of Indiana.*



*The Hoosier Responder is a publication of  
The Indiana Department of Homeland Security.  
Please direct any questions or comments to the  
IDHS Office of Public Affairs at 317.234.6713 or [pio@dhs.in.gov](mailto:pio@dhs.in.gov)*

Indiana Department of Homeland Security  
302 West Washington Street  
Indiana Government Center South  
Room E208  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
317.232.2222 or 800.669.7362

