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The U.S. Fire Administration maintains the **Emergency Management and Response – Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)**.

For information regarding the EMR-ISAC visit www.usfa.dhs.gov/emr-isac or contact the EMR-ISAC office at: **(301) 447-1325 and/or emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov**.

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West Nile Increases Across the United States

Reported cases of West Nile virus so far in 2012 have jumped to 3,142, the highest number since 2003. There are confirmed cases in 48 states, with [Texas being hit especially hard](#), and labs are struggling to [keep up with the demand for diagnostic testing](#).

Although the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) states 80% of infected people will not show any symptoms, first responders should know the symptoms of West Nile. Most symptomatic people will show fever, aches, headaches, nausea, and vomiting. About 1 in 150 people infected show more severe symptoms like weakness, loss of vision, convulsions, and paralysis.

Reported cases are expected to drop as colder weather comes; [state and local emergency managers](#) should still take note of ways to minimize or control mosquitoes in their areas. For example, eliminate standing water to keep mosquitoes from breeding or implement a mosquito control program. Public handouts and informational brochures are also [available for download or order](#).

The CDC monitors West Nile virus and tracks state statistics on the weekly updated [list of Notifiable Diseases and Mortality Tables](#). They also maintain a regularly updated [map of reported human and non-human cases](#).

(Source: [CDC West Nile Virus site](#))

Cyber Attacks on Supply Chain Manufacturing

In 2009 a cyber attack targeted Google, Adobe Systems, and about 20 other companies, and successfully accessed and stole intellectual property, personal information, and financial information. A [recent article in redOrbit](#) states the same group of hackers is launching another assault but this time they are also targeting supply chain manufacturers that provide services or goods to the main targets of the attacks, specifically defense, infrastructure, and technology industries.

The attacks appear to be targeting intellectual property such as design plans or sector information. The malicious code is left on websites attracting a certain demographic of worker, such as a site that energy sector employees use often, or a document is emailed to workers [with the code embedded in a document](#). The code then infects the workers' computer, thus infecting their company's network.

The InfoGram is distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures.

Companies falling into these categories must make sure their computer networks and software are up-to-date with the most recent patches, maintain employee training to include more recent threat trends, and ensure they review cyber security procedures and update them as necessary.

(Source: [redOrbit](#))

Revamped 211 System Success in Virginia

On June 29, a major storm hit the east coast with unexpected force, causing widespread damage and disruption of utilities. The storm unfortunately corresponded with a severe heat wave, complicating the response and recovery operations and making public health and safety more of a concern.

Virginia was hit especially hard with millions of residents without power for up to two weeks. Luckily, the state [211 system had recently been upgraded](#) from five regional, stand-alone call centers to a “cloud-based” platform, enabling the five regional centers to provide information to callers from anywhere within the state. This improved system quickly allowed people to find government, nonprofit, and volunteer services providing food, supplies, cooling stations, or shelter.

If coordinated properly, 211 can help handle nonemergency calls and free up first responders to handle true emergency response during a disaster. Each state’s 211 system operates differently; knowing what your state offers and coordinating with them before a disaster would be wise. Contact information for each state, coverage maps, and FAQs [can be found on www.211us.org](#).

(Source: [Government Technology](#))

USFA Releases Residential Heating Fire Report

Fire departments in the United States respond to an average of 50,000 fires caused by residential heating every year. Home heating is the second most common cause of residential fires after cooking fires, and account for 14 percent of fire department responses. Approximately 150 people die every year from heating fires.

According to [Heating Fires in Residential Buildings](#) (PDF, 424 Kb), the term “heating fires” applies to fires caused by “central heating units, fixed or portable local heating units, fireplaces, heating stoves, chimneys, and water heaters.” Confined fires, those fires in chimneys, flues, or fuel burners, accounted for 87% of residential heating fires.

The takeaway lesson from the report is these fires are preventable through active public outreach and education. USFA has several resources available for public safety education, including the publication “[Winter Fires – Safety Tips for the Home](#)” and the public information page [Home Fire Prevention and Safety Tips](#).

USFA teamed with the National Fire Protection Association to build [Put a Freeze on Winter Fires](#), a public information site. Also, the Environmental Protection Agency’s [Burn Wise](#) gives homeowners tips on safely burning wood for home heating.

Statistics quoted in all reports from the [Topical Fire Report Series](#) are gathered through the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

(Source: [U.S. Fire Administration](#))

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For information specifically affecting the private sector critical infrastructure contact the **National Infrastructure Coordinating Center** by phone at 202-282-9201, or by email at nicc@dhs.gov.