



TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

ONLINE

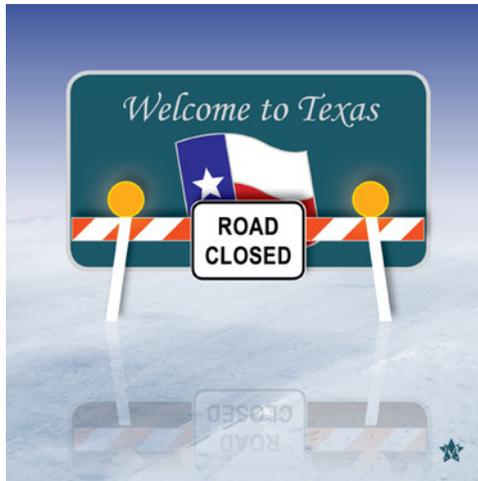
2014 Vol. 61 No. 11

Texas Division of Emergency Management is accepting article submissions for The Texas Emergency Management Online (TEMO) newsletter. If you have an idea for a topic or would like to submit an article, contact [Mike Jones](#) at 512-424-7050.

Message from the Chief

Winter Weather

You don't have to go back very far to be reminded that severe winter weather does happen in Texas. In early December 2013 ice storms wreaked havoc on north Texas and brought an icy chill to vast areas of the state. Major highways including Interstates 20 and 35 were closed. Some roads were iced over for days; in some areas, traveling into the state from the north was not allowed.



Dallas Fort Worth International Airport was closed as were most schools and businesses all across north Texas. By Friday morning, December 6th, as many as 268,000 homes and business were without power.

In February 2013 an historic cold front was on its way to the Texas Panhandle. Lines began to form for groceries and supplies. With the cold front came hurricane force winds—peak gusts of 75 miles per hour—and near record snowfall. Roads getting in or out of Amarillo were shut down and snow drifts stranded motorists. In the first 24 hours over 4,000 people were without power. Ten inches of snow for the

Panhandle was normal; all in all, 19.1 inches of snow fell on Amarillo, their third largest amount of snowfall, ever.

November 12, 2014 is Winter Weather Awareness Day in Texas.

Now, I realize you make look a little unorthodox shopping for winter supplies in your flip-flops, but now is the time to prepare. Don't wait for the long, last-minute lines or risk not being able to find what you need to survive a winter storm event. How can you prepare?

Message from the Chief, continued



McKinney, Texas, December 2013. Slick icy roads and no power. Photo: Mike Jones

Take inventory of your home emergency kit and add the following supplies:

- Rock salt or more environmentally safe products to melt ice on walkways
- Sand to improve traction
- Adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm.

If you don't have an emergency supply kit, a checklist to build one is available at: [Texas Prepares Supply Kit](#). How long could you and your family survive at home if you were unable to get to a store? Keep a disaster supply kit in all your vehicles, too.

Be familiar with winter weather terminology. Do you know the difference between freezing rain and sleet, between a winter weather advisory and a winter storm warning?

We all know winter weather is coming, and the potential for severe winter weather is possible anywhere in Texas. Don't be caught off guard; prepare now.

Speaking of cold

Got your flu shot yet? Influenza can be a dangerous, deadly disease. With few exceptions, the CDC recommends a flu shot for everyone over six months of age. And they recommend you get it early. Today there really are no excuses for not getting a flu shot; pharmacies and clinics all over the state welcome walk-ins for shots at little or no cost or wait. While you're on your way to your favorite grocery store or home improvement center to get supplies for your emergency kit, pop in and get your shot!

[Centers for Disease Control - Flu](#)
[TexasFlu.org](#)

Regional Resiliency Assessment Program (RRAP) for the Texas Cattle Feeding Industry



RRAP is a voluntary and nonregulated focus on specific infrastructure sectors within a defined geographic area and addresses a range of hazards capable of regionally or nationally significant consequences. The ultimate goal of an RRAP is to mitigate the nation's risk of loss of life and physical and economic damage from natural and manmade hazards.

The Texas Panhandle was awarded a RRAP grant for the cattle feeding industry. Initially focused on the corridor from Amarillo to Hereford; the project eventually encompassed the entire Panhandle. This was the first RRAP to focus on agriculture and the food sector. With a completion date of April 2013, the project was allotted \$1.4 million. This project will end up benefiting the entire cattle feeding industry as well as hogs and dairy cattle operations. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) took a year and a half to do an assessment of the industry and found three main areas needing improvement to include Facility Biosecurity, Business Recovery and Regional Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Response.

Why an RRAP for Cattle Feeding?

Approximately 2,500,000 head of cattle in the Panhandle at any given time.

- \$ 5.7 Billion per year spent by feedlots buying cattle.
- \$ 8.5 Billion per year is the total value of fed cattle sales.
- \$ 15 Billion is the total annual benefit to the region as the cattle feeding industry's dollars circulate through the local economy.



An FMD outbreak in the cattle industry would devastate the economy of the panhandle.

Feedlots are a soft target-little security on outer perimeter and very susceptible.

The Final Product



Each facility that participated in the project was equipped with a customized biosecurity plan and a business continuity plan. Each facility also had a bio assessment, risk assessment and business impact assessment done. A template of each plan is available through the Livestock Industries Preparedness Exchange, another product of the project, for cattle, swine, dairy, poultry and sheep.

A regional FMD protection plan was created and accepted by the region. The ultimate goal of the plan is to prevent the spread of the disease to healthy areas once a case has been confirmed through movement control, vaccination, depopulation, carcass disposal and disinfection. The plan is scalable, flexible and adaptable for all hazard events. A local FMD plan template was created and available to all jurisdictions as well.

Regional Resiliency Assessment Program (RRAP) for the Texas Cattle Feeding Industry, continued

To register for the plan templates:

www.i-info.com/go/lipx

To access the FMD plan/annex (under Regional Preparedness Planning):

<http://www.prpc.cog.tx.us/default.html>

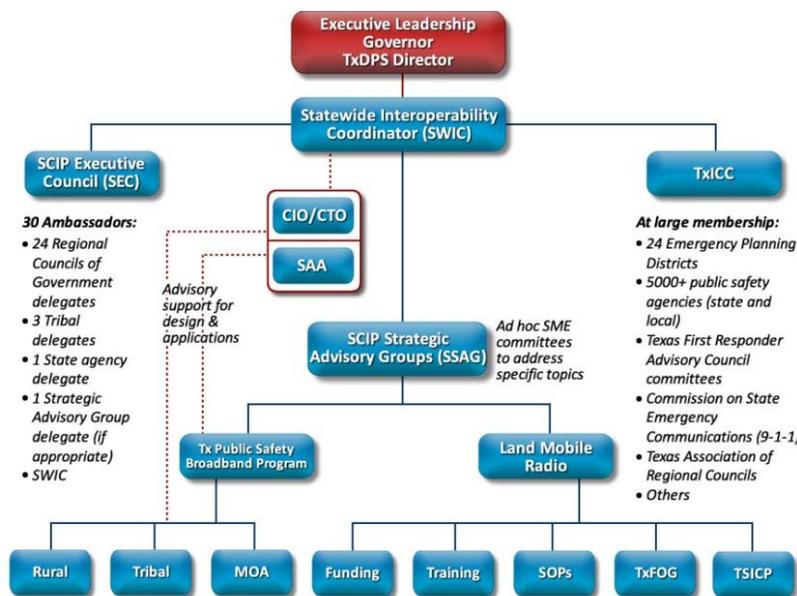
Office of the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator

The Office of the Texas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) is a part of the Public Safety Communication Service within the Law Enforcement Support Division at the Department of Public Safety. Texas SWIC duties are carried out by Deputy Assistant Director Todd Early, and the Deputy SWIC, Karla Jurrens.

The SWIC Office has the responsibility of coordinating interoperable communications across the State. The ability for agencies across the state to communicate as needed--when needed is critical to effective emergency management.

Texas Interoperable Communications Coalition

Governance is the underlying strength of interoperability. Interoperable communications in Texas is governed by the Texas Interoperable Communications Coalition (TxICC). The TxICC is a voluntary organization of Federal, State, local, Tribal, and non-profit entities including traditional emergency communications disciplines as well as public utilities, critical infrastructure security, and transportation agencies. The TxICC, along with the SWIC, provide oversight of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) implementation and maintenance. The TxICC provides the forum to discuss emergency communications goals and initiatives, as well as to ensure that all levels of government have the opportunity to align their efforts.



Knowing who you might call for assistance (and who you will be assisting) and what their communications capabilities are allows for quick and efficient response. Having Regional Standard Operating Procedures in place, and conducting regular training and exercises to test communications ensures everyone knows what to do when an event or incident happens.

The TxICC established a SCIP Executive Council (SEC) consisting of one delegate from each COG region, the three Tribal Nations, and a State Agency representative to serve as the official voting entity of the TxICC. The Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) provides oversight and leadership to the TxICC.

Office of the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator, continued

Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan

The Texas Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) is a stakeholder-driven, multi-jurisdictional, and multi-disciplinary statewide strategic plan to enhance interoperable and emergency communications. The SCIP is a critical mid-range (three to five years) strategic planning tool to help Texas prioritize resources, strengthen governance, identify future investments, and address interoperability gaps. The goals and objectives outlined in the SCIP emphasize the need for training and usage of interoperable channels.

The current SCIP document can be found on the DPS website:



TXICC – Annual Strategic Planning Conference

<http://www.dps.texas.gov/LawEnforcementSupport/communications/interop/documents/texasSCIP.pdf>



SCIP Workshop – September 2013

The purpose of the Texas SCIP is to:

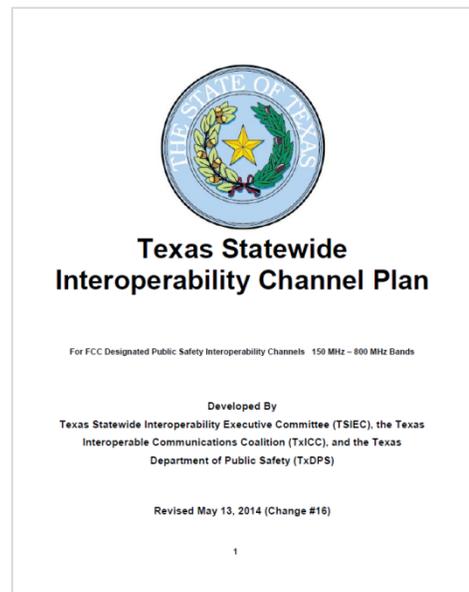
- Provide the strategic direction and alignment for those responsible for interoperable and emergency communications at the State, regional, local, and Tribal levels.
- Explain to leadership and elected officials the vision for interoperable and emergency communications, as well as demonstrate the need for funding.

The Department of Homeland Security-Office of Emergency Communications provides workshops with states to periodically review and update their SCIPs.

Texas Statewide Interoperability Channel Plan (TSICP)

The TSICP describes conditions and guidelines for programming and use of state-licensed interoperability or mutual-aid radio channels. License privileges are extended to organizations that have an executed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Texas Department of Public Safety.

The TSICP is available on the Public Safety Library – www.publicsafetytools.info Click on the PS Library button, select Webview and search for 'Texas'. A very useful feature of the PS Library is the downloadable applications for Apple and Google play. The TSICP can



Office of the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator, continued

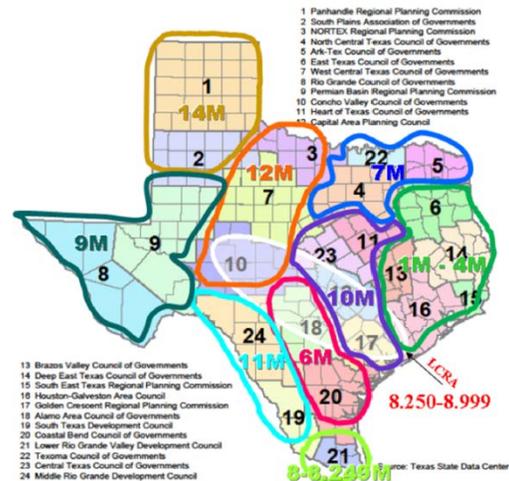
be downloaded onto a mobile device and the user will receive automatic notifications if the document has been updated.



The latest version of the TSICP added sections outlining the use of Mobile Satellite Talk Groups (MSAT) and the Statewide Coordinated P25 Radio Unit Identification (ID) Plan. Each region of the State has been assigned a range of Radio IDs which provides a process to maintain a set of unique identifier assignments in order to coordinate P25 Radio Unit IDs across the state.

Benefits of this voluntary approach include:

- Ability to quickly connect systems without reprogramming – Systems which are coordinated relieves one of the most significant obstacles to integrating systems; which is the need to resolve duplicate Radio Unit IDs.
- System owners only need to track one Radio Unit ID per radio, which makes tracking and managing radios, users and radio programming profiles ('codeplugs') much easier.
- Avoids the likelihood of duplicate Radio Unit IDs, saving significant troubleshooting effort for radio system support teams.
- Simplifies the mechanisms for enabling First Responders to operate on different systems throughout the State, saving precious time during disaster response.
- Helps eliminate errors in assigning IDs because they are organized into a Radio Unit ID fleetmap structure.



Office of the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator, continued

Legislative Report

The Office of the SWIC releases the annual "Texas Department of Public Safety Report on Interoperable Communications to the Texas Legislature" which provides detailed information and data on the progress of interoperable communications across the state. The latest version of the report can be found on the DPS website:

<http://www.dps.texas.gov/LawEnforcementSupport/communications/interop/documents/interopRpt.pdf>



Texas Public Safety Broadband

Texas and FirstNet have executed a Spectrum Management Lease Agreement which authorizes the Big-Net Long Term Evolution (LTE) system in Harris County to continue operations for 3 years, and allows Harris County to continue the planned expansion of the system. The LTE Outreach and Education efforts continue with providing Regional Broadband Planning meetings in the 24 Council of Government areas. Currently 18 regions have completed their kick-off meetings.

How hospitals prepare for community disasters

When disasters strike, hospitals respond. Incidents create sick and injured patients (and their family), the worried well seeking safety, patients evacuated from other hospitals, medically sensitive community members whose medical devices require power and water and the normal emergency cases like heart attacks. We must be ready even though our facilities are damaged and our staff experience disaster-related challenges.



New Braunfels Community Emergency Response Team volunteers use props to simulate traumatic amputations as part of a mass casualty drill at CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospital - New Braunfels. Photo Credit: New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung.

management, redundant communications (ham radio, etc.), logistics, media relations, etc., pre-planned. This plan is exercised during two annual drills that must meet three objectives: drill with community responders, stress the Emergency Department and simulate operating for 96 hours without outside resources. After these drills, performance improvement plans are developed and plan changes are made. All of these activities center on the annual Hazard Vulnerability Analysis which ranks risks ranging from pandemics to terrorism and is prioritized with help from local Offices of Emergency Management or their Regional Advisory Council. Staff are required to be trained to fulfill their disaster roles which range from decontamination to WEBEOC to evacuation device techniques. This creates the familiar EM cycle of planning, preparing, exercising, evaluating, training, responding and recovering.

Now, more than ever, it is very important that hospitals and community EM stakeholders work together to ensure that the community is resilient, including the vital health care sector.

With so many disasters impacting the US and the media attention around health care threats such as Ebola, regulators insist that hospitals maintain a robust Emergency Management (EM) program. To manage this, some hospitals hire a professional Emergency Manager (a niche in the EM profession that is just emerging). Others use a Nurse, Facility Manager, Administrator or a committee. Despite those differences, the preparedness objectives are uniform across hospitals.

Every hospital must have an Emergency Operations Plan with Hospital Incident Command System roles, patient



The San Antonio Fire Department teaches CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospital - Westover Hills Associates how to extinguish small fires.

How hospitals prepare for community disasters, continued



The Children's Hospital of San Antonio practices evacuating neonates (including their medical equipment) to and from the facility using the Southwest TX Regional Advisory Council for Trauma Ambulance Bus (Ambus).



Christus Santa Rosa Hospital - Medical Center Associates practice patient HAZMAT Decontamination.

November News Briefs

Flu Season

CDC has published the 2014-2015 recommendations for the prevention and control of influenza. CDC recommends an annual flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older. Flu activity is low across the United States now, but usually begins to increase in October and most commonly peaks between January and March. Make plans to get your flu vaccine this fall.

Centers for Disease Control [flu page.](#)

Texas Department of State Health Services [flu page.](#)

West Nile

Of course there has been a lot of talk about Ebola, but, with recent rain across much of Texas, mosquito outbreaks are on the rise. And, with mosquitos, the risk of West Nile and other mosquito-borne illness rise as well. The number of reported cases of West Nile is increasing in Texas. Prepare for this potentially dangerous disease.

Practice these four habits:

- Use an approved insect repellent every time you go outside. Approved repellents are those that contain DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Follow the instructions on the label.
- Regularly drain standing water, including water that collects in empty cans, tires, buckets, clogged rain gutters and saucers under potted plants. Mosquitoes breed in stagnant water.
- Wear long sleeves and pants at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Use air conditioning or make sure there are screens on all doors and windows to keep mosquitoes from entering the home.

[TDEM Daily Ebola Updates](#)

[West Nile Virus Homepage](#)

Texas EMS Conference

The 2014 Texas EMS Conference is November 23-26, 2014 at the Fort Worth Convention Center. Find out how more about conference and register here: [Texas EMS Conference Registration.](#)

The Annual IAEM-USA Conference

The 2014 IAEM-USA Conference is November 14-19, 2014 at The Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio. Find out how more about conference and register here: [IAEM-USA Conference Registration.](#)

The Great American Smokeout

The American Cancer Society marks the Great American Smokeout on November 20th. Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the US, yet 42 million Americans still smoke cigarettes. If you're a smoker, try quitting this one day. Try again the next day. Maybe even the next ...

[Great American Smokeout Information](#)

November 2014: Credits

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/CHIEF

W. Nim Kidd

DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

Paula Logan

Tom Polonis

Sandra Fulenwider

EDITORS

Suzannah Jones

Mike Jones

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Mike Jones

WEBSITE

DPS Web Team

CONTRIBUTORS

Joe Minshew, TDEM

Karla Jurrens, DPS

Esmeralda Valague, MA, CEM, NCPT

CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System

DIGITAL IMAGES CONTRIBUTED BY:

Texas Division of Emergency Management and as noted.