



TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ONLINE

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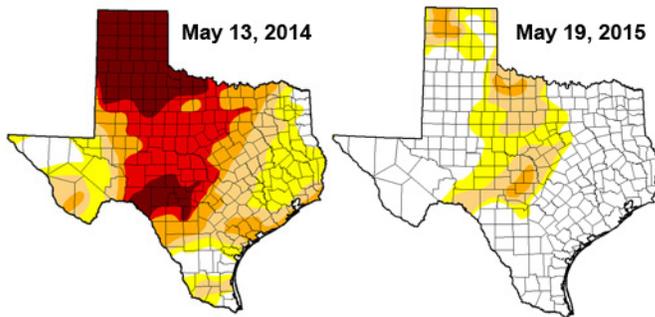
The Texas Division of Emergency Management is accepting article submissions for The Texas Emergency Management Online (TEMO) newsletter. If you have an idea for a topic or would like to submit an article, contact [Mike Jones](#) at 512-424-7050.

Message from the Chief – June 2015

Most Texans are all too familiar with the adage about Texas weather. It can fluctuate to extreme degrees, sometimes very quickly. So, how do you go about ending a drought in Texas? By enduring several weeks of record-breaking severe weather and unrelenting rain, of course!

Some Good News

Last May, the U.S. Drought Monitor reported that 91 percent of Texas was in some level of drought, with almost 40 percent experiencing at least extreme drought. This



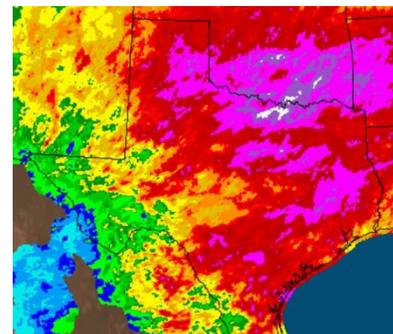
May, 70 percent of the state is considered drought free. For the first time since 2011, no part of Texas is under extreme or exceptional drought levels.

Texas lakes and reservoirs are on the rise. This time last year, Texas' reservoir water supply was only 65.5 percent full and falling. Now it's over 81 percent full and rising. Many reservoirs

released water to control flooding. And, except for far west Texas and the tip of the Rio Grande Valley, the wildfire danger across Texas is low. But all that rain comes with a price.

After a quiet start to spring, the frequency and intensity of severe weather in the U.S. began to increase toward the end of April. Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and other Plains states had already experienced significant inclement weather, including tornadoes, damaging wind, heavy rain and hail. It was clear that the severe weather was heading to Texas. Anticipating potentially widespread severe weather developing in Texas, we activated the State Operations Center on May 8 and began deploying assets around the state. It remained activated 24/7 through June 5.

As the storms began, heavy rainfall, accompanied by deadly tornadoes and strong winds, caused widespread damage. And it kept coming. It was raining almost everywhere and in record amounts, and the once drought-stricken ground



Courtesy National Weather Service

quickly became saturated. Over most of the state, massive flooding became the predominate issue. Then record breaking storms broke out in Central Texas, spreading north and east of the I-35 corridor and across southeast Texas to the Gulf, causing widespread damage and, sadly, loss of life. By May's end, many people were still unaccounted for and vast areas of Texas had seen extreme amounts rainfall over short periods of time.

Hurricane Season

As this severe weather outbreak begins to wind down, many Texas communities large and small are dealing with recovering and rebuilding. And now hurricane season is beginning.

With powerful storm surge, high winds, tornadoes and flooding, hurricanes could potentially devastate already heavily affected coastal areas as well as severely impacted inland areas.

Thousands of individuals in local, state and federal agencies, as well as members from voluntary organizations and the private sector have been committed to keeping Texans safe during these storms and helping them to recover following this unprecedented May weather. They are equally committed and ready if tropical storms threaten our coastal areas this hurricane season. You can help by taking the time now to assess your family's and your community's preparedness for these potentially dangerous storms.

Chief W. Nim Kidd, CEM[®], TEM

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[Hurricane and Post-Storm Preparedness](#)

[Evacuating with Your Pets](#)

Texans continue to needlessly risk their lives and the lives of first responders by attempting to drive through flooded roads.

Each year, more deaths occur due to flooding than any other severe weather hazard. Over half of all flood-related deaths occur in vehicles driven into flood water.

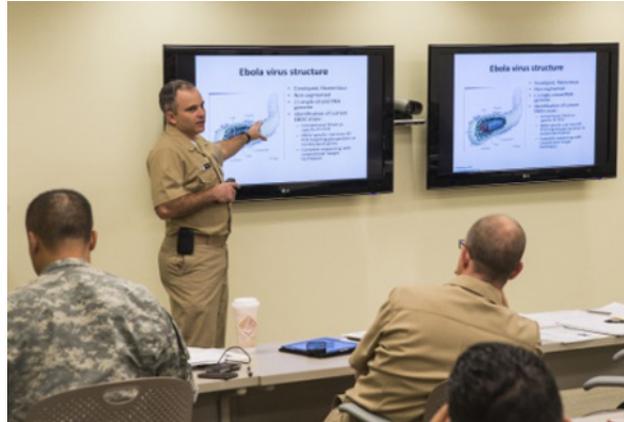
Don't drive through moving water, and DON'T drive around warnings or barriers!

[Turn Around Don't Drown[®]](#)

Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) Ebola Response Efforts and Considerations

The 2014 Ebola epidemic is the largest in history, affecting multiple countries in West Africa. U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), as the Department of Defense lead for coordinating defense support of civil authorities (DSCA) in the United States, was given the mission to stand up a joint medical support team (MST) to assist U.S. civilian hospitals to treat patients with Ebola and prevent the further spread of this epidemic. This was based off the October 19, 2014 request for assistance (RFA) from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) (ARNORTH), USNORTHCOM's Army component coordinated the training of the 30-person MST consisting of health care providers from across the nation representing the Army, Navy and Air Force. Training began at Fort Sam Houston, Texas on October 22, 2014, and was completed October 27, 2014. A second group of military healthcare providers was trained in November to facilitate rotational support to the



MST. The MST was designed to address multiple aspects of Ebola treatment such as facilitating additional training, serving as an interim staff while the existing staff is receiving additional or refresher training, augmenting staff treating Ebola patients and serving as a trained surge capability to deploy anywhere in the homeland.

U.S. Navy Commander James Lawler, Naval Medical Research Bio Defense Chief of Clinical Research, briefs the 30 person joint service Medical Support Team as part of the weeklong training hosted by U.S. Army North (Fifth Army), JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The multiagency training effort included USARNORTH's Civil Support Training Activity (CSTA), the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Disease (USAMRIID) and Naval Medical Research Directorate doctors selected for the MST. USAMRIID deployed instructors to train the team on donning and doffing personal protective equipment, a critical component of ensuring healthcare provider safety while treating Ebola patients. Additionally, eight CSTA subject matter experts evaluated the MST during their scenario-based certification exercise. U.S. Army Medical Command, in conjunction with the USNORTHCOM surgeon, was instrumental in providing a training syllabus and coordination among other MEDCOM and joint agencies.

While the MST support to DHHS for Ebola virus disease (EVD) response ended on December 18, there were several relevant emergency management and public health implications that emerged as a result of this RFA and MST training.

National Readiness for a No-Notice Bio Event

Prior to the DHHS RFA in support of the EVD response effort, DoD did not have a pre-existing MST capability that was staffed, trained and equipped to the extent required for a national EVD response. DoD developed this capability in response to the RFA. This involved extensive resources, training and fielding of specific personal protective equipment (PPE) within a very short timeframe. This RFA demonstrated the need for response capabilities that could be tailored and equipped to address multiple types of infectious diseases and other chemical, biological, nuclear, radiological (CBRN) events. Additionally, a natural outbreak would require more

public health and medical response while a biological weapon would involve more consequence management.

Other key considerations noted the speed of transmission due to modern transportation. Today's diseases can easily travel across cities, states, countries, and continents within hours. Rapidly emplaced mitigation measures are critical to slowing the spread of transmission. Ongoing enforced protocols, training and appropriate PPE enable the healthcare community to stay safe and effectively treat infected personnel. Identifying gaps related to facility capabilities, staff training and PPE are critical to managing patients with a deadly, highly infectious pathogen.

Collaboration, coordination of efforts and sharing of information is critical to leverage the response effort. This was witnessed by the combined efforts of several entities in staffing, resourcing, training and equipping the MST. It was also evident in the evolving PPE guidance that resulted from information shared from the field, and across healthcare facilities, organizations and agencies.

Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) and Training



Personal protective equipment is a general term and situation dependent. The EVD response required specific PPE and as more EVD research and real world empirical data evolved, so did the PPE guidance. The numbers, types and properties of PPE items will differ depending on the agent, the mission and the working environment. The PPE for the MST was tailored for medical staff that would work in a clinically controlled, isolation supported, hospital environment.

Remote and external working environments, such as the EVD response in Africa require PPE specifically tailored to address austere conditions with limited resources and reduced capabilities. Austere conditions could also emerge following disasters and complex catastrophes, greatly impacting the working environment and required PPE.

During the MST training, it became clear that clinical-grade PPE was not nationally readily available in sufficient quantities to support post event supply operations. Health care facilities across the nation were ordering PPE in anticipation of potentially receiving EVD patients in the United States while the EVD support in Africa also placed a high demand on PPE. Key implications of this PPE high demand/short supply emphasized prioritization of who gets the equipment, how it is stored and maintained and the amount of contingency stock required to support continuous

operations.

Additionally, healthcare providers require effective training and validation on properly donning and doffing PPE as well as performing procedures while



Above left and above: A Medical Support Team augmentation class trains on JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Nov. 18, 2014. Medical Support Team receives training on how to use Personal Protective Equipment and proper procedures when working in areas contaminated with the Ebola virus. The class was part of a weeklong training hosted by U.S. Army North (Fifth Army).

in PPE. Most healthcare providers are not as proficient with these PPE procedures unless they are a part of their daily scope of duties. Considerations for sustainment training and recertification are also essential due to the nature of the military environment and high turnover of rotating personnel in assignments.

While new and invasive diseases will continue to emerge and challenge the emergency management and public health environment, the development and training of the MST provided substantial insight to supporting a national bio-threat response. The Army's efforts to support its federal interagency and nongovernment partners are essential for unity of effort and maximizing response time in the nation's time of need. Development and training of the DOD MST supports this whole of government approach, which is vital for leveraging resources across the nation in preparing for, protecting against, responding to and recovering from all hazards and threats in the homeland.



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U.S. Navy Commander Ryan Maves of Infectious Disease and Critical Care Medicine, Naval Medical Center, San Diego, goes over ultrasound techniques during the Medical Support Team augmentation training at the San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) on Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, Nov. 19, 2014.

Partner Agency

Disaster response a team effort at the Texas Department of Insurance

The Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) is always ready to kick into high gear to help consumers with insurance issues following a disaster or storm.

In recent years, TDI has helped Texans through more than 20 storms and disasters, including hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Ike; the Bastrop wildfire; and the West explosion. With each disaster response effort, the agency's goal is to ensure that consumers receive prompt, fair and responsive service from their insurance companies.

"We understand the importance of helping consumers get back on their feet after a disaster, and we want to do what we can to help with that process," said Melissa Hield, the associate commissioner of TDI's Consumer Protection program.

TDI is usually among the first organizations to set up in a disaster area after local authorities have said it's safe to enter. TDI staff establish a presence in hardware stores, school gyms, or alongside TDEM and FEMA, to answer consumers' questions, help them file claims or complaints, and distribute educational information.

In the seven months following Hurricane Ike, more than 250 TDI staff members worked at 60 FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers in 33 cities and helped more than 8,000 consumers.



TDI set up a table in a home improvement store in Brownsville to help consumers after Hurricane Dolly.



In the immediate days after Hurricane Ike, TDI and other organizations helped consumers in a parking lot before moving indoors.

Beyond the assistance TDI provides to consumers in the field, staff from all areas at TDI play an active part in the agency's disaster response efforts. They post current information to the agency's website, issue press releases, extend the hours for TDI's toll-free Consumer Help Line, monitor insurance company response and solvency, investigate potential fraud, issue emergency licenses to adjusters, help local jurisdictions with safety inspections, and provide fire and windstorm inspections.

But TDI doesn't only respond to disasters, it also prepares for them. Before a major storm strikes Texas,

TDI staff work in shifts at the State Operations Center to be involved in the coordination process with TDEM and the Emergency Management Council.



TDI staff help a consumer in a FEMA Disaster Recovery Center after Hurricane Dolly.

Throughout the year, TDI participates in TDEM's disaster preparedness exercises and coordinates quarterly conference call meetings with the Texas State Disaster Coalition (TSDC).

TDI created TSDC in 2001 to ensure insurance companies, state agencies, and volunteer organizations are sharing information and collaborating on disaster response efforts. During a disaster response, TDI hosts daily conference call meetings with TSDC to update them on the situation, which allows them to make plans to deploy their catastrophe teams and adjusters to the disaster area.

Learn more about TDI through its website, www.tdi.texas.gov, or by calling the Consumer Help Line at 1-800-252-3439.

2015 Texas Emergency Management Conference



The 2015 Texas Emergency Management Conference was held at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center May 12-15, 2015, in San Antonio, Texas. As in past years, the conference

was a great success with almost 2,300 registered participants comprised of attendees, presenters and exhibitors and over 200 workshops and trainings that focused on traditional and non-traditional emergency management topics, including workshops developed specifically for the families of emergency responders.

New to conference was the addition of a lightning round to the Opening Ceremony, during which a representative of a local jurisdiction from each Texas Department of Public Safety region provided an eight minute presentation on a pressing issue or best practice in their area to promote

affiliation, communication and information sharing. This year's key note speaker, Dr. Richard Knabb of the National Hurricane Center, emphasized the importance of preparedness for what may be an active hurricane season. Chief W. Nim Kidd's closing remarks also stressed the importance of preparedness of jurisdictions at all



levels of government, yet he went one step deeper. Chief Kidd highlighted the need for emergency responders to ensure they and their loved ones are personally prepared too for a man-made or natural incident.



During the conference as the after effects of the ongoing severe weather negatively impacted the state, we, the emergency management community, were reminded that despite the limited, but impactful, events of the past few

years, that our circumstances can change at a moment's notice. Making what was learned and shared at the conference, even more important to the future preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation for each jurisdiction in Texas.



NOAA Planes Get Significant Upgrades

NOAA's two Lockheed WP-3D Orion aircraft recently entered a long-term maintenance period at Naval Air Station, Jacksonville. The aircraft will receive new wings and significant additional upgrades as part of a service life extension program that will allow the WP-3D Orion aircraft to continue supporting all of NOAA's critical missions for years to come. The process will take approximately one year and once completed, NOAA's second WP-3D will enter its own re-winging and upgrade maintenance period in 2016.

The two planes have flown into storms every hurricane season for nearly four decades, collecting research and forecasting data to transmit back to the mainland.

While the planes are routinely maintained, this is the first big overhaul in more than a decade.

The planes are also receiving upgraded radar in the tail, fuselage and nose. During a storm, researchers and forecasters use the radar and other instruments to measure a storm's track and strength.

Last year, for the first time the U.S. launched unmanned aircraft in Hurricane Edouard to collect data.

Texas A&M Forest Service

Plan My Land Operation Online Tool Now Available

May 13, 2015—COLLEGE STATION, Texas—Want to put in a road on your land? Protect your water resources? Enhance wildlife, harvest trees or clear vegetation? Texas A&M Forest Service's newest online tool, Plan My Land Operation, is designed to help you protect your property and ensure sustainability as you begin your next land improvement project.

Geared toward landowners, contractors and land managers, Plan My Land Operation is key to planning any improvement to your land. This tool helps you plan and layout your project based on your specific terrain, soil and water resources. As a user, you can quickly map a property boundary, identify sensitive areas, place a buffer around critical features, and determine things needed like the proper size culvert.

"Planning any land operation is a critical first step to protecting your land and water resources. Without a good operational plan, your land may be at risk," Hughes Simpson, program coordinator for Texas A&M Forest Service said.

As a service-based state agency, TFS strives to provide land managers advanced tools to help efficiently and effectively implement land operations.

"Ordinarily, in order to do something like this you need an extensive GIS system or to be a land operation expert. Now, anyone with access to the Internet can map their property and generate detailed operation planning reports," Simpson said.

A unique feature of the Plan My Land Operation tool is that it is also useful to hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. Users can map out their trail and it will show the distance, elevation and slope of that trail. While full capability of the tool is statewide, this function is available nationwide.

Plan My Land Operation is the newest online tool added to an already extensive lineup of interactive online tools located at texasforestinfo.com. This website provides landowners, managers, government officials, local community groups and

the public state-of-the-art access to custom Web mapping applications with capabilities to discover and explore an array of maps depicting forest conditions, and query and download data on a variety of forest interests.

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