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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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Frequency Jammers Block Emergency Calls

Earlier this week a 4-car accident in Portland, ME, injured 11 people. Fortunately no one had life-threatening injuries as response to the accident was delayed because someone in the area was using a [radio frequency jammer which interfered with emergency communications](#). Similar incidents have happened in the same area, and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is investigating.

Jammers do not discriminate between types of signal that they block, so all emergency communications by GPS, radio, cell, and Wi-Fi can be disrupted by the devices. Any blocking or tampering with authorized communications signals is illegal, as is the sale of devices that do so.

The FCC has published a [FAQ sheet](#) (PDF, 124.4 Kb) and a [short 1-page bulletin](#) (PDF, 64.9 Kb) discussing what jammers do and why they are illegal.

The FCC operates an investigations unit within their enforcement bureau and will investigate suspected use of such devices. According to their website, “if you are aware that someone is operating, selling, leasing, advertising for sale, shipping, distributing, and/or importing jammers, [you can file a complaint](#).”

(Source: [The Portland Press Herald](#))

Wildfires and Propane Tanks

The [Dayton \(TX\) News ran an article](#) recently with tips on how home and business owners can help protect their propane tanks from the wildfires that have been burning through the western part of the state. The propane safety tips are also important for responding fire personnel, who should not assume these steps have already been taken.

With the extensive drought conditions covering much of the country, grass and brush fires are more of a hazard in areas of the country that are not usually hit by them. [Propane101.com](#) and the [Propane Education and Research Council](#) (PERC) also have pages with instructions on what to do during a wildfire:

- Make sure all personnel know what propane smells like.
- If there is time and it is safe to do so, turn the shut-off valve to the tank completely clockwise.

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

- Check for and remove any improperly-stored gas cylinders in a structure. Propane cylinders should always be stored outside.
- If possible, turn off the gas supply valves going to the gas appliances in the house. Close the screen, door, and/or damper to any gas fireplaces.
- After the fire has passed, ensure that proper safety checks have been completed. Do not try to repair or modify any systems.

The PERC published the [Propane Safety and Wildfires](#) (PDF, 575.8 Kb) informational flyer for consumers that could be used as handouts during wildfire season. In addition, PERC has a list of [emergency training scenarios](#) that fire departments can use when planning response.

(Source: [FireEngineering.com](#))

Water Utilities Response for Fire Departments

Fires and disasters often disrupt water delivery to areas and buildings, causing compromised piping or sprinkler systems. Depending on the size of the incident, this can at the least complicate responses to the primary incident. At most, it creates a chance for loss of life and property that otherwise wouldn't be an issue.

Occasionally a disaster is itself caused by failing water systems, such as the [2008 water main break in Bethesda, MD](#). River Road unexpectedly lived up to its name during a December morning rush hour and commuters had to be rescued by swift water teams and helicopters. No one was killed, but many people were put in harm's way, the roadway itself was compromised, and community water systems taxed as "[millions of gallons](#)" of water rushed down the road.

Fire and emergency responders often are expected to know the basics of water supply and distribution systems, including visually identifying types of valves, pumps, and meters, and should be able to shut off supply to some broken water lines or hydrants when necessary. A [Fire Engineering article](#) published this month discusses these types of system details along with many graphics.

(Source: [FireEngineering.com](#))

Active Shooter Resources Available

Since the mass shooting in Colorado last week, the EMR-ISAC has received multiple emails from a variety of sources featuring free online resources available to emergency responders, businesses, and citizens. A summary:

- [Active Shooter: What You Can Do](#) – 45-minute online training provides guidance on how to prevent and prepare for an active shooter incident.
- [Active Shooter: How To Respond](#) – booklet and poster available for facilities owners and operators to prepare and respond to incidents.
- [Active Shooter Awareness Virtual Roundtable](#) – this archived September 2011 webinar discusses response plans and employee training.
- [Performance Venues – Indicators of Violence & Protective Measures](#) (PDF, 131.5 Kb) – discusses suspicious activity reporting and protective measures.
- [Bomb Prevention Training](#) – open to State, local, and private sector entities.
- [Bomb Making Materials Awareness Program](#) – helping to foster information sharing between businesses and law enforcement.

(Source: [DHS](#))

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DHS and the FBI encourage recipients of this document to report information concerning suspicious or criminal activity to the local [FBI office](#) and also the [State or Major Urban Area Fusion Center](#).

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.