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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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New Guidance After Bakken Oil Derailment

The oil industry is taking another look at protocol and regulations after the December 30, 2013 derailment in Casselton, ND, the third derailment of a train carrying crude oil from the Bakken Shale region in less than a year.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) [sent the following suggestions](#) to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA):

- Regulators should consider rerouting trains carrying hazardous materials to avoid "populated and other sensitive areas;"
- The FRA and PHMSA should create an audit program to ensure rail carriers have adequate emergency response capabilities to handle a crash or spill;
- Another audit program should be developed to ensure shippers have properly classified the hazardous materials on board.

[From the rail industry itself](#), the CEO of Union Pacific stated shippers will begin treating crude oil like hazardous materials such as anhydrous ammonia and work to find safer shipping routes away from populated areas.

The boom in oil production in North Dakota has [reshaped oil transportation around the country](#). In 2007, 74 percent of the crude from North Dakota was shipped by pipeline; but due to the inability of the existing pipeline to handle the increase, 71 percent of the oil produced in November 2013 was shipped by rail. According to the American Association of Railroads, rail shipping increased by 6,000 percent.

(Source: [NTSB](#))

Fire Behavior in Modern Building Construction

In the past several years, the change of fire dynamics and behavior in residential buildings has garnered a lot of attention. Some of the research focuses on the [evolution of home furnishings from natural materials to synthetic](#); however a new partnership between the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and the American Wood Council (AWC) brings more attention the changes in building materials.

According to a [recent press release](#) (PDF, 17 Kb), USFA and AWC worked together to create several web-based educational tools for the fire service. These tools

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discuss materials such as structural glued laminated timber beams, structural composite lumber, and structural insulated panels; a list of subject matter experts on these topics; and an interactive tool on traditional and modern construction and their properties.

The online tools are listed on the [USFA website](#), along with a variety of other resources on this topic.

(Source: [USFA](#))

Social Media for Crisis Communication Webinar

The U.S. Small Business Administration and Agility Recovery are co-hosting a webinar on social media for crisis communication on Tuesday, February 11 from 2-3pm EST. The discussion will include:

- Effective uses of various social media channels;
- Simple first steps toward building a crisis communications plan;
- Creating a crisis communication plan;
- Best practices based on recent disasters.

Key messages to staff, clients, and business partners in a timely and accurate manner are essential when a disaster strikes. Organizations are increasingly relying on social media to get ahead of and dissipate misinformation that can negatively effect on the company or organization.

Since 2009, the SBA has partnered with Agility Recovery to offer business continuity strategies through its [PrepareMyBusiness](#) website. The site houses past webinars and downloads of helpful disaster preparedness checklists.

A question-and-answer session will follow the presentation. Space is limited; [participants should register](#) if they plan on attending.

(Source: [SBA](#))

National Health Preparedness Security Index

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) jointly with more than 20 public health organizations and associations released the [National Health Security Preparedness Index](#) (NHSPI) in December 2013. The NHSPI aligned with other national measures of preparedness, including [Presidential Policy Directive-8](#) and the [National Health Security Strategy](#).

The NHSPI is divided into five domains: Health Surveillance; Community Planning and Engagement; Incident and Information Management; Surge Management; and Countermeasure Management. States are scored on a 1 to 10 scale with 10 being the highest. The numbers are then averaged, giving each state an overall score. The overall score for the United States for 2013 was 7.2.

Information in the NHSPI is collected and reported at the state level; however local health departments can use that information to base their activities and plans around, thereby increasing their state's rating and overall level of preparedness.

(Source: [NHSPI](#))

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