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Tropical Illness Makes its Way to United States

A virus normally seen in Africa, Asia, and the island nations of the Indian Ocean recently made its way to the Caribbean. [Chikungunya was first reported in the Americas in December 2013](#). The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) reports an estimated 55,000 confirmed or suspected cases in the Caribbean since then. The [first case in the United States](#) was reported in mid-May.

Chikungunya is transmitted via infected mosquito. Symptoms start within 3-7 days after being bitten and include: fever, headache, muscle pain, rash, and severe joint swelling and pain. The name means “contorted with pain.” It very rarely results in death, but symptoms can last for months or sometimes years.

There is currently no vaccine or specific treatment for this virus except symptom relief. The only real method of prevention lies in the control of mosquitos.

Public health departments in states and territories near the Caribbean are encouraged to educate themselves and their local medical facilities on the identification and treatment of this virus. Additionally, since we are currently headed into summer and travel to the Caribbean is common for people all over the country, health officials nationwide should be aware of this issue in returning travelers.

In addition to the resources and information on the [PAHO website](#), the [World Health Organization](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and the [Florida Department of Health](#) also have pages dedicated to Chikungunya.

(Source: [PAHO](#))

Federal Collaborations in EMS Webinar June 2

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s Office of EMS is hosting a new webinar series “EMS FOCUS: A Collaborative Federal Webinar Series” to give federal agencies an opportunity to provide more information about EMS efforts and programs. The first webinar, “[Federal Collaboration in EMS—The Four Priorities](#),” is planned for Monday, June 2 at 2 pm Eastern time.

The inaugural webinar will take a detailed look into the top four priorities of the [FICEMS Strategic Plan](#), released earlier this year. FICEMS – the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS – consists of representatives from every federal

agency that addresses EMS. The FICEMS chair and the OEMS director will be accompanied by representatives from four committees to discuss efforts toward:

- Veteran to Civilian EMS Credentialing;
- Evidence-Based Guideline Development;
- EMS System Preparedness;
- EMS Data Standardization.

Attendees will be encouraged to participate in an open question-and-answer session, with the webinar and Q&A lasting approximately 1 hour. Every other month, EMS FOCUS will provide a venue to discuss crucial initiatives, issues, and challenges for EMS stakeholders and leaders nationwide.

(Source: [NHTSA OEMS](#))

Hurricane Season Begins June 1

Hurricane season begins this Sunday, June 1st. Here is a partial list of resources for fire departments, emergency management agencies, and communities to help better prepare for these major disasters:

- Preparedness tips from PrepareAthon! and the [National Hurricane Program](#) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA);
- The PrepareAthon! "[How to Prepare for Hurricanes](#)" (PDF, 1.9 Mb) guide;
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) offers the [2014 Hurricane Outlook](#) and the [National Hurricane Center's](#) resources;
- Ready.gov, FEMA's site dedicated to a more prepared nation, hosts an [extensive section on hurricanes](#);
- After a hurricane, contact [DisasterAssistance.gov](#) to find out how to apply for assistance;
- Preparation tips from the [Federal Communications Commission](#) (FCC) and the [Internal Revenue Service](#) (IRS).

(Sources: various)

Millions Killed in Delaware Highway Crash

[A truck carrying 460 honeybee hives](#) overturned on a major interstate ramp near Newark last week. The truck was [headed to Maine from Florida](#) as part of the mobile pollination industry. Authorities estimate the crash released 16-20 million bees on the interstate a little after 6 pm, during late rush hour. Several people were stung up to 100 times each and transported to a local hospital.

The Delaware State Police activated the "Honey Bee Swarm Removal Plan." Local on-call beekeepers and handlers were brought in and firefighters sprayed water on the bees to keep them more-or-less contained until dark, when they go dormant. The ramp was closed for over 12 hours.

This out-of-the-ordinary case is an excellent example of creating emergency plans for the unexpected. Delaware wrote the bee swarm plan 14 years ago to identify subject matter experts and give first responders some initial guidance. The question of who to call for help is best answered before you have to deal with an unexpected emergency, such as millions of bees on a busy highway.

(Source: [Delaware Online](#))

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