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EMR-ISAC InfoGram Oct. 21 – New fentanyl detection standards will protect first responders in the field; CISA releases Infrastructure Resilience Planning Framework

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Emergency Management and Response - Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

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New fentanyl detection standards will protect first responders in the field

The opioid crisis in the United States began in the late 1990s as a result of extensive overuse of prescribed medications. This crisis continues today and has since evolved to include abuse of synthetic opioids, like fentanyl, obtained both through medical prescription and by illicit means.

One critical consequence of the widespread prevalence of synthetic opioids is the alarming frequency with which first responders, including emergency medical and law enforcement personnel at all levels, encounter them. Contact with a synthetic opioid such as fentanyl or a related compound presents a safety hazard for first responders if they are not prepared with the proper protective equipment. Reliable detection is one way to protect first responders from exposure.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) funded and provided subject matter expertise for development of three standards for detection of fentanyl and fentanyl-related compounds in the field. These three new standards were published in July 2021 by ASTM International.

This suite of ASTM International standards promote the protection of those on the frontline of the opioid crisis through a specification, guide, and test method for field detection equipment:

- ASTM E3243-21 Standard Specification for Field Detection Equipment and Assays Used for Fentanyl and Fentanyl-Related Compounds.

Highlights

- ASTM E3289-21 Standard Guide for Using Equipment and Assays for Field Detection of Fentanyl and Fentanyl-Related Compounds.
- ASTM E3290-21 Standard Test Method for Establishing Performance of Equipment and Assays for Field Detection of Fentanyl-Related Compounds.

The newly published standards will be put into effect almost immediately through a DHS S&T-led research and development effort with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL). They will be used to support collection of reference spectra to build out instrument libraries for approximately 50 Drug Enforcement Agency controlled substances including fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, and other emerging synthetic drugs.

The ability of first responders to identify fentanyl, its analogs and other synthetic drugs through use of standardized methods, reliable equipment, and a centralized, accurate reference library will help increase operational efficiency and responder safety.

Visit ASTM International's website to access these three new standards. Read the full press release on DHS S&T's website.

(Source: DHS S&T)

U.S. Fire Administration

The U.S. Fire Administration operates 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 fema-emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov.

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CDC and FDA warn of increased availability of delta-8 THC and adverse events

On September 14, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a Health Advisory to warn of the increase in availability of cannabis products containing delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and reports of adverse events. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released a Consumer Update on the same day, with recommendations for consumer safety concerning delta-8 THC.

The regulatory environment surrounding manufacture and sale of cannabis products is conflicting and changing rapidly, even as markets for legal cannabis products are growing and diversifying.

While the Drug Enforcement Administration unambiguously classifies delta-8 THC as a Schedule 1 drug under the Controlled Substances Act, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2018 Farm Bill legalizes sale of byproducts of the hemp plant, which arguably include delta-8 THC products, since delta-8 THC products can be manufactured from hemp.

This legal "loophole" around delta-8 THC, along with the relaxation of many states' laws governing marijuana products, have contributed to a proliferation of delta-8 consumer products across the country. Products sold as concentrated delta-8 THC are readily available online. These products are sometimes being marketed and sold as if they were typical legal hemp products containing non-psychoactive cannabinoids. Consumers may not even be aware a product is psychoactive or intoxicating, due to incomplete or inaccurate labeling, or misleading marketing.

The CDC reports increased availability of a wide variety of products, such as vapes, smokable hemp sprayed with delta-8 THC extract, distillates, tinctures, gummies, chocolates, and infused beverages. The FDA warns that none of the delta-8 THC products on the market have been evaluated or approved by the FDA for safe use in any context.

In 2021, the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) introduced a product code specific to delta-8 THC into its National Poison Data System (NPDS), allowing for the monitoring of delta-8 THC adverse events by poison control centers. Reports from January through July 2021 showed that 41% involved unintentional exposure to delta-8 THC and 39% involved pediatric patients (less than 18 years old).

The FDA reports that most cases it was notified about over the past year occurred after ingesting delta-8 THC-containing food products (e.g., brownies, gummies).

The FDA warns that delta-8 THC products should be kept out of the reach of children and pets. With Halloween festivities around the corner, it might be easier for young children to accidentally consume the edible forms of these products, especially if they are available in "lookalike packaging," something Arkansas' Attorney General recently issued a public health warning about.

911 operators and emergency medical services personnel should be vigilant when responding to patients presenting with THC-like intoxication symptoms, especially from individuals who do not report an exposure to marijuana or history of use. Symptomatic patients should be questioned about their use of cannabidiol (CBD) and delta-8 THC products.

Read the advisories from CDC and FDA for more information.

(Sources: CDC, FDA)

CISA releases Infrastructure Resilience Planning Framework

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has just released the Infrastructure Resilience Planning Framework (IRPF), a resource for planners in state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments; regional planning commissions; infrastructure owners; and large manufacturing clusters.

The IRPF is a flexible framework that helps users to identify critical infrastructure, understand interconnected infrastructure systems, assess related risks, and develop and implement resilience solutions.

The IRPF was developed by CISA Infrastructure Security Division's Infrastructure Development and Recovery (IDR) program. It can be incorporated into many types of plans, such as economic development, capital improvement, hazard mitigation, and emergency response/recovery. It can also be used to support funding requests. The guide can be used with or without IDR assistance by local and regional planning and development organizations.

The IRPF outlines five key steps that can be incorporated into existing planning processes to enhance resilience by addressing critical infrastructure dependencies. The IRPF Fact Sheet summarizes these steps. To support these steps, IRPF includes guidance, tools, and resources, including infrastructure dependency questions, a meeting facilitation guide, and a compendium of mechanisms to fund resilience solutions.

CISA/ISD is developing additional resources to supplement the IRPF that it plans to post to the website in the coming months.

- The Infrastructure Dependency Primer is a video series describing the fundamentals of interconnected infrastructure systems. This was developed based on state and local comments that users might not be aware of these concepts which are useful when applying the IRPF.
- The Regional Resiliency Assessment Methodology, a framework for conducting regional infrastructure assessments, based on lessons learned from the Regional Resiliency

Assessment Program. The Methodology can be used to support the assessment phase of the IRPF.

- A Drought and Infrastructure Planning Guide, a brief resource describing the impacts and considerations of drought on infrastructure systems.

CISA/ISD's IRPF is available on its website, on the Infrastructure Development and Recovery Program page. If you have questions or comments about the IRDF, or you would like to find out more about how the IDR Program can assist your organization, email CISA at idr@cisa.dhs.gov.

(Source: CISA)

IAFC hosts virtual Wildland-Urban Interface Conference, Nov 15-16

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) is hosting a virtual Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Conference on **November 15 and 16**.

The conference will offer access to two days of live-streamed general sessions, breakout sessions and the Virtual Marketplace. It is organized around three tracks: 1) fire adapted communities; 2) operations and suppression; and 3) wildland fire policy & tools. Topics on the agenda include, but are not limited to:

- The current state of wildland fire.
- Cameron Peak and challenges across Colorado late season 2020.
- Hurricanes and Wildfires: Interconnected challenges faced in the southeastern United States.
- Refining landscape-level fire planning to a community: Ashland's PODs experience.
- Fighting fire at Wildland Preparedness Level 5 (PL5) in the WUI.
- Resource management challenges in 2020 and 2021.

Announcement of the Wildfire Mitigation Awards will occur each day of the conference. These awards are the highest national honor one can receive for outstanding work and significant program impact in wildfire preparedness and mitigation.

The conference is free and the registration is designed to be quick and easy. To register, visit the IAFC's conference registration page.

(Source: IAFC)

CISA, FBI, and NSA release joint Cybersecurity Advisory on BlackMatter Ransomware

CISA, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the National Security Agency (NSA) have released joint Cybersecurity Advisory (CSA): BlackMatter Ransomware. Since July 2021, malicious cyber actors have used BlackMatter ransomware to target multiple U.S. critical infrastructure entities, including a U.S. Food and Agriculture Sector organization. To reduce the risk of BlackMatter ransomware, CISA, FBI, and NSA encourage organizations to implement the recommended

Cyber Information and Incident Assistance Links

MS-ISAC
SOC@cisecurity.org
1-866-787-4722

IdentityTheft.gov

IC3

Cybercrime Support Network

General Information Links

FTC scam list

CISA alerts

Law Enforcement Cyber Center

TLP Information

NSA encourage organizations to implement the recommended mitigations in the joint CSA and visit StopRansomware.gov for more information on protecting against and responding to ransomware attacks.

(Source: CISA)

Ongoing cyber threats to US water and wastewater systems sector facilities

CISA, the FBI, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the NSA have released a joint Cybersecurity Advisory (CSA) that details ongoing cyber threats to the U.S. Water and Wastewater Systems (WWS) Sector. The joint CSA provides extensive mitigations and resources to assist WWS Sector facilities in strengthening operational resilience and cybersecurity practices. CISA has also released a Cyber Risks & Resources for the Water and Wastewater Systems Sector infographic that details both information technology and operational technology risks the WWS Sector faces and provides select resources.

(Source: CISA)

CISA seeking answers for implementation of endpoint detection and response tools

The question of how long logs containing information that could provide clues into cybersecurity incidents should be maintained emerged as a sticking point following breaches at federal contractors Microsoft and SolarWinds when CISA noted limited logging capabilities of Microsoft Azure's cloud services except at premium levels. Microsoft has since offered federal agencies a one-year free trial of advanced logging for cybersecurity auditing.

The maintenance of logs is one element in a class of offerings referred to as Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR), which is specifically mentioned in a May 12 executive order responding to SolarWinds and other major breaches. The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently instructed agencies to cooperate with CISA by sharing their current EDR status and coming up with plans to optimize their deployment of the technology.

(Source: NextGov)

Ransomware group FIN12 aggressively going after healthcare targets

An "aggressive" financially motivated threat actor has been identified as linked to a string of RYUK ransomware attacks since October 2018, while maintaining close partnerships with TrickBot-affiliated threat actors and using a publicly available arsenal of tools such as Cobalt Strike Beacon payloads to interact with victim networks.

FIN12 relies on partners to obtain initial access to victim

environments. FIN12 also distinguishes itself from other intrusion threat actors in that it rarely engages in data theft extortion — a tactic that's used to leak exfiltrated data when victims refuse to pay up — which Mandiant says stems from the threat actor's desire to move quickly and strike targets that are willing to settle with minimal negotiation to recover critical systems, a factor that perhaps explains their increasing interest in attacking healthcare networks.

(Source: The Hacker News)

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

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