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By James M. Thomas

October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month and unfortunately we have been reading in the news about the many situations where information has been compromised. We all benefit from the computers in the information age we are now in, but we must also now be very careful in the way which the information and the equipment is handled both in our personal and professional life. There are several tips in this issue that should prove to be beneficial.

Congratulations to Mike Varney, the Fire Chief of the Ellington Fire Department who was recently named the National Volunteer Fire Chief of the year. Chief Varney has been very active in many aspects of public safety in Connecticut for several years including playing a leading role in the area of " Public Safety Communications Interoperability".

Congratulations to Chief Varney, we are very proud of him and all that he does for everyone in Connecticut on a day to day basis.

This issue has many special features including the outstanding efforts of the local CERT Teams. This is where the average citizen can become involved at the local level and play a significant role, that help not only the member and their family, but also the local community where they live. Kudos, to the more then 150 CERT Team members who attended the 3rd Annual Training Conference at the Connecticut Fire Academy in early September.

In addition we have highlighted some of the drills and exercises that have taken place recently. Please feel free to share your experiences with others. If you have something you would like to have in the DEMHS please contact us at our website: Comm.demhs@po.state.ct.us or call us at 860-256-0800.

Enjoy the October issue.

Eight Cyber Security Practices to Stay Safe Online

The widespread availability of computers and connections to the Internet provides everyone with 24/7 access to information, credit and financial services, and shopping. The Internet is also an incredible tool for educators and students to communicate and learn.

Unfortunately, some individuals exploit the Internet through criminal behavior and other harmful acts. Criminals can try to gain unauthorized access to your computer and then use that access to steal your identity, commit fraud, or even launch cyber attacks against others. By following the recommended cyber security practices outlined here, you can limit the harm cyber criminals can do not only to your computer, but to everyone's computer.

However, there is no single cyber security practice or technological solution that will prevent online crime. These recommended cyber security practices highlight that using a set of practices that include Internet habits as well as technology solutions can make a difference.

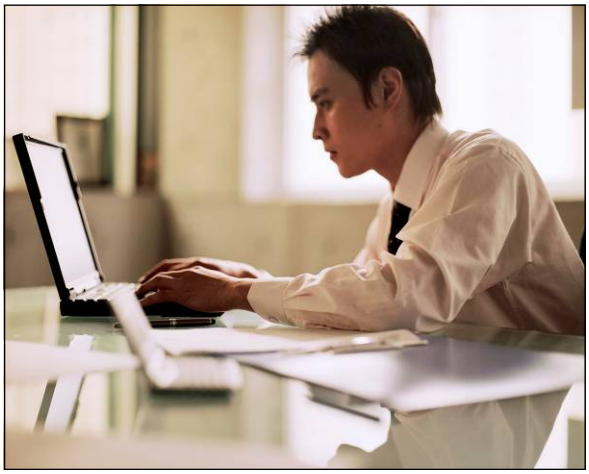
The National Cyber Security Alliance's Top Eight Cyber Security Practices are practical steps you can take to stay safe online and avoid becoming a victim of fraud, identity theft, or cyber crime.

1) Protect your personal information. It's valuable.

Why? To an identity thief, it can provide instant access to your financial accounts, your credit record, and your other personal assets.

If you think no one would be interested in your personal information, think again. The reality is that anyone can be a victim of identity theft. In fact, according to a Federal Trade Commission survey, there are almost 10 million victims every year. It's often difficult to know how thieves obtained their victims' personal information, and while it definitely can happen offline, some cases start when online data is stolen. Visit www.consumer.gov/idtheft to learn what to do if your identity is stolen.

2) Know who you're dealing with online.



And know what you're getting into. There are dishonest people in the bricks and mortar world *and* on the Internet. But online, you can't judge an operator's trustworthiness with a gut-affirming look in the eye. It's remarkably simple for online scammers to impersonate a legitimate business, so you need to *know* whom you're dealing with. If you're shopping online, check out the seller before you buy. A legitimate business or individual seller should give you a physical address and a working telephone number at which they can be contacted in case you have problems.

3) Use anti-virus software, a firewall, and anti-spyware software to help keep your computer safe and secure.

Dealing with anti-virus and firewall protection may sound about as exciting as flossing your teeth, but it's just as important as a preventive measure. Having intense dental treatment is never fun; neither is dealing with the effects of a preventable computer virus.

Anti-virus Software

Anti-virus software protects your computer from viruses that can destroy your data, slow your computer's performance, cause a crash, or even allow spammers to send email through your account. It works by scanning your computer and your incoming email for viruses, and then deleting them.

To be effective, your anti-virus software should update routinely with antidotes to the latest "bugs" circulating through the Internet. Most commercial anti-virus software includes a feature to download updates automatically when you are on the Internet.

Firewalls

Don't be put off by the word "firewall." It's not necessary to fully understand how it works; it's enough to know what it does and why you need it. Firewalls help keep hackers from using your computer to send out your personal information without your permission. While anti-virus software scans incoming email and files, a firewall is like a guard, watching for outside attempts to access your system and blocking communications from and to sources you don't permit.

Some operating systems and hardware devices come with a built-in firewall that may be shipped in the "off" mode. Make sure you turn it on. For your firewall to be effective, it needs to be set up properly and updated regularly. Check your online "Help" feature for specific instructions.

Anti-Spyware Software

Anti-spyware software helps protect your computer from malicious spyware that monitors your online activities and collects personal information while you surf the web. It works by periodically scanning your computer for spyware programs, and then giving you the opportunity to remove any harmful surveillance software found on your computer. Some anti-virus software contains anti-spyware capability. Given the increasing sophistication of spyware programs, consider using two different anti-spyware program search one looks for slightly different sets of threats, and together they may offer increased protection.

This information was compiled by The National Security Alliance. For additional information on these Eight Cyber Security Practices, please go to their website at :

http://staysafeonline.org/practices/index.html

4) Be sure to set up your operating system and Web browser software properly, and update them regularly.

Hackers also take advantage of unsecured Web browsers (like Internet Explorer or Netscape) and operating system software (like Windows or Linux). Lessen your risk by changing the settings in your browser or operating system and increasing your online security. Check the "Tools" or "Options" menus for built-in security features. If you need help understanding your choices, use your "Help" function.

Your operating system also may offer free software patches that close holes in the system that hackers could exploit. In fact, some common operating systems can be set to automatically retrieve and install patches for you. If your system does not do this, bookmark the website for your system's manufacturer so you can regularly visit and update your system with defenses against the latest attacks. Updating can be as simple as one click. Your email software may help you avoid viruses by giving you the ability to filter certain types of spam. It's up to you to activate the filter. In addition, consider using operating systems that allow automatic updates.

5) Use strong passwords or strong authentication technology to help protect your personal information.

Keep your passwords in a secure place, and out of plain view. Don't share your passwords on the Internet, over email, or on the phone. Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) should never ask for your password.

In addition, without your knowledge, hackers may try to figure out your passwords to gain access to your computer.

6) Back up important files.

No system is completely secure. If you have important files stored on your computer, copy them onto a removable disc, and store them in a secure place in a different building than your computer. If a different location isn't practical, consider encryption software. Encryption software scrambles a message or a file in a way that can be reversed only with a specific password. Also, make sure you keep your original software start-up disks handy and accessible for use in the event of a system crash.

7) Learn what to do if something goes wrong.

Unfortunately, there is no particular way to identify that your computer has been infected with malicious code. Some infections may completely destroy files and shut down your computer, while others may only subtly affect your computer's normal operations. Be aware of any unusual or unexpected behaviors.

8) Protect your children online.

Children present unique security risks when they use a computer — not only do you have to keep them safe, but you have to protect their data on your computer. By taking some simple steps, you can dramatically reduce the threats.

CTWARN: Connecticut Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network

We're still fighting over the waterhole. While 70% of the Earth's surface is covered by water, only 2.5% is freshwater. Most of this freshwater is trapped in polar icecaps, with much of the rest found as soil moisture or kept in underground aquifers. According to the World Health Organization, less than 1% of the world's freshwater, or 0.007% of all the water on Earth, is readily available for human consumption. Natural and human-generated assaults on this resource have rendered the waterhole even more vulnerable.

The Connecticut chapter of the American Water Works Association, CTAWWA, has launched a statewide Water Wastewater Agency Response Network (CTWARN) as a voluntary mutual aid, statewide response system to provide greater water sector resiliency against natural or manmade incidents. CTWARN is modeled on the California, Florida and Texas models that have successfully utilized their respective WARN systems in response to such disasters as earthquakes and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Pre-planned with resource identification lists, the Connecticut WARN's mission is to ensure efficient, multi-organizational, public-private sector participation in the assurance of readily available, safe water. Such full-scale emergencies as Katrina resulted in some utilities being unable to provide services to their consumers, while other utilities outside of the impacted areas wanted to help but could not. Catastrophic events demand a responsive and coordinated process to direct emergency resources to where they are most needed. However, the coordination did not exist, and the resources could not be matched to needs in the short term.

Because water utility operations are specialized and tend to be self-sufficient, they must fill the gap between a disaster onset and arrival of non-local aid. When water restoration has been completed, a community's recovery from the disaster increases significantly.

Examples of the types of help that can be provided to utilities include electrical components that are cleaned and replaced; control panels rebuilt; electrical motors replaced and rebuilt; by-pass pumps installed; lift stations cleaned with vactor jet trucks; water main leaks located and repaired; valves located and isolated; chlorination equipment rebuilt; portable standby generators connected; and human resources such as field crews mobilized and deployed.

A principal benefit of a WARN includes local area consistency with the National Preparedness Goal, which would allow **expanding regional collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries on a voluntary basis through mutual aid agreements.** In Connecticut, the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security is working with such other state agencies as the Departments of Public Health and Environmental Protection to promote regional collaboration across many aspects of emergency response and recovery.

Continued next page

Representatives from these agencies sit on the CTWARN steering committee which currently includes delegates from such private and public entities as:

CTAWWA
Connecticut Water Company
Portland Water Department
Aquarion Water
Birmingham Utilities
Southington Water Department
Metropolitan District (The MDC)
Regional Water Authority
Rural Water Association
Middletown Water Department
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation

Having a WARN agreement in place will also facilitate faster reimbursement from FEMA, if applicable, in the event of a large scale incident for municipalities.

CTAWWA is leading the WARN development process, and there will be a recruitment program soon. The CTAWWA-hosted web site, CTWARN.ORG, is being created to provide easily- accessible communication, inventory of resources and pre-event matching. The web site will have a members-only section that will allow users to create a profile that includes company information, trade capability and needs, reliable contacts and communication. It will also include a searchable resource database, including qualified personnel and portable equipment listings. Membership in a Connecticut WARN is voluntary and free.

In addition to developing the web site and a recruitment process, the steering committee is constructing a Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA) to address:

- Response procedures, including a plan and timing, supervision authority, housing/food, communications, etc.
- Reimbursable expenses, including a process for arbitration
- Insurance
- Immunity

The MAA is important because it outlines how a member can respond if they choose to voluntarily participate, expedites a response if signed in advance, defines reimbursable expenses, and meets local, state and federal guidelines. It does not obligate a member to respond – it is on a totally volunteer basis.

Implementation of CTWARN is expected to result in enhanced access to resources, reduction of administrative conflict during events, expeditious arrival of aid, improve business continuity issues and, most important, the rapid restoration of public services.

The CTWARN committee has scheduled a series of workshops throughout the state, beginning with two in November 2007, which will provide necessary membership, network and regional collaboration information:

November 8	Prospect Fire House, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
November 15	MDC Training Center, 9 am to 1 pm.

For further information, contact Tom Chaplik at tchaplik@rwater.com or (203) 401.2725.

CS-PERN

Connecticut State - Police Emergency Radio Network

By: Chief Paul D. Jakubson, Madison Police Department
Chairman: CPCA Technology & Communications Committee

CS – PERN what is it and what will it do for Law Enforcement in Connecticut?

A municipal police officer on a day shift responds to a suspicious vehicle complaint in a residential neighborhood. Prior to arriving, the call turns into a burglary and a brief description of a suspect vehicle is given to the officer. When the officer pulls into the neighborhood he observes a vehicle leaving and the operator acting suspiciously. The operator is known to the police officer as a burglar he has arrested before. The officer attempts to stop the vehicle but it drives off into the adjoining Town that is covered by the State Police. Now the dispatcher must notify the barracks dispatcher of what has occurred who must relay that information to any responding troopers.

Neither the municipal officer nor the trooper can communicate with each other because the police officer's radio is in the **UHF** (ultra high frequency) range and the trooper's is on their **800 MHz** digital/trunked system. The two dispatchers must stay on the phone to relay information back and forth. The suspect's vehicle is spotted by the state police and they give chase to pull it over. Before that can happen the car crosses into another municipality and another dispatcher must be brought up to date on the events that have occurred, unless of course the dispatch center is fortunate enough to have a scanner. The additional municipality cannot communicate with either the first police officer or the trooper because their radio system is operating in a **low band** frequency. Now three dispatchers are talking to one another on phone lines and relaying all pertinent information back to their respective cars. Now try to imagine how you can manage this scenario with multiple agencies involved with over six vehicles from disparate agencies, covering an area of over six square miles. The suspect is finally apprehended as a result of good police work; notwithstanding the lack of efficient communications.

This scenario is all too common today in Connecticut. I realize the "HOTLINE" radio is still up and running in some parts of the state but that is strictly a "point to point" system. There are some very good regional cooperative systems like those in Fairfield county, the Capitol region, the Waterbury area and New Haven county but if you should be in a bordering town that does not participate in these systems or are just traveling through the state on business and are out of range then you must rely on your cell phone to communicate – if you have service!

The scenario I referred to earlier in this article did actually occur and it has bothered me that police officers cannot communicate between each other or back to a control point when out of their normal coverage area. We have seen on the news many instances where state and local police have been involved in an incident and they cannot communicate except through their dispatch centers or as a last but crudely effective resort, using hand signals.

How did the Connecticut State – Police Emergency Radio Network (CS-PERN) come into being? It began with a meeting between Chief Murray Pendleton, Waterford and Chairman of the CPCA Homeland Security committee, Pam Hayes, Executive Director of the CPCA and Mr. Jack Leonard of the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. This was followed up with meetings between myself, Chief Mulhall of Newington and Mr. Michael Stemmler of the Department of Public Safety, communications division.

The concept was simple in design because most of the equipment already existed. Mike Stemmler proposed that we reconfigure a duplicate transmitter/repeater that existed as a backup to the I CALL/ITAC network. It would operate as a single frequency 800 MHz analog – simulcast – repeater that covered the entire state of Connecticut. This coverage is based on a simple, basic analog radio outputting 35 watts of power. The coverage maps generated for the ICALL/ITAC network at that power output indicated that 97% or better of the state would be able to receive and repeat a signal. The basic infrastructure of the system has existed since the installation of the Department of Public Safety digital radio network. The CS-PERN network will reuse the existing DPS microwave network that links all their current and future sites. It will also utilize the GPS based timing system to coordinate signal utilization throughout the state.

I had several meetings with the Commissioner of Public Safety, Len Boyle along with his senior staff led by Colonel Ed Lynch. The concept was presented to them along with the cost estimates. They endorsed the plan as presented and agreed to seek out the balance of the funding. Commissioner Boyle did meet with "Skip" Thomas, Commissioner of DEMHS who also agreed with the plan and assisted in obtaining the necessary funds to complete the system build.

How much will CS-PERN cost? The system design provided by the state contracted vendor, Motorola, has been determined to be $1,037,729. They have also provided a cost estimate of complete new system if we were to begin this project without using the existing state infrastructure. That figure is $5,326,449. The CS-PERN proposal represents a cost savings of $4,288,720.

How will CS-PERN be funded? The CPCA has $450,000 set aside for radio interoperability projects from two years worth of Homeland Security grant funds. The balance of the project cost, $587,729, was obtained through the efforts of Commissioners Boyle and Thomas.

This system will be in operation within one year. The Police agencies that have an existing 800 MHz system will only need to program the new frequency into their radios. The rest of us will need to equip our vehicles with a low cost, analog radio. These can be obtained either through the state contract process or your individual vendors at a cost between $800 to $1500 depending on the make, model and accessories you choose. The CPCA will continue to seek grant opportunities to offset these costs. You and more importantly, your personnel, will have a simple, cost effective system that will provide a means of communicating during an emergency police operation.

Port Security Exercise takes place in Bridgeport

Mike Edgerton, Port Security Specialist for Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound, briefs exercise participants prior to exercise play. Over 100 federal, state, local government and industry partners gathered in Bridgeport and participated in the functional exercise.

DEMHS Commissioner James Thomas and CT DOT Manager of Highway Operations James Mona consult a map as they discuss the possible solutions to the exercise scenario during the Port Step functional exercise.

Port Security Exercise takes place in Bridgeport

The United States Coast Guard and the Transportation Security Administration, in cooperation with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security sponsored the Port Security Training and Exercise Program (Port STEP) Functional Exercise in Bridgeport, Connecticut on September 6, 2007.

The crisp September morning began with over a hundred participants boarding buses to view the port area that was to be the site of the notional terrorist attack. Representatives from the Area Maritime Security Committee (AMSC) along with many other federal, state, local and industry partners walked the docks of the Bridgeport/Port Jefferson Ferry. Through a brief introduction of the site exercise players gained an understanding of what impact an improvised explosive device would have on port operations. The port is not only the embarkation point for the ferries. Interstate 95 and the rail lines also converge there. After the walking tour and briefing, participants returned to their tabletops. That is where they rolled up their shirtsleeves and began working together. Fortunately this is something these players have all done before and most participants were very familiar with each other. Recently many had been involved in the Region 1 Tactical Interoperable Communications Drill in Norwalk, Connecticut in April 2007.

"The Long Island Sound Area Maritime Security Committee has participated in several tabletop, advanced tabletop, and fully functional exercises, such as TOPOFF 3 and we feel good about collectively responding to any incident within that first 12 hours," said Captain Dan Ronan, Captain of the Port and Commander of Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound. "In this exercise we wanted to focus more on developing our plan to quickly restore our multiple transportation systems to foster economic recovery and get people moving again in the hours and days following an incident. Through the collaborative efforts of our federal, state, and local partners as well as the transportation and utilities industries an effective process to restore public transportation systems has been established."

Upon completion of the table top exercise currently established working relationships and partnerships were strengthened through the facilitated discussion of recovery from this kind of incident. Many of the jurisdiction and “turf” issues that exist in many other parts of the country have long since been sorted out by this amicable, professional group of participants.

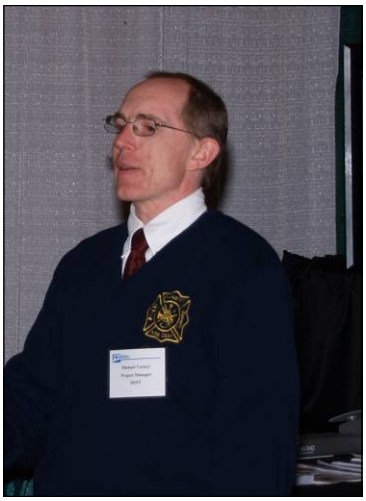
The Port Security Training and Exercise Program (Port STEP) was designed to meet the requirements of the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002. Planning is currently underway for next exercise in the preparedness cycle which is the tri-annual full scale exercise scheduled for June 2008 that will take place in New Haven.

CERT Weekend Summary- 2007

Although it was a sunny and hazy humid weekend, over 150 people attended the 3rd annual CERT weekend that was held at the Connecticut Fire Academy in Windsor Locks, September 8th & 9th, 2007. Participants heard informative presentations from John Hardy of the Newington Amateur Radio League, as well as Detective Pat Chagnon's presentation about Operation Counter Terrorism and Dr. Conserva & Dr. Goldman speak about the State Animal Response Team (S.A.R.T.). Throughout the weekend, CERT participants practiced their cribbing, fire extinguishers skills, and participated in the maize confidence course while others attended classes in Wilderness Survival CPR, Hazmat Awareness, Smart Triage, and Heart Saver CPR.

Participation for this weekend increased over 35% from 2006. CERT members look forward to attending the 2nd Annual Connecticut Citizen Corps Conference November 20, 2007. Details for this

TOWN NOTES:
ELLINGTON, CT



The best of the best
Ellington fire chief receives national honor

By Karine Abalyan
Journal Inquirer

ELLINGTON — When Michael Varney joined the Ellington Volunteer Fire Department 23 years ago, he was a high school graduate following in his father's footsteps. Firefighting was "something I always wanted to do since I was a little kid," he said recently, recalling how his dad, Dennis Varney, became a member of the department in the early 1970s. Moving up the ranks, Varney carved a niche for himself at the department and, seven years ago, became its chief. Last month, he was honored for his dedication to firefighting when Fire Chief magazine named Varney volunteer fire chief of the year.

Colleagues say Varney, 41, not only excels at leading his 50-member department, but also participates in key state and national programs, bringing important resources to Ellington. "He's very intelligent, very dedicated," said Assistant Chief Vince Gambacorta. Gambacorta recalled how Varney organized the response to an ammonia leak at Country Pure Foods in Ellington. The 2003 incident at the juice plant prompted the evacuation of more than 1,000 residents in Ellington and Vernon. Gambacorta said Varney "took charge" and led a team of town officials and crews from more than 30 fire departments. "It was a major statewide deal," Gambacorta said.

Varney is also known for securing federal grants to supplement his department's budget. Gambacorta said that with Varney's help, the department received about $500,000 in grants over the last four years. The money has been used to upgrade breathing apparatus and communications equipment, and to buy a live burn unit — a trailer where firefighters can light fires to simulate rescue scenarios.

Regionally, Varney is involved with the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association and has served on the state's Emergency Management and Homeland Security Coordinating Council. Varney also is a member of an International Association of Fire Chiefs committee that has put together a national emergency response network of firefighters, hospital staff, and other emergency personnel. "Mike brings a wide variety of talent to the fire service," said Tim Wall, president of IAFC's New England Division and chief of the North Farms Volunteer Fire Department in Wallingford. Wall said he appointed Varney to the committee because he has a background in technology and radio communications.

Varney works full time for the state Department of Information Technology, managing various radio communications and security systems. "I don't know how he has the energy to do what he does," First Selectman Michael Stupinski said. Varney said he hopes to continue promoting training programs and securing funds for future Fire Department projects. "We're one big family," Varney said. "I inherited a good department." Most importantly, he would like residents to support building a firehouse in the south end of town. Voters turned down a $2 million proposal to build a fire station on Pinney Street last October.

Varney said he's proud of the Fire Chief award. He has been nominated in the past but said he was "very surprised when I got the call." According to Fire Chief magazine's Web site, more than 60 emergency service organizations nominated candidates this year. The Ellington Volunteer Fire Department is planning a reception for Varney in October. "It's quite an honor," Gambacorta said. "A nationwide award like that for a little town like Ellington."

Millstone Drill

THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS

On August 18, 2007 a state of emergency was declared at Millstone Power Station and Governor Rell ordered the town of Ledyard to be evacuated. Evacuees were encouraged to follow established evacuation routes to their designated Host Community. At the Hugh S. Greer Field house at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, evacuees and their vehicles were monitored and decontaminated if necessary. People were able to receive and take Potassium Iodide (KI) tablets if they needed them. Refreshments, connections to shelter, transportation and medical assistance were all available for the evacuees.

WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS A DRILL THIS WAS

This was the scenario for Saturday's exercise which included DEMHS REP division staff, Dominion Millstone, UCONN Fire Department and Police Department, Mansfield VFD, Eastern Highlands Health District, American Red Cross, and other volunteers. The FEMA Region 1 office in Boston sent its experienced team of evaluators to provide guidance during the rehearsal, and to evaluate what took place at the UConn EOC and in the Field House. REP and Millstone conduct one Host Community exercise per year, and these are full-scale exercises using real equipment and responders and the actual location.

Brenda Bergeron, DEMHS' Legal Counsel, and Commissioner Thomas were among the many brave souls who volunteered to act as "contaminated" evacuees. They were able to see the whole process from vehicle monitoring and decontamination. The Commissioner was "*very impressed by the entire unified effort by the University of Connecticut and the Town of Mansfield in their very detailed preparations for receiving the evacuees from the Town of Ledyard. Beginning with the Local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) down to the very detailed and controlled screening process at the Greer Field House, you knew that everyone was committed to providing the very best possible care and treatment for the individuals arriving at UCONN from Ledyard. The entire team at the UCONN Campus was very professional, well organized and well trained. They knew what to do, and they did in a very efficient and caring manner. We are very lucky to have them as one of our host communities!!!"* Brenda Bergeron was "*impressed…with the organization and professionalism of the workers. Even though I knew it was only an exercise, there is an element of anxiety about the situation, and I could really see how these trained individuals could reduce the evacuee's anxiety with their calm demeanor and knowledgeable assistance. Plus, they quickly adjusted to changing facts and worked together as a team.*"

FEMA evaluated the performance of everyone involved and found no significant issues.

In addition, on September 12, the third in a series of weekly Millstone EOC exercises took place in the armory. REP staff participated in the roles of EP Director and Governor's Media Staff, and the GeoLab was staffed to provide support with maps and displays in the EOC and Joint Media Center.

Remember…..

If You **See Something….Say Something**

1-866-HLS-TIPS

1-866-457-8477

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in Connecticut

Consistent with federal preparedness guidance which currently mandates a regional approach to emergency preparedness planning, the State Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS), the State Department of Public Health (DPH), the Citizen Corps Advisory Council, and the Region I office of the Department of Health and Human Services collaborated on a strategic plan for Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in Connecticut. The plan is modeled after the five DEMHS regions for organization, planning and regional capacity building and will be financially supported with state and federal dollars in order to assure that Connecticut has a sustainable medical resource during times of need.

Connecticut's intent is for existing MRC units, and any organization wishing to start an MRC, or to become a branch of an already existing unit, to agree to participate in the MRC regional planning process as part of the application/recognition approval. The goal of this strategic planning process is for all local MRC units to be part of a DEMHS Regional MRC Response Team, while maintaining a local identity. The concept of regionalization of MRCs will enhance each region's collective capacity to share resources, and to respond to public health threats and emergencies, which includes terrorism and outbreaks of infectious diseases.

In June 2007 a Connecticut Medical Reserve Corps Advisory Committee of the State DEMHS Coordinating Council was formed, and its first meeting was held June 29th, and the groups' By-laws were completed and approved in July 2007. The following additional activities are currently in process: formation of Regional MRC Councils in each of the five DEMHS regions, the development of funding recommendations to support the five Regional MRC Teams, the development of Standard Operating Procedures for the Medical Reserve Corps teams.

If you are interested in more information on the Medical Reserve Corps in CT, and the State's MRC regionalization strategy, please contact the MRC State Coordinator, at the Department of Public Health:

Mary Grace Duley, MA, RN
Hospital Preparedness Program Coordinator
State ESAR-VHP/MRC Coordinator
Operations Branch
CT Department of Public Health
410 Capitol Ave., MS#12PHP
Hartford, CT 06134-0308
Phone: 860-509-7152
Fax: 860-509-7987
Email: mary.duley@ct.gov

Upcoming Training & Exercise

Oct 9 Oct 10	ICS 400—2 day course—Bloomfield
Oct 16 Oct 17 Oct 18	Terrorism and the Suicide Bomber—POSTC 3 day course
Nov 15 Nov 17 Nov 18	ICS 300—3 day course—Ellington

For training and exercise questions please contact Dave Brown, Bob Christ, Bob Scata, or Sharon Mazzochi at **860-256-0840**. Fax: 860-706-5539. Please go to the website to register for these courses.

Training is critical for first responders and is readily available through the State Fire Academy, Regional Fire Schools, and the Police Officers Training Academy. First responders include Police, Fire, Public Works, and 911 dispatchers to name but a few.

All of the following organizations have the ability to deliver **NIMS training** to your police officers, firefighters, public works employees, 911 dispatchers, health workers, education staff and emergency management personnel. Training can be delivered weekdays, weekends or evenings to meet your needs. The NIMS program can be delivered in four, eight or twelve hour modules depending on the duties assigned to personnel.

You should also know that these programs are available on line at FEMA's web site:
http://www.fema.gov/tab_education.shtm

Training Facility Contact Information:

Police Officers Training Council	203-238-6505
Connecticut Fire Academy	860-627-6363
Eastern CT Fireman's Training School	860-487-1105
New Haven Regional Fire Academy	203-946-6215
Wolcott Fire School	203-879-1559
Hartford County Fire School	860-828-3242
Burrville Fire Training School	860-482-7496
Valley Fire Training School	203-736-6222
Middlesex County Fire School	860-663-1308
Fairfield Fireman's Training School	203-254-4709
Stamford Regional Training Fire School	203-977-4673

All State Agencies should contact the Training Unit at DEMHS.

New Training Numbers and Location

Due to the fire at the Brainard Field hangar, the Training and Exercise Unit has moved to it's PERMANENT location of :

25 Sigourney Street, 6th floor, Hartford, CT 06106

There main phone number is now **860-256-0840** and their fax number remains **860-706-5539**.

Please make note of these changes.

The Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security is urging all residents, businesses, and schools to go to READY.GOV for preparedness information on how to handle natural and man-made disasters. There is an abundance of information that includes plans, kit information, contact information sheets and links to other helpful and informative sites. There are also activities for kids and schools.

Please take a moment to check out the website and pass the information and site address along to your communities, schools and businesses.