domestic preparedness .com
T.I.P.S. Total Integrated Preparedness Solutions
$50 Per Year
Volume 1, Issue 13, June 29, 2005

This Issue:

Interview: Marsha J. Evans, President of the American Red Cross

By John Morton
Interviews

DomPrep.com's John F. Morton and Martin Masiuk met with Retired Navy Rear Adm. Marsha J. Evans earlier this month at American Red Cross Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Admiral Evans detailed the Red Cross organizational linkages with DHS and State/Local EOCs for response planning. She also outlined a new initiative for community-based preparedness training and the mechanisms through which the American Red Cross (ARC) is developing the mass-care support function in local response planning. Lastly, she pointed to the September 2005 National Preparedness Month as a major event that will highlight the critical role the ARC and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will play in any future mass-casualty event.

For the complete streaming audio interview, visit DomPrep.com and click on the Interview WebChannel.

September Is National Preparedness Month!

What Is YOUR Organization Doing About It?

Facilities Management in the Age of Terrorism

By Neil Livingstone
Smart Security

Ever since the disaster at the 1972 Munich Olympics, where Arab terrorists slipped into the Olympic compound and killed two Israelis and took nine other athletes and coaches hostage, major sporting events have been terrorist targets. This author was NBC's on-air security commentator at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics when a bomb exploded in Centennial Park, killing one visitor and injuring 111 others.

The location of the attack came as no surprise. All of the venues were extremely well secured, but the mayor and other city officials – some of them, regrettably, playing the race card – criticized what they alleged to be the exclusionary nature of the Olympics and demanded that there be some area set aside where so-called "ordinary people" could participate and revel in the Olympic spirit. At least partly for that reason it was decided not to secure Centennial Park – a decision that, in effect, was the same as painting a large bulls-eye on the site.

Continued on the Next Page

Editorial and Circulation Office
517 Benfield Road, Suite 303
Severna Park, MD 21146
www.domesticpreparedness.com
(410) 518-6900

Editorial Staff

James D. Hessman
Editor in Chief
JamesD@domprep.com

Channel Masters

Rob Schnepp
Fire/HAZMAT
rschnepp@domprep.com

Joseph Cahill
Emergency Medicine
jcahill@domprep.com

Colonel (Ret.) Robert Fitton
Military Support
bfitton@domprep.com

Ashley Moore
Standards
amoore@domprep.com

Bonni Tischler
Customs & Border
btischler@domprep.com

Jay Kehoe
Law Enforcement
jkehoe@domprep.com

John Morton
Interviews
jmorton@domprep.com

Neil Livingstone
Smart Security
nlivingstone@domprep.com

Adam McLaughlin
State Homeland News
amclaughlin@domprep.com

Business Office

Susan Collins
Circulation Director
subscriber@domprep.com

Sharon Stovall
Copy Manager
sstovall@domprep.com

Martin Masiuk
Advertising & Sponsorships
mmasiuk@domprep.com

Subscriptions
$50.00 annually 26 issues for single user, delivered via web or email. To order, visit www.domprep.com and click on subscribe.

Published by IMR Inc.
Martin D. Masiuk, Executive Director and Publisher,
mmasiuk@domprep.com

No magnetometers were set up in or at the entrances to the park, and there was no requirement that handbags and backpacks be X-rayed or even hand-checked.

It was clear to all of the security professionals involved in the Atlanta Olympics that, if a problem occurred, it would probably be in Centennial Park. And that is exactly what happened: Eric John Rudolph, an anti-abortion and anti-gay activist, decided to leave a bomb near one of the television towers in the park. The rest, as they say, is history.

In the post-9/11 world, it is actually very surprising that, as of late June 2005, no major sports or entertainment venue on U.S. soil had been attacked by terrorists.

Fans, Fraud, and a Blizzard of Flying Glass

But terrorism is just one of the security challenges faced today by the operators of such facilities. Access control, rowdy behavior by fans and/or athletes – the Detroit Pistons-Indiana Pacers game, for example – ticket fraud, theft, and muggings (especially in parking areas) are just a few of the major problems that facility managers have to deal with in a typical working day. However, a potential act of terrorism remains the most troubling threat, according to many managers, because it is the most difficult to prevent, especially if it involves a lone terrorist, wearing a bomb belt studded with ball bearings or nails, perhaps, who walks into a stadium or arena or other sports facility and blows himself up – taking with him, of course, a number of other people who just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

A related problem is that, although the managers of most sports facilities have created and promulgated emergency response and evacuation plans, relatively few have carefully crafted and exercised terrorism contingency plans, especially when those plans involve such esoteric threats as chemical and biological attacks.

The best – i.e., not only the most effective but the most cost-effective as well – security measures and systems are those that are designed into a facility at the outset. The retrofitting of stadiums, arenas, and other venues is invariably more difficult, time-consuming, and expensive than building security measures and systems into the original design.

A good example of a first-rate security operation can be glimpsed at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. However, and despite the quality of the security personnel there and the thoroughness of their training and procedures, the building itself presents numerous problems – the most difficult of which, probably, is the large amount of glass, sloping outward over the entrances, on the face of the building.

Continued on the Next Page

A bomb blast in the parking lot could turn untreated glass into a blizzard of flying projectiles, killing and maiming dozens, even hundreds of people. It should be recalled that 223 people were killed and more than 5,000 injured – ninety percent of them by flying glass – in the Al Qaeda attacks on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998.

Facility Design Recommendations

Following are a few security recommendations that should be considered in the design of sports and entertainment facilities:

1. A security professional should be a member of the design team, along with architects and engineers.
2. The use of glass, even treated or laminated glass, should be kept to the minimum. All building materials should be tested for flammability and strength against a variety of potential threats.
3. The structure itself should incorporate progressive collapse features as and where appropriate. The facility also should have, if possible, a reasonable setback to afford it more protection from vehicle bombs. If that is not possible, consideration should be given to the erection of blast walls and the use of blast-resistant materials. Bollards and other barriers also should be strategically placed around the facility to prevent unauthorized vehicles from gaining access.
4. Doors, portals, and other entrances should be designed not only to accommodate current screening technology, but also should be large enough to accept future technologies as well. All points of access and egress should be unobstructed from a visual or line-of-sight aspect so as to make observation by security personnel both easier and more effective – this design feature also will help when there are crowd-management problems.
5. Parking areas should not be underneath the facility but adjacent to it. They should be adequately lighted as well – to discourage car thefts, rapes, and muggings – and monitored by roving patrols and/or CCTV. Panic buttons and emergency phones should be installed at appropriate intervals; they also should be highly visible. In addition, consideration should be given to restricting trucks and vans to the parking areas that are most distant from the facility, because those vehicles can carry more explosives than an automobile can and, therefore, represent more of a threat.
6. The external boundaries of the property should be secured by fencing – combined in some cases with Jersey barriers – to further restrict unauthorized entry. (This would be a particularly important consideration for racetracks. A recent lawsuit alleged that the operators of a racetrack did not exercise enough care in securing the facility, because an impaired individual was able to gain access to an area immediately adjacent to the track and subsequently crashed his motorcycle, dying from the crash.) The introduction of gates will also permit easier, more thorough, and better-controlled screening of vehicles and their occupants.
7. Plans for emergency evacuation flows should be carefully studied – and computer-simulated as well – to ensure that the structure or facility can be cleared as quickly and efficiently as possible, while at the same time providing maximum access to emergency vehicles and personnel. The same careful attention should be given to the installation and operation of effective fire-suppression and smoke-handling systems.
8. Ventilation systems should be in areas that are not accessible to the general public, and the vents themselves should be protected by grates and/or other barriers to prevent the introduction of noxious substances, including chemical/biological agents.

Security Management Procedures

Building a better stadium or arena is only the beginning. What happens after the building is "ready for business" is equally important. Following are some comments and recommendations involving the management, staffing, and operation of such facilities – and, for that matter, almost any other large structure or building ranging from apartment houses and hotels to office buildings and warehouses and factories:

1. All existing facilities should undergo security assessments on a regular basis, both to identify current vulnerabilities and to keep up with shifting threats.

Continued on the Next Page

2. Perhaps one of the greatest shortcomings of most facilities is the failure to properly screen all employees, especially more transient workers such as ushers, groundskeepers, guards, parking attendants, ticket-takers, and maintenance personnel. All cleared employees should be appropriately badged – and those badges should be carefully *checked*, close up and personal, at all security points.
3. Key managers and security personnel should be aware of and trained in the operational procedures and guidelines set forth in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) – and also be prepared to work with local authorities and first responders within the NIMS framework, as and when necessary.
4. Threat assessments should be conducted in advance of every public event, particularly those involving high-profile or controversial entertainers, teams, or political figures, and/or at events where a high probability of alcohol or drug abuse might reasonably be assumed.
5. Evacuation and crisis-management plans should be developed and promulgated – and then exercised on a regular basis, both to identify shortcomings and to enhance the skill sets and training of those involved in implementation of the plans.
6. Guidelines governing the screening of people and bags coming into a facility also should be developed, and systems should be installed to detect weapons and, if feasible, explosives.
7. Each arena, performing arts facility, or stadium should take steps to restrict access by visitors to any space not open to the general public, and all but necessary employees to key infrastructure nodes and sensitive operations areas.
8. Security personnel should be well trained, not only to control fan/athlete violence but also to handle more extreme contingencies such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

Teams, Athletes, and Brands

In recent years, many top athletes have found themselves mired in allegations of drug abuse, sexual misconduct, the use of steroids, violence, gambling, and the acceptance of illegal payments from agents. Former NBA star Jayson Williams, for example, was involved in the accidental death of his 55-year old chauffeur at Williams's New Jersey mansion. Williams and some friends allegedly were mishandling a loaded shotgun when it discharged, killing the chauffeur, and to make matters worse engaged in a cover-up of the incident.

Another NBA player, Kobe Bryant, was cleared of a sexual assault charge but his career, especially his product endorsements, suffered anyway. Yet another NBA star was found to have more than 300 unregistered and unsecured firearms in his home. MasterCard reportedly backed out of endorsement negotiations with baseball's Barry Bonds when allegations of steroid use surfaced.

For these and many other reasons – protecting the good name of sports is perhaps the single most important reason – any well considered and well managed athletic or team security program must have programs and procedures in place to test for illegal substances, prevent gambling, and both encourage and enforce appropriate behavior by college and professional athletes. Then, in the event that a serious situation does arise, a well-established and comprehensive crisis-management plan can be immediately implemented to address any problems that result.

Only if proper security, investigative, and crisis-management programs are already in place can the safety, integrity, and profitability of modern sports, and sports facilities, be preserved.

Electro-Muscular Disruption Technology And How It Works

By Jay Kehoe
Law Enforcement

Electro-muscular disruption (EMD) technology – i.e., Tasers™ - has become an essential tool for American law-enforcement agencies within the past five years. With over 7,100 of the nation's law-enforcement departments and agencies, and the U.S. military, now using Tasers, the various ways in which "use of force" incidents are planned and carried out have shifted significantly.

Continued on the Next Page

This makes a lot of sense, particularly in view of the dramatic reduction in injuries – not only to police officers and soldiers, but also to suspects – that has been recorded since Tasers first came into common use. Throughout the entire country, Tasers are now used on a daily basis to stop focused and aggressive suspects, and suicidal individuals, without causing injury. The use of Taser technology has, in fact, become global: There are now 45 nations that have fielded EMD devices to their own law-enforcement agencies and military units, and that number is growing each year.

Justice: Swift, Sure, and Safe

Tasers – defined in Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary as "a gun that fires electrified darts to stun and immobilize a person" – have been around since the 1970s, when inventor John H. Cover first realized that high-voltage/low-amperage electricity could be effectively used to subdue both humans and animals without causing injury. Interestingly, the acronym TASER was taken from a science-fiction book Cover had enjoyed as a child: **T**homas **A**. **S**wift and his **E**lectronic **R**ifle.

The early Tasers, which functioned primarily as pain-compliance devices, were used much like pepper spray and police batons: When an individual is combative or aggressive, pain – not life-threatening, it should be emphasized, or so intense or violent as to cause serious injury – is applied, via the electrified dart, to compel that person to follow police or military orders. These original Tasers were effective, except in situations when the individual was under the influence of a substance that masked the sensation of pain and/or was so highly motivated or focused that he or she could not feel the full effect of the pain.

In 1999, the first EMD Tasers were introduced by Taser International Inc. of Scottsdale, Arizona. The new Tasers, although based on Cover's initial concept, were not specifically designed to work on the pain-compliance principle – although painful, they focus on using the natural systems within the human body against itself. The human body is controlled by the brain, which communicates with the rest of the body by a series of electrical impulses running through the central nervous system.

Phenomenal Results From a Simple Concept

The operational concept behind the new Tasers was a simple one: Generate electrical impulses similar to those produced by the human brain as a way to override the motor control system (and/or large muscle groups within the body) and the result will be immediate, debilitating, and incapacitating.

When properly deployed, Tasers have in the past five years lowered officer injury rates in some police departments up to eighty percent (Orange County, Fla.) and suspect injuries up to sixty-seven percent (Phoenix, Ariz.). Two major cities (Miami, Fla., and Seattle, Wash.) went through an entire calendar year (2003) without a single fatal police shooting – a phenomenal achievement, particularly in recent years, for law-enforcement agencies in cities of their size.

These and other successes can be attributed to police-department adherence to one simple operating concept: Stop incidents in which force might be required at their lowest level, before they escalate to the use of weapons that commonly cause serious physical injury or death.

Tasers are not designed to replace firearms, police batons, or pepper spray. They are, as previously noted, modern technological devices designed to give police officers and correctional officers an additional tool to use, in conjunction with good verbal skills and appropriate defensive tactics, to prevent relatively minor incidents from escalating into major confrontations in which innocent people might easily be killed or injured.

Continued on the Next Page

September Is National Preparedness Month!

What Are *YOU* Doing About It?

Are You Prepared?

FAST RESPONSE

You have masks and suits. You bought tents and shelters. Your communication devices and detectors are close at hand.

What will you use to perform the actual decontamination? Are you willing to bet your life and the lives of others on soap and water? How will you decontaminate those tents, shelters, communication devices and detectors? Or will you leave it all behind?

Keep yourself and others alive while protecting your investment and infrastructure. Intelagard offers EasyDECON™ DF200 decontamination solution and easy-to-use equipment for fast and effective deployment. Call Intelagard today for powerful and effective decontamination solutions and truly be prepared.

Contact us today! Call 1.303.309.6309, or e-mail info@intelagard.com.

Intelagard is an exclusive distributor of EasyDECON™ DF200

INTELAGARD®

www.intelagard.com

Tasers work – extremely well. One of the major problems encountered by agencies deploying them, in fact, is that, because the Tasers do work so well, officers equipped with Tasers become overly reliant on them and do not always remember that the Taser is simply another tool to help law-enforcement agencies carry out their basic mission of maintaining law and order. What might easily become an over-reliance on Tasers can be combated only through the development and promulgation of strong policies and procedures governing the use of Tasers, followed up by large doses of the effective training needed to assist officers in making proper decisions on how and when to use these new enforcement tools.

Anti-Taser Lobby Refuted by Independent Studies

Several years ago, groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union and Amnesty International said that Tasers should be banned, and lobbied for independent medical evaluation of EMD technology in general, pointing out that most of the original medical studies on this new technology had been funded by the manufacturer, Taser International. Claims that anywhere from 80 to 110 people had died after being stunned by Tasers were widely publicized.

Five years and more than three dozen independent medical studies later, the reports are in, and they confirm that there is only one known case in which the use of a Taser apparently caused a death. That case occurred in Louisiana, where, after being struck by a Taser, a suspect fell and hit his head, causing a fatal injury. No direct causation of death by the electrical energy was found, though – probably for the simple reason that the Taser does not have enough electrical power to damage either heart or nerve tissue. Operating on two three-volt lithium batteries (exactly like those in several types of digital cameras), the power output of the Taser is less than .004 amps.

No application of force is totally and permanently without risk. But the Taser has proved to be the safest alternative that has ever been available to police-department personnel whose jobs require them to deal with violent combative individuals. In addition to the Louisiana fatality, there have been a number of other deaths that have followed, but were not necessarily caused by, Taser applications, but the vast majority of these have been attributed to massive drug overdoses, preexisting heart problems, and a relatively rare medical condition known as excited delirium.

Usually, those in a state of excited delirium lack the body's normal mechanisms for self-preservation and simply fight themselves beyond the point of exhaustion – to death, in other words. The condition is not new, incidentally, and is not caused by the frenetic stress of modern times. It was first documented in the 1800s, in fact, in the Journal of Insanity.

Among the more recent and more comprehensive independent medical evaluations of EMD technology are those that have been conducted by the United States Military Human Effects Center of Excellence (HECOE) and The Potomac Institute for Policy Studies; medical organizations such as PACE, the Pacing and Clinical Electrophysiology Journal, also have done valuable work in this field. Executive summaries of most if not all of the latest EMD studies are available on Taser International's website www.taser.com.

Guidelines and Recommendations

In April 2005, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the world's oldest and largest nonprofit organization of police executives, with over 19,000 members in over 89 different countries, developed a report that includes a number of thoughtful and thoroughly researched guidelines to help law-enforcement agencies deal with the deployment and use of EMD devices.

The IACP report was designed to, among other things, provide law-enforcement decision-makers with a strategy to successfully field Taser technology through a combination of carefully considered policies and procedures, comprehensive training, and the involvement of local community leaders in the process. The IACP report is available, along with more than a dozen Executive Brief Citations and other materials on EMD devices, at www.iacp.org/research/rcdcuttingedgetech.htm

Continued on the Next Page

Agencies now investigating the possibility of deploying EMD technology should be aware that there are certain other helpful steps that they should consider. In addition to following the strategies outlined in the IACP report, these agencies should ensure that the emergency medical services agencies supporting them are trained both in dealing with patients who have been struck by Tasers and in identifying medical conditions that over the past five years have been determined to be potentially life-threatening.

Before deploying Tasers, these agencies also would be well advised to educate local media and community groups on the reasons why a Taser program is being started, and supply the same groups, and the general public, with complete and accurate data on what Tasers are, how they work, and how they not only save lives and deter crime but also make the community much safer in many other ways.

Ludwig Benner: The Father of Modern HAZMAT Thinking?

By Rob Schnepp
Fire/HAZMAT

During the late 1960s and into the 1970s, the nation's fire departments were suffering between twenty and fifty firefighter deaths and injuries per year due to hazardous materials incidents. "That statistic bothered me," commented Ludwig Benner, then a hazardous materials specialist with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). "I looked at the numbers of firefighters getting hurt at hazardous materials incidents, and figured out they were many, many times more likely to suffer a hazardous materials-related injury than the second-ranked classification of workers injured in the hazmat field – transportation employees.

"The problem really became evident," Benner continued, "in 1971. I investigated a HAZMAT accident in Houston where a guy got killed and several other employees were injured. Ironically, the fatality was the HAZMAT training officer and, as it turns out, he and the rest of the firefighters were following the emergency response instructions they were taught.

"During that investigation a question occurred to me: If these guys were doing what they were trained to do, how did they get themselves wiped out? It had to be the training. After the investigation, I was prompted by a friend and colleague to offer some alternative solutions in terms of HAZMAT training, and agreed to develop and teach a class on hazardous materials at Montgomery College [Md.]."

Essentially, that was the beginning of what might be called the age of enlightenment for HAZMAT response in the nation's fire-service community. For the next 10 years, Benner, along with other significant players in the fire-service hazmat-response arena – working in conjunction with the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Chemical Manufacturers Association, the American Association of Railroads, and other national organizations – led a campaign to improve the ways in which firefighters respond to and, of greater importance, *think their way through* a hazardous-materials emergency.

CHEMTREC, HAZWOPER, and Other Advances

Indirectly, their work (along with several significant hazmat incidents that occurred at the time) laid the foundation for such advances as the formulation of Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response regulations, found in the Code of Federal Regulations. These regulations, commonly referred to as HAZWOPER, are under the jurisdiction of OSHA (the Occupational Safety and Health Administration).

Another major step forward was the formation of CHEMTREC, an emergency-response resource for chemical information, funded by the Chemical Manufacturers Association. There were a number of other significant changes and developments along the way that collectively improved the abilities of firefighters across the country to handle hazardous-material emergencies. The net result was a huge reduction in the hazmat-related deaths and disabling injuries that were so common among firefighters in the 1960s and 1970s.

"Back then," Benner pointed out, "firefighters received HAZMAT training pretty much the same way, following the prevalent fire-service paradigm at the time: attack and extinguish.

Continued on the Next Page

I wanted to change that paradigm by teaching firefighters the importance of *thinking* their way through an incident rather than jumping into the middle of something they didn't really understand. I wanted to show them how to look at a situation, interpret the visual cues, and predict what was going to happen next."

"Additionally," he continued, "my training program illustrated how critical it is to start out with a game plan, even if it's pretty basic. If the situation isn't going to create a problem, maybe you don't have to do anything. On the other hand, if it's going to hurt somebody, you have to figure out *how* it's going to hurt them and decide whether or not you can do anything about that."

A Decisive and Innovative Change

To help firefighters think through a HAZMAT situation, Benner developed an innovative decision-making process, appropriately named DECIDE.

- Detect HM Presence.
- Estimate Likely Harm Without Intervention.
- Choose Response Objectives.
- Identify Action Options.
- Do Best Option.
- Evaluate Progress.

The DECIDE acronym represents key decision making points that occur during a typical HAZMAT emergency. "The intent of the DECIDE process," according to Benner, "is to help the responder get 'ahead of the curve' during a HAZMAT incident.

"The goal," he emphasizes, "is to constantly update the predictions of what's going to happen next, in order to see how the actions are changing the outcome. With a HAZMAT incident, you have to focus on the outcome. The beauty of the DECIDE process is this: If you can't make a prediction about what will happen next, you can pinpoint the data gaps that will ultimately allow you to make a prediction."

Now many years removed from his days of teaching hazmat, but still interested in the health and well being of firefighters, Benner offers this perspective in closing: "I had the very distinct advantage of hindsight when I was investigating accidents for the NTSB, and once you start to understand why people are doing things, you start to see what's going wrong. Back then, firefighters were using the same paradigm for HAZMAT incidents as they were for structural firefighting – and it wasn't working. All I did was show them how to look at the situation a little differently [by using the DECIDE model] and appreciate the differences between a firefighting mindset and a HAZMAT mindset. Hazmat incidents can't be handled with a cookbook approach, and I'm not a believer of teaching cookbook-type HAZMAT training – you have to use your head."

The full-source document on the DECIDE process, and many other writings by Ludwig Benner, can be found on the web at http://members.cox.net/lbjr99/papershm/DECIDE.htm).

An additional website referencing Benner's work is http://www.iprr.org/HazMatdocs/GEBMO/GEBMO.html

States of Preparedness

By Adam McLaughlin

State Homeland News

ILLINOIS

Conducts Full-Scale Bioterrorism Exercise

Perry County hosted a full-scale biological terrorism exercise in the city of Du Quoin earlier this month to test the ability of the health and emergency service agencies in the area to respond to a terrorist incident involving the use of biological weapons. An estimated 275 or so responders, from both full-time and volunteer agencies, participated in the exercise, which was planned by Applied Marine Technologies Inc.

The exercise scenario postulated terrorists aerosolizing the bacteria Tularemia at the Southern Illinois Center. Tularemia, also known as rabbit fever or deer fly fever, starts as a sudden flulike illness characterized by fever, malaise, and chills. The symptoms usually develop between three and five days after exposure, but can start within 24 hours or as late as 14 days after exposure. The disease can be fatal without proper antibiotic treatment.

Continued on the Next Page

The exercise "was a tremendous success," according to Doug Corbett, Perry County Health Department administrator, "because it exposed all the things that you would not think of when planning for this type of scenario."

The Perry County exercise was one of several terrorism drills being conducted throughout this summer in Southern Illinois. One important goal of the exercises, Corbett said, is to help focus agencies on the importance of providing mutual aid during disasters. Perry County will soon become a component of the Southern Illinois Surveillance System, a network including St. Louis and the Metro East, which monitors public health emergencies.

PENNSYLVANIA

Launches Homeland Security Institute at the University of Scranton

The University of Scranton announced plans earlier this month to house the university's new Homeland Security Institute in its Graduate School facilities. The Institute, which is dedicated to developing applications for, and providing solutions to, problems that threaten regional or national security, will offer Continuing Education programs on such related topics as terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Included in the curriculum will be classes such as Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction Awareness & Operations, and Hospital Response to Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents.

In addition to maintaining an educational focus on preparedness training, the Homeland Security Institute will also sponsor research projects focused on public health and safety, including the prevention of and/or responses to bioterrorism. A previously announced partnership between the university's Institute of Molecular Biology and Medicine (IMBM) and SCHOTT Nexterion (in Duryea, Pa.) already has been formed, with the goal of developing high-throughput diagnostic assays for the detection of organisms that pose a threat to U.S. homeland security.

The Homeland Security Institute is one of six facilities in Pennsylvania affiliated with the National Consortium of Homeland Security, which includes institutions that research, train, and carry out a broad spectrum of programs related to national security. For more information about the Institute and the courses offered, see http://academic.scranton.edu/department/cce/HSIHomepage.html.

VERMONT

Receives Critical Review From FEMA Officials

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified five critical shortcomings during the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant Plume and Ingestion Exercise that was conducted during the last week of May 2005. The "Plume" part of the exercise was scheduled to meet a biennial requirement to determine the adequacy of radiological emergency preparedness and response plans. The "Ingestion" part of the exercise met a requirement to evaluate (every six years) the state's ability to ensure that the public can be protected from ingesting contaminated food and water.

Three of the five deficiencies cited by FEMA were against the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Waterbury; one deficiency each was alleged against the towns of Vernon and Halifax. FEMA said that the EOC experienced a 14-minute delay in sending out an evacuation notice to the residents of the two towns. Moreover, according to Kenneth Horak, acting director of FEMA's Boston office, the message sent out by the EOC was "misleading, inaccurate, lacked direction, and in many instances … was contradictory, confusing, and incomplete." In Vernon, the town's warning notification was eight minutes late, FEMA said, and town officials in Halifax took too long to complete their emergency notification call tree. Vermont and the towns have 120 days to correct the deficiencies cited, FEMA officials said.

September Is National Preparedness Month!

What Is *YOUR* Community Doing About It?