


THE HOOSIER RESPONDER

JUNE 2019



JACKSON COUNTY EXERCISE SIMULATES SCHOOL EXPLOSION

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A BOND OF BROTHERS OVERCOMING THE ODDS

Growing up, everyone makes important decisions that have implications for a lifetime. Decisions like what group of people to hang out with, what college to attend and what career is most suited for individual success.

Dustin Pruett understands the power of important decisions. He also understands overcoming the odds and surpassing expectations. Birth defects to both his legs could have limited his options; both legs would require amputation over the years. Instead, Pruett continues to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a firefighter, despite the challenges, fears and obstacles that would have stalled most young men.

“Ever since I was a kid, I can remember riding on the firetruck with my dad, getting picked up from school and then riding along on runs,” Pruett said. “I always found it fascinating to go on the runs and see my dad put on the gear, knowing he’s going into a burning house to put out the fire.”

Pruett, 18, grew up with only one leg, opting to remove the second leg a few years ago due to ongoing complications. What started as a challenge to overcome felt at the time



Dustin Pruett and Brandon Anderson

more like a threat to fulfilling his dreams. After all, can a double amputee serve as a firefighter?

“I had my concerns at first because I already knew how I was going to handle my left leg with fire gear. I had no idea how to approach adapting equipment for my right side,” Pruett said. “I had my fears, but, at the same time, if there’s a way, I’m going to find it, and I’m going to do it.”

And find a way he did. Pruett recently completed his Firefighter I and II courses, including all of the strenuous physical requirements. While he was finishing up high school, he served with his hometown Marshall Volunteer Fire Department.

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Amid the training to become a firefighter, Pruett also found inspiration. It came at the right time in his life, leaving an unmistakable bond that continues to encourage Pruett and others.

“I saw a news story about Brandon Anderson (captain, Fishers Fire Department) and how he returned to full fire service recently after his leg was amputated and thought ‘That’s awesome. Someone else is an amputee and a firefighter. I’m not alone, and there is a way to do all of this,’” he said.

Anderson has a unique story as well. After a motorcycle accident on Aug. 12, 2016, he spent a month trying to save one of his legs. Again, tough decisions define lives.

“Ultimately, I realized it wasn’t going to be possible to save my leg,” Anderson said. “If it was, it wouldn’t be usable.”

Anderson made the decision to amputate above the knee. During recovery, he spent time evaluating what the new normal looked like in his life.

“I wondered if there were any others in the fire service who were amputees, and I began thinking of how I was going to get back to it,” he said.

After several months of physical therapy, regaining strength and making the prosthetic work for him, Anderson defied the odds

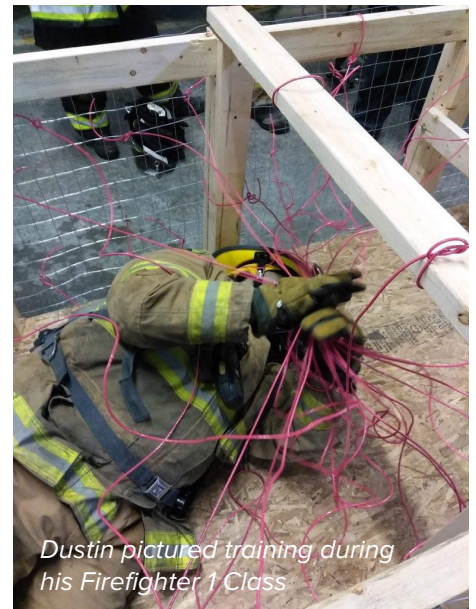
and returned to full fire duty with no restrictions, one of a handful of firefighters nationally to do so. It’s easy to see why connecting Pruett and Anderson seemed inevitable.

The two began exchanging messages and phone calls, talking about some of the challenges they have encountered. “War stories,” Anderson called them. Is it ok to go in to a fire with a prosthetic? What is the most efficient way to get in to turnout gear?



Dustin pictured with State Fire Marshal Jim Greeson at the 2019 Fire Department Instructors Conference

“I’m so amazed at the decision process both Pruett and Anderson have made,” said Capt. John Mehling, public information officer with Fishers Fire. “I can’t begin to understand what it has to be like to have that belief and futuristic picture to say ‘This is going to be better if we remove the leg.’”



Dustin pictured training during his Firefighter 1 Class

Pruett and Anderson continue to impress with their capabilities and share their passion and drive to inspire others. Anderson speaks with firefighters throughout the country who are going through similar situations. Pruett regularly visits with the kids at a children’s hospital—where he spent a lot of his childhood—inspiring them to keep going. Never give up, no matter what.

“Don’t let others make the decision for you. Make the decision yourself, and prove it to yourself. Be willing to put forth the effort and not just take the status quo,” Anderson said.

“If somebody says you can’t do something, prove the doubters wrong and show them you can,” Pruett said.

Pruett is attending Vincennes University in the fall to study fire science and homeland security.

SAVE THE DATE



The Indiana Department of Homeland Security is sponsoring First Responder Day at the Indiana State Fair on Monday, August 12, 2019. Join us for a fun day at the fair with free entry for First Responders.

UPDATE ON THE GET ALARMED CAMPAIGN

As of June 1, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) has received **5,559** requests for 10-year alarms and **849** requests for deaf/hard of hearing alarms. Already, **1,574** of the ten year smoke alarms and **149** of the deaf/hard of hearing alarms have been distributed. Applications are still being accepted and can be found at GetAlarmed.in.gov.

The Get Alarmed program is funded by a grant through 2020. IDHS is committed to installing 10,000 smoke alarms across Indiana over the next two years, and has applied for another grant to continue the initiative.



FIREWORKS SAFETY

Summer weather is here and with that comes firework season. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security and the State Fire Marshal want to remind everyone that while fireworks can brighten up events, practicing safety can help keep the festivities going longer. See all the tips on the [IDHS Fireworks Safety](#) website.



SAFETY TIPS

- Never let children handle, play with or light any fireworks without adult supervision.
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- When setting off fireworks, use a clear, open area and keep the audience a safe distance from the shooting site.
- Do not attempt to make or alter any fireworks.
- Only light one firework item at a time.
- Never attempt to re-light or fix a “dud” firework.
- Have a fire extinguisher, water supply, hose or bucket of water nearby.
- Use extreme caution when lighting fireworks in the wind. Keep spectators where the wind is blowing away from them.
- Never smoke or drink alcoholic beverages while handling fireworks.
- Never aim, point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Sparklers burn at extremely hot temperatures, from 1200 to 1800 degrees Fahrenheit. Glow sticks make an excellent, safer alternative to sparklers, especially for young children.

WHEN CAN FIREWORKS BE SET OFF?

MOST DAYS (NOT HOLIDAYS)
9AM - 11PM*

JULY 4
10AM - MIDNIGHT

NEW YEARS EVE
10AM - 1AM

JUNE 29 - JULY 3, JULY 5 - 9
5PM - 2 HOURS PAST SUNSET

** Check with local officials as local ordinances may further restrict usage.*



FDIC 2019 RECAP

Indianapolis once again served as host in 2019 for the 92nd annual Fire Department Instructors Conference, commonly referred to as FDIC. Held from Monday, April 8, through Friday, April 12, FDIC showcased the newest tools in fighting fires and keeping firefighters safe. Throughout the week, FDIC held 27 hands-on training classes, 91 workshops and more than 200 classroom training sessions. The week was capped off with an emotional 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb in Lucas Oil Stadium, a way for firefighters and the community to honor and remember the FDNY firefighters who selflessly gave their lives so that others might live. [Watch a video recap of the event here.](#)



FDIC BY THE NUMBERS

35,369 fire industry professionals attended trainings, workshops, business meetings and explored the exhibit hall.

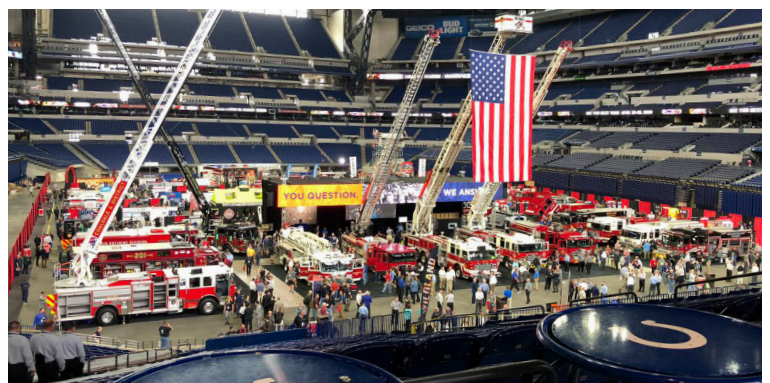
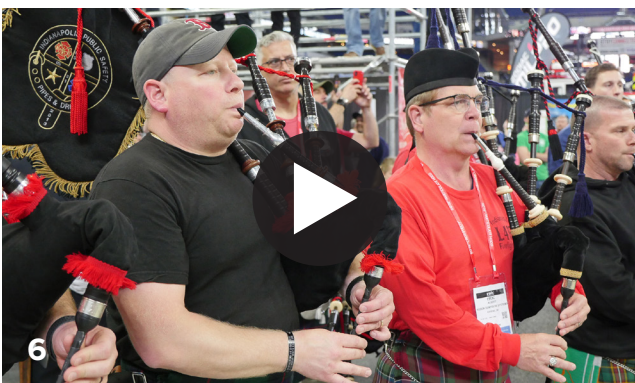
814 exhibitors displayed their latest products and services throughout the entire Indianapolis Convention Center, walk ways, outdoor demonstration areas and Lucas Oil Stadium.

Attendees came from **67** different countries.

40% of attendees did not attend FDIC last year!

ATTENDEES

- 31%** Volunteer
- 32%** Career/Paid
- 23%** Combination:
Volunteer & Career/Paid
- 5%** Distributors
- 4%** Industrial
- 3%** Military
- 2%** Other



2019 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

A busy 2019 Indiana legislative session has concluded. Hundreds of bills found their way to Gov. Eric Holcomb's desk for his signature, with several impacting emergency responders and Hoosier safety. Below is a summary of the bills that may impact responders across the state.

HEA 1001

This act increases the funding for the Secured School Fund to **\$19 million**.

HEA 1004

This act improves the Secured School Fund by making the funds more accessible to rural and accredited nonpublic schools. It expands ways in which the funds can be used, including paying for law enforcement officers. The act also requires schools to conduct an active shooter drill each school year.

HEA 1063

This act allows schools to develop Stop the Bleed programs in order to increase school safety. In order to receive a Stop the Bleed kit, schools must train a minimum of five individuals on how to administer the kit. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) and the Indiana State Department of Health are required to develop and provide such training.

HEA 1113

This act requires the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission to adopt certain building rules regarding installation of audio frequency induction loop systems and beacon positioning systems in certain new structures in certain types of cities.

HEA 1225

This act allows schools and the county sheriff's office to apply for Secured School Funds in order to implement an active event warning system.

HEA 1342

This act requires certain public safety individuals to complete an approved telephone cardiopulmonary resuscitation (T-CPR) training program.

SEA 325

This act allows schools to apply for Secured School Funds to implement student and parent support services plans.

SEA 513

This act increases the maximum amount an individual may receive from the State Disaster Relief Fund to **\$10,000**.

SEA 142

This act prohibits a building commissioner, building code official or inspector of a local government unit from issuing or overseeing the issuance of a permit if the person has a conflict of interest (direct or indirect financial interest). It also requires local governments to adopt an ordinance to establish a procedure to address a conflict of interest.

SEA 485

This act adds certain elevator standards to the list of national codes that the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission shall adopt. It also allows IDHS to request certain types of documentation to determine that work conducted on a regulated lifting device was performed by a licensed individual, requires the Commission to review national codes within 24 months after the effective date of the national code and allows the Commission to set a fee that is less than the standard fee for permits in certain instances.

SEA 498

This act provides that the Office of the Secretary of Family and Social Services may reimburse certain emergency medical services provider agencies for covered services provided to a Medicaid recipient as part of a mobile integration healthcare program.

HEA 1269

This act:

- Eliminates the boiler and pressure vessel rules board and the regulated amusement device safety board, and transfers all duties and powers to the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission.
- Provides that IDHS and the Commission may grant variances regarding fire safety, building and equipment rules.
- Requires IDHS to make variance applications available for review on a public portal and allows local fire and building officials to receive notice of applications filed within their jurisdictions. Local fire and building officials, or other interested parties, may submit documentation regarding a variance application.
- Requires the state building commissioner to create a database cataloging variance rulings.
- Allows IDHS to make the initial determination on variance or waiver requests for EMS Commission rules and Board of Firefighting Personnel Standards and Education rules to improve efficiency.



EXERCISE - EXPLOSION AT JACKSON COUNTY SCHOOL!

Imagine a disaster. Specifically, an explosion in a common area of a small, rural high school. Think of the chaos. Think of the fear of students who hear the noise reverberating. Envision students and teachers lying on the floor, hurt from the initial blast.

In April, Jackson County first responders held an exercise with this exact scenario at Seymour High School. Participants included the Jackson County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), Seymour Community Schools, Seymour Fire Department, Jackson County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Seymour Police Department and Schneck Memorial Hospital.

“This exercise was an opportunity for our first responders and



schools to work together and look for strengths and areas for improvement,” said Duane Davis, Jackson County EMA director.

Search and rescue, triage and patient treatment and transport

were an important part of the scenario, with salvage and overhaul operations occurring as well. The high school also practiced evacuation and reunification, sending one group of students off-site to a reunification center.

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“We had 15 ‘victims’ in all. We work with EMS and police a lot every day, but this event was somewhat unusual,” said Chief Brad Lucas of the Seymour Fire Department. “I’ve hired several new firefighters in the last year, and this gave them an opportunity to get hands-on, simulated training.”

“This was a great opportunity to have our school personnel and first responders work together to practice how we would make the best of a bad situation,” said Talmadge Reasoner, Seymour High School vice principal. “This is a small town, so I know all of these people. We’re used to seeing these folks, but seeing them do their job on a patient... it’s sobering to know what might take place if this happened in real life.”

The training section of the Indiana Department of



Homeland Security (IDHS) provided additional support and Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program compliance certification for the event.

“Exercising provides an opportunity to familiarize staff with their roles and responsibilities, and validates

plans, policies and procedures in a low-risk, no-fault environment,” said Ashley Baldwin, IDHS exercise program manager for southern Indiana. “Being able to assist and support is incredibly satisfying, and building relationships at the local level will prepare us all during a real-world event.”



STATE AND FEDERAL GRANTS UPDATE

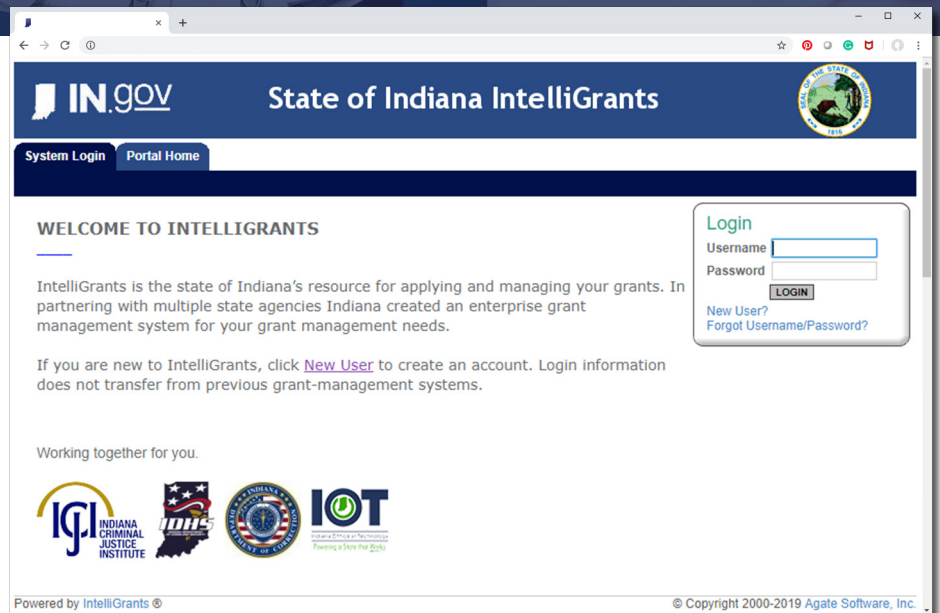
The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) has launched the new grant application and management system platform, IntelliGrants. With the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP) and the Indiana Homeland Security Foundation Grant application periods now closed, IDHS is preparing for the next round of federal applications.

EMPG AND HMEP APPLICATIONS

Organizations intending to apply for the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) and the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) grant during summer 2019 should ensure that they have a system administrator registered with IntelliGrants.

The system administrator should be authorized to request grants on behalf of an entity and approve others to have access to the system. This information must be submitted by filling out the [form available on the IDHS website](#).

Information gathered through the form will be used to create administrator accounts. Logins and passwords will be sent to administrators as grant application periods approach.



Organizations must have a system administrator identified in the IntelliGrants system to apply for any new grants through IDHS.

SECURED SCHOOL SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM UPDATE

Following the legislative changes that occurred in the program during session, IDHS and other state agencies are currently working with the Office of the Governor to define and implement the new programs and services now available. The goal is to provide a comprehensive grant program, presenting schools several options to address school safety in a way that is most impactful.

Secured School Grants are currently NOT open for

applications. All schools will be notified when the Secured School Grant is open for applications. The expectation is that the application period will open in Summer 2019.

As this process moves forward, IDHS will provide more information on timing for the creation of a school system administrator account in the IntelliGrants grant management system. In the meantime, learn more about suggested steps for schools on the [Secured School Safety web page](#).

Individuals with questions or concerns may view the frequently asked [questions on the IDHS website](#) or reach out to the Grants Management team at grants@dhs.in.gov.

IDHS TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Two members of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, Mike Hill, WebEOC administrator, and Graham Jessiman, business systems consultant, recently attended Juvare's annual conference in New Orleans.

Juvare may not be a familiar name to many, but the company took over responsibility for various pieces of software used within the state of Indiana, including WebEOC and EMResource, and was previously known as the Emergency Preparedness and Response Division of Intermedix.

During this year's conference, Jessiman began his term as Chairman of the WebEOC User Advisory Board, a body made

up of representatives from the WebEOC user community and members of the Juvare product management team. Together the board works to develop and improve WebEOC.

Central to the theme of the conference were presentations on Juvare Exchange, a product being used at Shaken Fury, the 2019 National Level Exercise, to "roll up" data from local jurisdictions to county, state and federal (FEMA) levels in an easier manner than previously possible.

Preliminary information also was shared on a new mobile WebEOC app, which will allow the better use of WebEOC on hand-held devices. The new mobile app will be available later this year. With the app roll



out, IDHS will need to make some changes to various WebEOC boards, allowing more user-friendly interfaces on a mobile device. Changes will be prioritized by usage and need.

More information on this and future plans will be made available to those attending the IDHS pre-conference workshop at the Emergency Management Alliance of Indiana conference later in the year.

MISTY THE ARSON DOG

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) has a new team member: Misty, a 2-year-old black lab and arson dog. Misty and her handler, Lillian Hardy, search and rescue training manager, were certified through the State Farm Arson Dog Program on April 26, 2019.

The State Farm Arson Dog Program is a four-week course that teaches handlers and the dogs how to detect accelerants at fire scenes.

Indiana fire departments that request investigative assistance from the IDHS fire investigation section also can use Hardy and Misty to determine if accelerants were used. Already, the team has been deployed on several investigations.



CHANGES AHEAD FOR SECURED SCHOOL GRANT

School safety continues to be a top priority for Indiana lawmakers, as well as Gov. Eric Holcomb. The most recent legislative session, which ended April 26, included spirited debate around several proposals, from expanded school safety funding to addressing the mental health needs of schools and teachers across the state. Many of those proposals stemmed from the [August 2018 School Safety Recommendations report](#) coordinated by a working group and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

In the end, lawmakers appropriated \$19 million to the Secured Schools Fund—an increase from the \$14.3 million allocated last year. With the increase comes expanded opportunities for schools to participate and additional items eligible under the fund, beyond the school resource officers, technology and equipment and threat assessments previously covered. Schools can now request funds to place a law enforcement officer or a school

resource officer in schools; apply jointly with county sheriffs for an active event warning system; provide firearms trainings for schools that choose to allow firearms in buildings; and to “implement a student and parent support services plan” to address wellness concerns in schools.

State agencies are collaborating to implement those services and programs, and IDHS is working to update the Secured Schools Grant (SSG) application in [IntelliGrants](#), the new grant management system. Applications will open soon for the 19-20 academic year. An increase in applications is expected this year, and applications will be reviewed for eligibility and priority.

Visit the [Grants Management section on the IDHS website](#) for the latest news.

“The SSG program is an important mechanism through which the State supports the individual needs of each school district,” said Rusty

Goodpaster, state training officer and director of the Secured Schools Safety Board. “These enhancements to the fund provide flexibility to allow smaller schools to participate in the program while also expanding to parameters of how schools can protect staff and students.”

In addition to the SSG program, Indiana also hosts the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy each year and a free metal detector program for schools based on enrollment. About 97 percent of schools received detectors last year.

Holcomb issued the following statement after signing the school safety bill: “I convened a group last year to examine school safety, and the recommendations led to this legislation that provides access to more funding for safety equipment, facilitates partnerships with local law enforcement and requires threat assessments in school. This new law is key to ensure our schools are better prepared.”

CHANGES TO THE SECURED SCHOOLS FUND

- \$19 million for FY20 and FY21
- \$500,000 for non-public schools
- Eligibility includes SRO or accredited law enforcement officer
- Schools/sheriffs can apply for setup costs for an alert warning system (1 time)
- Eligibility includes plan to implement a student/parent support services plan
- Eligibility includes firearms/self-defense training for staff

CHANGES TO THE MATCH REQUIREMENTS/FUNDING FORMULA

Average Daily Membership	Funding
1 - 500	up to \$35,000 at 25% match or up to \$50,000 at 50% match or up to \$100,000 at 100% match
501 - 1,000	up to \$50,000 at 50% match or up to \$100,000 at 100% match
More than 1,000 or Coalition	up to \$100,000 at 100% match

BUSINESS CONTINUITY AWARENESS WEEK EMPHASIZED EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



Fires. Data breaches. Pipes bursting. Emergencies and natural disasters come in various forms and sizes. Indiana state government agencies and local businesses raised awareness and prepared for these situations and more during the 2019 Business Continuity Awareness Week.



“The community relies on the health, safety, food and other services provided by government agencies and businesses,” said Scott Huffman, state continuity of operations/ government planning manager. “Understanding how a disaster will impact your agency, resources and customers is vital to ensuring these services are available after an emergency.”



Under Huffman’s guidance, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security dedicated the week to “Investing in Resilience” in various ways. Events included a State Continuity Working Group meeting, a Continuity Planners Workshop Train-the-Trainer

course and three individuals taking the Level II Master Continuity Practitioner Certification test and becoming certified. Additionally, Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb [proclaimed](#) May 13-17 as Business Continuity Awareness Week in Indiana.

The Indiana Office of Technology also participated in an event during which the agency reviewed their recently updated continuity of operations (COOP) plan. COOP plans list potential threats to the organizations and identify alternative methods to remain functional after the emergency.

“Our tabletop exercise helped Office of Technology employees understand the COOP plan and helped address any gaps or weaknesses in the plan that needed improvement to make it more effective,” said Ram Annamalai, deputy/assistant IT director for the Indiana Office of Technology. “We strongly

believe when organizations create COOP plans for catastrophic events that agencies should also focus on localized incidents like a water main break, fires or IT-related incidents. These incidents could also cause a major disruption in providing critical services to the citizens of Indiana.”

Huffman, who helped organize the 2019 event, has big plans for future Business Continuity Awareness Weeks.

“I want to build upon everything we’ve accomplished this year,” Huffman said. “I want to webcast Continuity Planning meetings, create a state level essential functions document, offer more trainings and have more people become certified through FEMA’s Continuity Excellence Series.”

For more information, visit [IDHS’s Continuity of Operations/ Government webpage](#).

AWARD-WINNING PROGRAM TACKLES HIGH INFANT MORTALITY RATES



Two coordinators of an innovative program to address infant mortality in Montgomery County were honored recently with awards at the 2018 Indiana Emergency Response Conference.

Darren Forman, firefighter/community paramedic with Crawfordsville Fire/EMS, was named Paramedic of the Year. Scott Sinnott, OB-GYN with Franciscan Physician Network, was named Medical Director of the Year. Both were recognized for their role in Project Swaddle, a program to address infant mortality rates by providing prenatal and postnatal care to local mothers.

“The idea is innovative, because it is providing necessary care to patients who can’t financially access it on their own,” Sinnott said. “It provides necessary medication, increases the level of labor safety and hopefully will lower pre-term births.” Montgomery County, Ind., has an average infant mortality rate of 8.6 deaths per 1,000 live births, above the state average of 7.3.

Project Swaddle was created in 2018 in partnership with the Montgomery County Health Board, Franciscan Health Crawfordsville, the Women’s Resource Center and the Crawfordsville Fire/EMS Department. The program is part of Crawfordsville’s community paramedicine program, originally created to address heart failure.

Community paramedicine allows emergency medical services (EMS) personnel the ability to increase primary and preventative health care access. Some of Forman’s duties include administering necessary IV treatments, calling to remind women about doctor appointments and transporting them if necessary.

“It took a long time to create the Project Swaddle program,” Forman said. “It was like creating the wheel, because we had no previous programs we could look to for guidance.”

Community paramedicine allows emergency medical services (EMS) personnel

the ability to increase primary and preventative health care access. Some of Forman’s duties include administering necessary IV treatments, calling to remind women about doctor appointments and driving them to their appointments.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s the weekend, a holiday or there is severe weather, I am always working,” Forman said. “If I get a call from a mother who needs a ride to the hospital at 3 a.m. in a snow storm, which really happened, I’m driving her to the hospital.”

He also is there to provide support and guidance for a few weeks after a mother and baby is released from the hospital. Approximately 20 mothers and 10 babies currently participate in the program.

Women are referred to Project Swaddle by Franciscan Health Crawfordsville and the Women’s Resource Center if they show signs of a high-risk pregnancy, such as pre-existing health problems, age, financial problems and weight.

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Patti Harvey, executive director of Women's Resource Center, said the center refers patients to Project Swaddle because they want to foster a better home life for the mothers and babies.

"We see girls from all walks of life," Harvey said. "Some have medical issues, some financial struggles and others have no support at home. Darren helps these mothers in any possible way, and they have come to rely on him and trust him."

Forman said fire and EMS agencies in Indiana and surrounding states mention they have a similar health care gap and would like to implement the program in their community. However, the obstacle to replicating the program is the lack a true business model.

"We had to start from scratch, and the program we have now is based on a lot of trial and error," Forman said. "Funding and private insurance are a few of the missing cogs in the wheel we created."

The department is working with Wabash College and Purdue University on creating a business model.

"My favorite part of the job is holding these babies," Forman said. "I look at this baby I'm holding and think, 'I helped this baby be born, how cool is that.' And that is the entire purpose of what I'm doing, making sure babies are healthy."

IDHS RECOVERY STAFF PARTICIPATES IN SHELBYVILLE PREPAREDNESS DAY



On Saturday, May 18, recovery staff members with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) participated in and provided educational materials at Disaster Preparedness Day in Shelbyville, Ind.

The event was organized by Indiana Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (INVOAD) and Indiana Catholic Charities, with the help of Shelby County EMA Director Ryan Hansome. The event featured organizations including the Shelbyville Fire Department, Shelbyville Police, the Shelby County Sheriff's Department, Shelby County EMA and Shelby County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD).

The public event allowed attendees to become more familiar with various response organizations and their roles in

the community, as well as some of their specialized equipment. Emergency preparedness resources and various educational materials were also made available.

"We're always happy to take part in events like these," said Mary Moran, Recovery Director with IDHS. "Getting the opportunity to meet with and talk to the folks in the communities we serve is always a valuable experience, both for us and for them."

The event was made possible by a grant from Walmart issued to Catholic Charities USA. A second Disaster Preparedness Day event is currently being scheduled to take place in Fulton County in late August. For more information on future events, please contact Catholic Charities Representative Jane Crady at jacc1@tds.net.



INDIANA'S NEW PUBLIC SAFETY PORTAL

A new Public Safety Portal just made updating Indiana permits and licensing requirements through the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) much easier.

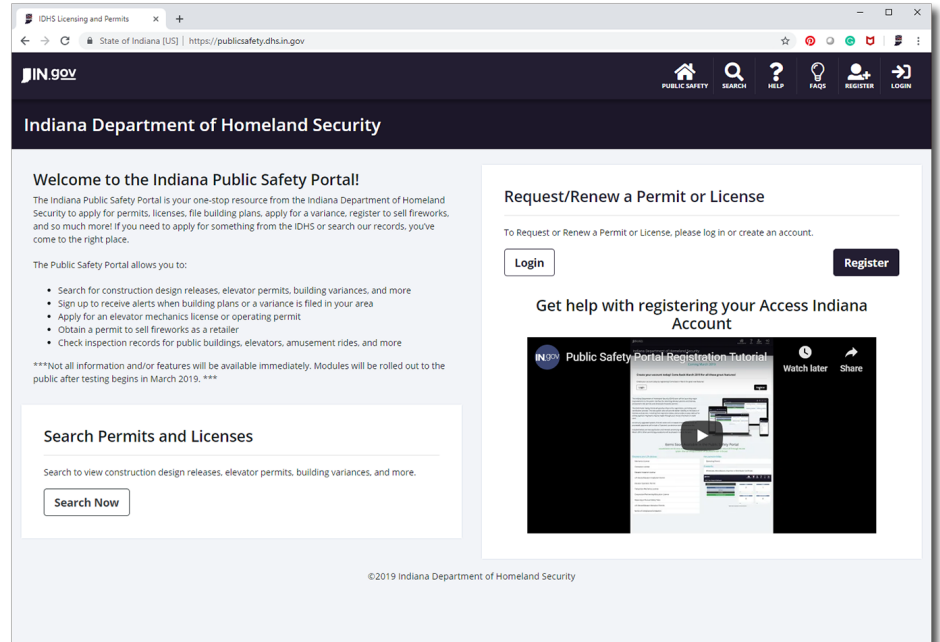
The Public Safety Portal is an online, one-stop web portal resource for Hoosiers to control all of their IDHS-required documentation. Once complete, the portal will replace the Division of Fire and Building Safety (DFBS). Phase 1 of the project launched in March of 2019 with the elevator and amusement rides module.

This new system also will take advantage of the state's single sign-on process and provide an easy method for online payment.

Chuck Emsweller, chief information officer for IDHS, led the development of the Public Safety Portal since its creation in January of 2017.

"When I started here at IDHS, it was very obvious to me that the existing DFBS system was far outdated and inadequate to provide and collect the information we needed," Emsweller said. "Upgrading our inspectors with modern technology, like iPads, will greatly increase the efficiency for them to do their jobs."

The new Public Safety Portal



also is designed to be significantly more user friendly for customers compared to the old DFBS system.

Narendra "Dev" Nimmagadda, senior IT project manager for the IDHS, said the Public Safety Portal's user interface is more enhanced compared to its DFBS predecessor.

"The interface features stats and a dashboard for customers to navigate through the Public Safety Portal webpages," said Dev. "We designed it to be a one-stop shop, and most of all, be a resource customers can use without constantly needing our assistance."

The new portal also is expected to bring in more revenue than the previous system.

"The original estimates indicated an annual loss of \$2 to 2.5 million per year due to inaccuracies in the existing DFBS system," Emsweller wrote. "When all four phases are complete, we anticipate an annual revenue stream of \$14 to \$15 million, versus the current \$12 million."

Despite an increase in revenue, money is not the motivating factor in creating a new system.

"Revenue is important of course, but our prime objective of each of these systems is to ensure better public safety," Emsweller said.

To learn more about the Public Safety Portal and register for an account, visit <https://publicsafety.dhs.in.gov/>.



NEXT LEVEL VETERANS INITIATIVE SEEKS TO EMPLOY MORE INDIANA FIRST RESPONDERS

The transition from military to civilian life certainly is no walk in the park, especially when it comes to finding a fulfilling career. The Next Level Veterans initiative seeks to change that by working with employers to fill 85,000 open Indiana jobs, including jobs found in the emergency response field.

Launched in 2018, Next Level Veterans connects active-duty and retired military personnel with employment opportunities, resources and communities in the state of Indiana. Public and private sector organizations support the initiative, and currently more than 600 veterans and military spouses are registered in its program.

Wes Wood, director of the nonprofit organization INvets and former member of the U.S. Army, leads the Next Level Veterans initiative. Wood says the initiative provides veterans with a more customized job searching experience.

“We’re trying to flip the dynamic of the traditional ‘job board’ career process for veterans,” Wood explained. “For veterans who know what field they want to go into, we want to help them get there. For those that don’t, we want to introduce them to

employers and help them get placed into a job position that suits them best.”

As of May 2019, Next Level Veterans works with more than 100 employers around Indiana. However, only a handful of those are emergency response organizations.

Jeffrey Wirt, the director of veterans and employee outreach at the Indiana Department of Veteran Affairs, works closely with the Next Level Veterans initiative. Wirt said the training veterans receive in the military oftentimes makes them great applicants for emergency response job positions.

“The military occupational specialties veterans learn and perform while serving relate closely to many first responder jobs,” Wirt said. “Combat medics, for example, already have the training and experience found in the EMS field, which makes them excellent applicants for those types of job positions.”

Wirt, a 15-year member of the Indiana Army National Guard, says it can be simple but challenging for veterans to find a job they are comfortable with after returning from active duty.

“There are many businesses in Indiana, like those in the Next Level Veterans initiative, that are veteran friendly and actively seek out veterans to hire,” Wirt said. “But it can be difficult for veterans to adapt to the work structure seen in civilian jobs.”

Wirt’s brother-in-law, Charles Ingraham, is a veteran who works as a firefighter for the Indianapolis Fire Department. Ingraham served in the U.S. Army from 2000–2007, and he frequently uses skills he gained from the military in his job as a firefighter.

“Just like in the military, you have to take orders and follow a rank structure while working as a firefighter,” Ingraham said. “Being in an environment like that made it easier for me to transition from a military to a civilian job.”

Indiana emergency response responder agencies interested in partnering with the Next Level Veterans initiative can visit <https://www.in.gov/veterans>.

VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE CRITICAL SUPPORT TO COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGERS

With tight budgets and a growing workload to serve their communities, emergency management agencies (EMAs) often find themselves short of one crucial resource: personnel. Without volunteers, an effective emergency response is difficult to attain and sometimes even harder to maintain.

Whether it's serving on a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), being a certified amateur radio operator or manning one of the emergency operations center (EOC) seats, volunteers take on many different responsibilities to support EMAs.

For Decatur County, volunteers are part of a very active CERT team. These volunteers do more than just respond to weather emergencies. They assist in crowd and traffic control during local parades, during the county fair and other large events.

"We have times when the county needs more people," said Decatur County EMA



Director Brad Spear. "The time the volunteers put forth frees up more time for first responders, and that's essential."

Spear also is working to revamp the county high schools CERT team. This team is trained to the same level as the normal CERT team and would be available to deploy at school or to events in the community.

"The idea with this program is to encourage the students to continue to volunteer after high school. Many colleges in Indiana now have CERT teams so the students will take the experiences they gained and transfer them to another level."

While many counties have CERT teams similar to Decatur County, citizens in Hamilton County have a unique opportunity to serve their community by learning how to staff and manage the county EOC.

"We want our volunteers to learn the many different positions and get them to the point where, if needed, they could serve in the EOC manager capacity," said Hamilton County EMA Director Shane Booker.

EOC volunteers start out in the situational awareness seat and work their way up through

(continued on next page)



the planning, logistics and operations section chief roles. They meet twice a month for two hours to learn about the positions.

“We want to teach them the crucial skills they would need by letting them experience real-world situations and seeing how different emergencies are handled,” said Booker.

While managing volunteers can take a lot of time and effort, it is worth it, according to Booker.



“Working with volunteers is worth the time investment. We need to be able to grow to meet the needs of a major incident and make sure we have people who are well-practiced in how we do things, so we can draw from them as a resource in an emergency.”

“While we have a few volunteers with a public safety background, our volunteers are mostly just citizens who wanted to get involved and serve their community,” said Spear.

IN MEMORIAM



Dennis Moats

Dennis Moats, who served as Bartholomew County’s Emergency Management Director from 1991 through 2015, died April 10, 2019, at Columbus Regional Hospital. He was 68.

He was a longtime volunteer for the American Red Cross and Red Cross Disaster Services and a two-time recipient of the Red Cross Volunteer of the Year Award.

As a Red Cross instructor and instructor-trainer, Dennis taught hundreds of first aid, CPR and instructor classes.

Dennis was the Cubmaster of Cub Scout Pack 560 and had been a committee member and Merit Badge Counselor for Boy Scout Troop 557 for 30 years. He was a 33-year member of Columbus Elks Lodge #521.



Ted Bombagetti

Theodore L. “Ted” Bombagetti passed away Sunday, May 26, 2019. He was 63.

For 40 years, he served his community as a volunteer firefighter. He was a member of the Bass Lake and Knox-Center Township Fire Departments. Starting out at Bass Lake, he was chief for six years. He was currently the assistant fire chief of the Knox-Center Township Fire Department. To him, being a firefighter was a true calling and an honor. He also served as Starke County’s emergency management director before accepting the District 2 coordinator position with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

BLOCK 100 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP
07/27/2019 AND 07/28/2019
WARSAW-WAYNE FIRE TERRITORY

RESCUE TASK FORCE OPERATIONS
06/22/2019 AND 06/23/2019
FORT WAYNE

UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL PET PREPAREDNESS MONTH OBSERVED: JUNE 2019

The entire household should be prepared for an emergency, and that includes pets. Use the hashtag #PetPreparedness on social media to share ways your county is celebrating pet preparedness month and encouraging residents to plan ahead for their pets' safety.

For pet preparedness tips, visit GetPrepared.in.gov.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH OBSERVED: JUNE 2019

June 2019 marks the fifth annual Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Month, which encourages individuals to learn about PTSD symptoms and available treatments. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security offers a mental health training for first responders that helps them recognize PTSD symptoms in themselves, fellow responders and the individuals they are helping.

For more information about PTSD, visit <https://www.ptsd.va.gov>.

NATIONAL FIREWORKS SAFETY MONTH OBSERVED: JUNE 2019

In 2017, the Indiana State Department of Health reported more than 230 firework-related injuries occurred. Most of all reported injuries were to hands and fingers. Before the summer festivities begin in your community share some fireworks safety tips so everyone can stay safe.

For more on fireworks safety, visit GetPrepared.in.gov.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL CPR AND AED AWARENESS WEEK

OBSERVED: JUNE 1-7, 2019

Every year, the American Heart Association sponsors National CPR and AED Awareness Week to raise awareness about how CPR and AED skills can help save someone's life. Consider organizing CPR training in your community as one way to raise awareness about the risks of cardiac arrest.

For more information about National CPR and AED Awareness Week, visit <https://cpr.heart.org>.

NATIONAL LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

OBSERVED: JUNE 23-29, 2019

In 2018, 20 lightning-related deaths were recorded in the United States, most of which occurred when individuals did not take immediate shelter during a thunderstorm. Continued education are credited as the reasons for the low fatality numbers. Share lightning safety information before a thunderstorm occurs to help keep the entire community safe.

Visit GetPrepared.in.gov for more information about lightning safety.

NATIONAL HEATSTROKE PREVENTION DAY

OBSERVED: JULY 31, 2019

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is warning Americans to *Look Before You Lock*. The national campaign warns family members, guardians and caregivers that leaving a child in a vehicle for a prolonged period during the summer months can quickly become fatal. In as little as 10 minutes, children can suffer from a heatstroke. Consider sharing heatstroke prevention tips on social media as a way to participate.

Visit GetPrepared.in.gov for information about extreme heat safety.

For additional ways to share information in your community, visit <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/child-safety/heatstroke-prevention>.

*The Indiana Department of Homeland Security works 24/7
to protect the people, property and prosperity of Indiana.*



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Please direct any questions or comments to the
IDHS Office of Public Affairs at 317.234.6713 or pio@dhs.in.gov*

Indiana Department of Homeland Security
302 West Washington Street
Indiana Government Center South
Room E208
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317.232.2222 or 800.669.7362

