

# THE HOOSIER RESPONDER

JUNE 2020

**Keeping Eyes  
on the Skies  
Saves Lives**

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*Photo by Beth Carpenter, IDHS*

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In the next few weeks, all IDHS staff members who are able should be back to work as usual in the Indiana Government Center South building. Field inspections and regional responses launched a few weeks ago, so IDHS is approaching full capacity in all areas — a first since the pandemic halted most normal operations.

The Indiana Emergency Operations Center remains at a Level 1 but has scaled back its hours to 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The EOC continues to work closely with our Health and Indiana National Guard partners in moving resources and supporting logistics of additional testing sites, food pantries and distribution of PPE. This will continue indefinitely.

While most employees are back at work, some remain home. Some staff members fall in the high-risk category related to COVID-19, and the agency is working to reassign duties to anyone who cannot effectively work from home. This will continue for all state agencies, along with additional processes, cleaning requirements and safety procedures, all with social distancing requirements in mind.

What does this mean for Indiana's first responder community? First and foremost, we stand ready to support counties in any way needed, whether it be from COVID-19, natural disaster or manmade event. Our teams are trained for all hazards. Our Planning, Training, Exercise and Grants Management Division is working hard to provide typical services to the state, although trainings are limited in size due to CDC guidelines. Grants continue to open and get processed, including Secured School Safety Grants.

Code Enforcement inspectors are busy now working with local fire marshals to ensure opening businesses are adhering to the occupancy guidelines. Our teams are a great resource for guiding business owners who are determined to put safety first when opening their doors again to the public. Also, our Elevators and Amusements Section has ramped up work inspecting theme parks and any county fairs planning to open.

We remain committed to supporting county governments with information about the fight against COVID-19. Local governments are participating in federal funding workshops, and local emergency management officials are actively participating in tracking PPE for first responders. IDHS will continue to share current information and actions and engage local officials, as necessary.

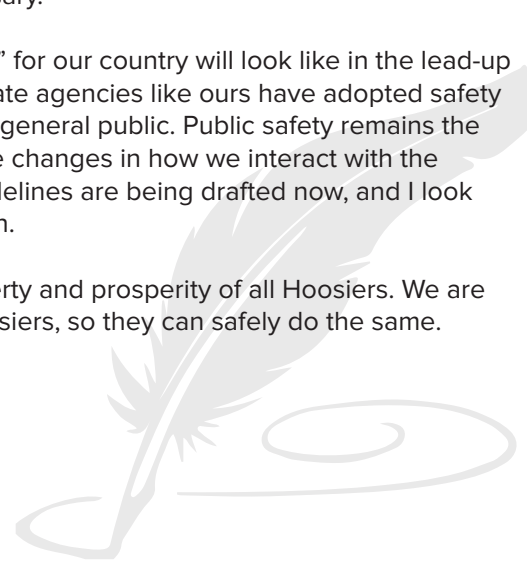
Nobody really knows what this "new normal" for our country will look like in the lead-up to finding a COVID-19 vaccine. Until then, state agencies like ours have adopted safety guidelines to protect our staff as well as the general public. Public safety remains the top priority for IDHS. This may result in some changes in how we interact with the public/customers in our building. Those guidelines are being drafted now, and I look forward to sharing these plans with you soon.

IDHS continues to protect the people, property and prosperity of all Hoosiers. We are excited to get back on track supporting Hoosiers, so they can safely do the same.

Sincerely,



Steve Cox  
Executive Director





## IDHS OFFERS GUIDANCE ON ESSENTIAL BUSINESS

When Gov. Eric Holcomb's Stay-At-Home Order was issued on March 23, staff members from IDHS were called into action to help Hoosiers understand what businesses could continue operating under the order.

A [Critical Industries webpage](#) was created and a special hotline to answer questions was set up the next day by IDHS staff. More than a dozen staff members from IDHS and the State Personnel Department fielded more than 3,000 phone calls and the webpage received about 2,000 hits on that first day of operation.

"It was all types of people, and even the Director, in there to help answer questions in an ever-evolving situation," said code enforcement official Michele Knoy. "How quickly it was put together is a testament to IDHS."

Every weekday, hotline staff from IDHS have been answering the phone to take questions on whether businesses can be open and how they can reopen,

with many asking about salons, dog groomers and houses of worship, among other topics. More than 15,000 calls have come in since the hotline opened.

"The call center was an amazing idea," said clerical assistant Monica Hurley. "We are able to assist the community and give them insight on what's going on within our state. I am honored to be a part of an amazing team that believes in the well-being of our community."

More than 20 IDHS employees have staffed the hotline, which transitioned to working remotely, and in recent weeks the team has been reduced to about a handful of representatives. They continue to see a steady call volume, averaging more than 250 calls per day, and experienced a spike in calls following the announcement of the [Back on Track Indiana](#) plan on May 1.

Community engagement officer Kat Dayhoff-Dwyer has worked the hotline, and with

a background in emergency management, she said she has seen how disasters (like COVID-19) can bring out the fear in people. The attention IDHS employees have shown to hotline callers has made a positive difference.

"Hearing the stress in their voice when they first call, and then they offer many blessings and thank-you's at the end of your call, we know we did well," she said.

Likewise, administrative assistant Bonnie Sims has been proud to be a reassuring voice to Hoosiers.

"There was a lady who was very upset and crying, saying that she had already lost \$10,000 in her business, unsure what to do. In talking with her, I was able to calm her down and go through the process steps," she said. "After getting the run-around from other sources, she thanked me for being understanding, listening and taking the time to help her."



# NATIONAL GUARD RESPONDS TO HOOSIERS IN NEED

On March 17 Gov. Eric Holcomb activated the Indiana National Guard to “address and assist in this public health emergency.” In the following weeks, the Indiana National Guard activated nearly 1,500 Soldiers and Airmen serving in a wide variety of support roles to augment the staff and capabilities of many state agencies, such as the Indiana State Department of Health and the Indiana Department of Correction.

The Indiana National Guard played a vital role in the early response efforts. The use of the National Guard’s primary warehouse, and shipping and logistics hub, provided the space and workforce to distribute PPE to frontline medical workers across the state. This mission was the first of many statewide, interagency missions.

Guardsmen and women continue working at numerous food banks around the state to

ensure their neighbors receive the help they need. Most recently, teams supported large-scale food distribution missions, utilizing critical infrastructures like the Indiana State Fairgrounds and Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The Guard’s assistance helped provide more than 1 million meals across the state, and that number continues to grow.

Hoosier soldiers and airmen support ISDH as a force multipliers at numerous testing sites. Their roles include setup and teardown operations, directing traffic and administering tests. Alongside

ISDH officials, Guardsmen assist with blood draws as part of the antibody study by the Fairbanks School of Public Health.

Guardsmen and women are augmenting IDOC staff in various capacities such as limited medical support, roving exterior patrols and assisting with warehouses operations.

Army and Air senior leaders provide expertise to other agency leads in the analysis, planning and coordination of several interagency missions. This augmentation enables other state agencies to utilize the planning power and

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procedures of Indiana's military assets to make informed decisions. Many of these "behind the scenes" missions aid in predictive analysis, responses to media and citizen inquiries and logistics planning within the State Emergency Operations Center.



Soldiers and airmen of the Indiana National Guard live, work and raise families in Hoosier communities; many guardsmen and women who previously responded to floods, tornadoes, snow and ice storms, are activated during this crisis to once again serve Hoosiers.



## STATE EOC ENGAGES PARTNERS FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

For the past 11 weeks, the Indiana Emergency Operations Center has operated at a Level 1 status in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of June 3, the EOC has completed its 268th mission, with all emergency support functions on-call virtually. Due to social distancing, most of these functions were assigned remotely to protect the health of EOC workers.

"Despite the challenges of a virtual EOC, the many state partners who are assisting in this response continue to help us get the resources to every part of Indiana, where they're needed the most," said Erin Rowe, director of emergency management for IDHS.

"Our ability to collaborate and put plans in place quickly has helped us tremendously," she added.

Although the pandemic remains very much active, the needs to respond to this health emergency have been put in place, allowing the EOC to pull back on operations, to some degree. For weeks, resources, supplies and personnel have been gathered, dispatched and aligned across Indiana, and health facilities continue to effectively handle the increase in patients. PPE supplies have been imported from private vendors and are being

distributed by the state's new PPE marketplace, health and IDHS.

Moving forward, the focus for the EOC will be on assisting in the public health response in as many ways as possible to help treatment, tests and tracking resources get where they need to be.

### Among the missions coordinated by the EOC are:

- Multiple PPE shipments
- Resource transportation and relocation
- Food pantry support
- Transportation of testing supplies

IDHS works in a support function for all public health and safety groups across the state. The EOC becomes activated when a statewide coordinated response is required for a large-scale disaster or emergency. While the COVID response is manageable, the EOC also tracks flooding and other weather emergencies this time of year.

"Spring in Indiana can be very unpredictable, but our teams are well-prepared to respond if necessary and help the local governments and state with whatever hazards come our way," said Steve Cox, IDHS executive director.



## LICENSED TO EXPLODE

Construction and demolition companies are integral to building Indiana's infrastructure, and their operations rely heavily on the use of regulated explosives. There is more to regulated explosives than simply pushing the blast button, however. Companies seeking to utilize regulated explosives in Indiana must first be licensed as a blaster and operator to gain blasting and operator licensure through the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).

Madison Roe, the SARA Title III program manager for IDHS, oversees the certification of blasting and operator licenses in the state of Indiana.

"Any company planning to use any type of regulated explosive should be coming through and verified by IDHS Hazmat," Roe said. "Even regulated explosives have a danger risk, and the licenses are a way to make sure

companies using explosives are properly trained and following the blasting laws of Indiana."

Blasting licenses, as described by the official IDHS "[Procedure Guide for Licensing Explosive Use](#)," is required for anyone "who supervises or directs and performs the loading and firing of explosives materials in the State of Indiana." Operator licenses are required for any "person/company who takes

possession of a regulated explosive in the State of Indiana for the purpose of detonation under the person's direction or control."

As of 2019, there are 265 blasters and 20 operators licensed in Indiana. Companies seeking to purchase Indiana blaster and operator licenses must submit the required application information along with the designated fee. The

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blaster license fee is \$175, and the operator license is \$350, and both are valid for three years before needing renewal.

Before submitting applications, applicants also must take and pass a blaster's course through Ivy Tech Community College. If a company or individual holds a blasting and operator license from a different state, however, they have the option of transferring

Neil Wilson, project manager for Rock Solutions LLC, has worked in the blasting and drilling field since January of 2015. Wilson said [Rock Solutions LLC](#) has been licensed to blast in Indiana for more than five years, and always works to ensure blasting operations are within safety regulations.

"We check our seismograph readings to make sure that we

said. "Safety is our main and foremost concern."

Any time the use of regulated explosives is necessary for operations, Wilson said the company uses non-electric detonators.

"We use explosives every week to remove rock," Wilson said. "It's usually needed when rock is encountered while we are lowering elevations or placing utilities."

So far, Wilson has completed seven blasting licensing renewals for individuals and contractors working for Rock Solutions LLC. For a company that operates in three other states aside from Indiana, Wilson said the IDHS blasting and operators licensing process always meets his expectations.

"IDHS is very efficient to work with," Wilson said. "They are extremely helpful with any questions that I have, and the renewals are returned in a very quick time frame."



Michael White with IDHS inspects explosive magazines at the Martin Marietta mine in Indianapolis, accompanied by mine foreman Caitlin Darnall.

over to Indiana through reciprocity.

In addition to handling blasting and operator licensure, Roe said IDHS Hazmat also provides Hoosiers the opportunity to report blasting concerns.

"Our hazmat specialists are trained to investigate blasting complaints called in by the public," Roe said. "It is possible for blasting to cause damage to people's homes, so we take complaints received seriously."

are in compliance with state requirements, and also make changes to reduce noise to the best of our ability," Wilson





# INVESTING IN CONTINUITY

2020



#BCAW2020

Emergencies come in all varieties, and no organization, plan or person can build an effective continuity program against them alone. As COVID-19 threatened the stability of Indiana's economy, continuity experts from state agencies and local businesses collaborated, shared ideas and put their practices into action during Business Continuity Week 2020 (May 17–23).

"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. "Business Continuity Week stresses the importance of having a continuity plan in place that documents what functions or services are essential to these businesses and what elements are necessary to be able to accomplish them."

This year's Business Continuity Week theme, "We Are Stronger Together," emphasized the importance of collaboration and how organizations of varying backgrounds can be brought closer together to improve resilience. Although Business Continuity Week traditionally

consists of workshops, courses and other types of continuity-related activities, most of this year's activities were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Myra McShane, health and safety manager for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), represents IDEM's business continuity function of protecting human health, the environment and maintaining safe business operations throughout the state. As a member of Huffman's DHS Continuity Working Group, McShane believes last year's Business Continuity Week events adequately prepared members of the DHS Continuity Working Group for the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Collaboration with other agencies, planting the seeds for agencywide remote work and planning for reconstitution of employees back into the office are just a few ways that the 2019 BCAW events have been effective in IDEM's response to the COVID-19 pandemic," McShane said.

McShane also explained how COVID-19's impact on Indiana has effectively proven the

accuracy of Business Continuity Week's 2020 theme.

"By working together across agency boundaries, we more fully understand the meaning of 'We Are Stronger Together' and how we can accomplish more together," McShane said. "It is somewhat comforting to know that the majority of agencies, if not all, face the same continuity of operations plan challenges."

Business Continuity Week serves as an important reminder to why Hoosier businesses need to take the time to develop a continuity plan. For Indiana businesses currently without a continuity plan in place, Huffman says the opportunity to do so is still there.

"It is never too late to create a continuity plan," Huffman said. "Every step you take to identify important continuity pieces, such as your essential functions/services, key personnel and orders of succession, will strengthen the resilience of the organization."

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



# FIRE FATALITY MAP

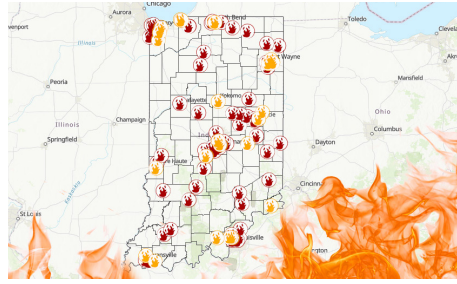
A new, interactive map feature of fatal residence fires tracked by the Indiana State Fire Marshal will help identify areas where increased education and outreach may be necessary to teach Hoosiers about fire safety.

As of June 1, the Fire Investigations Section at (IDHS) has tracked 32 residential fire fatalities across Indiana. This data is imported into the [IDHS Residential Fire Fatalities Map](#), which tracks incidents in which a person dies as the result of a fatal residence fire. The map lists all incidents tracked by or reported to Indiana State Fire Marshal investigators beginning in 2019, although Indiana has no mandatory reporting law for fire fatalities.

“This data is extremely helpful to our staff because it identifies any trends or pockets across Indiana where fire fatalities may be trending upward,” said Indiana State Fire Marshal Joel Thacker. “Part of our role as a state agency is to educate the community about the importance of fire escape plans, where to put smoke alarms and how to avoid fire risks. This helps us determine areas of Indiana that may need extra support.”

The map can be adjusted to display residential fire fatalities from 2019 and 2020. For the current year, the deaths also are broken down by the county in

which they occurred. Each year separates the deaths as either an adult or juvenile. Clicking on each incident tells you the date and location of the fire, the number of deaths and the cause if determined.



The [Fire Investigations Section](#) includes 13 trained investigators as well as a K-9 accelerant detection dog, Misty. Plans are underway to add a second dog to the operation due to high demand. Fire departments may request a state investigator for help in determining cause and origin of fires and to assist local fire investigators with large scenes. Investigators are assigned to different regions of the state and assist or lead in more than 600 events each year.

In 2018, the Indiana State Fire Marshal tracked 72 fire fatalities. That number rose to 87 in 2019 and is on pace to reach that level in 2020. Nationally, cooking is the top cause of residence fires. Lack of a working smoke detector is listed in more than two-thirds of fire fatalities.

“It’s tough when you are at a scene and determine there were

no working smoke alarms in the home,” said Clayton Kinder, chief fire investigator. “A working smoke alarm gives people the best chance at escaping a fire, because every second counts.”

In 2018, the Indiana State Fire Marshal was awarded a national Fire Prevention and Safety Grant for \$520,000. The [Get Alarmed](#) program launched to install 10,000 smoke alarms in Indiana homes. As of June 2020, more than 7,500 have been distributed to departments across the state to install. IDHS continues to work with Hoosier fire departments to install and track the alarms as the grant requires, and a handful of incidents have been reported where people escaped a burning home unharmed because of Get Alarmed.

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has curtailed the Get Alarmed program efforts. Alarms will continue to be distributed to Hoosiers once a backlog of necessary installations is completed.

“Part of our mission is public education and outreach, and the numbers show we need to continue this focus in the months ahead,” Thacker said. “By tracking and publishing this data on the IDHS website, we hope people will pay attention to any target areas and talk to their neighbors and family members about fire safety.”

# EYES IN THE SKIES SAVE LIVES

For more than an hour on Nov. 5, 2017, a quarter-mile-wide tornado damaged farms, trees and power infrastructure as it crossed three Indiana counties, including Delaware County, where another tornado the same day damaged the historic Muncie Fieldhouse and straight-line winds brought down trees on Ball State University's campus. Watching, documenting and reporting all of it were storm spotters in east-central Indiana.

"We were able to keep track of all three severe weather events because of storm spotters, how they were trained and able to pass information along," said Adam Grimes, sergeant at Delaware County Emergency Management Agency. "We received all their info at one central point and collected and shared photos of the damage on social media."

County emergency management agencies (EMAs) across Indiana rely on local teams of storm spotters to be their eyes as severe weather threatens. Some are first responders, like law enforcement, who are already in the field. But, many are trained volunteers who are deployed

as severe weather enters the area. They are trained as part of the National Weather Service's Skywarn program, which offers two-hour classes locally to teach anyone with an interest in public service the severe weather information that county officials and the National Weather Service (NWS) need to know to accurately issue warnings of dangerous storms. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these classes were cancelled, but the training can be taken online too (via [COMET](#), [NWS Indianapolis](#) or [NWS Louisville](#)).

"Storm spotters are invaluable. What lots of people don't realize is that radar can't see a tornado. You need ground troops, somebody to report who you can trust, to confirm the radar," said Tom Ecker, Madison County EMA director. "If we don't have ground troops, we cannot notify the public in a timely manner."

Skywarn trainings teach that the farther away a radar antenna is from a storm, the more difficult it is to capture cloud activity closer to the ground. This means trained spotters are critical to determining what is

happening in the lower portions of storms.

"Spotters bridge the gap between radar and ground truth," NWS meteorologist Sam Lashley said at a training in Decatur County. "Storm spotters add credibility to National Weather Service warnings. People will take action quicker if they hear a trained spotter reported it."

Lashley also tells spotters-in-training their reports help the NWS make more informed warning decisions, give advanced lead time for county EMAs and help first responders get to people in need faster, all of which ultimately could save lives.

Although it was cancelled this year due to the pandemic, Madison County EMA has hosted a Skywarn training event for almost 50 years to recruit, train or refresh members of its volunteer storm spotting team, which includes firefighters, police officers, interested members of the public and many licensed amateur radio operators. There, both NWS and county staff present updated

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information of what to look for in the clouds, where to be to stay safe while observing and how amateur radio operators communicate as part of emergency radio operations.

“You learn that a cloud formation that looks terrible, isn’t always dangerous. For example, a roll cloud is not dangerous at all, or low-hanging clouds,” Ecker said. “You find out what is not dangerous, where to position yourself to stay safe and so you can see the formation of a tornado, wall cloud or funnel cloud, and the criteria of hail size and wind speed to report in.”

In counties like Madison and Delaware that have a large base of storm spotters, when a severe thunderstorm is approaching, the EMA deploys spotters to predetermined locations to watch the storm from different vantage points so that spotters can confirm what another one may see. Others observe from their homes or workplaces and report when conditions merit.

Sometimes spotters who are mobile help with other tasks, like measuring river flood gauges or taking photos of storm damage. Relaying that information back to EMAs can help get assistance to communities faster. EMAs communicate with Indiana Department of Homeland Security district liaisons like Stormy Friday to keep the state informed of damage and counties’ needs when their resources are exhausted.

“I am always sharing severe weather information with EMAs and helping them with resources and information that they may need. I send updates from the county emergency operations center to the State Emergency Operations Center to help if necessary. For example, in 2018, in a flooding event, there was a need for 200 sandbags, and I was able to coordinate with the state to get that community more sandbags,” Friday said.



Similarly, storm spotting reports help inform the IDHS Watch Desk within the State Emergency Operations Center. Before and during severe weather, the Watch Desk sends out assessments that advise counties of weather conditions so they can prepare for when a storm hits. During a weather event, the Watch Desk monitors radar systems and social media posts, which include storm spotter damage reports. The Watch Desk corroborates that information and, if warranted, can send out updated weather assessments and warnings so that counties have additional information to base decisions

on. Spotters’ damage reports also help the Watch Desk anticipate where and when requests for assistance may come in from counties, which can include issuing a travel advisory in places with significant damage.

However, the flip side also can be true. Spotters’ reports let county and state officials know when weather conditions are not severe enough to issue warnings.

“Being on the ground and confirming there is not a tornado is just as important as confirming there is. The National Weather Service wants to avoid false reports and being the ‘boy who cried wolf,’” said Watch Desk officer Beth Carpenter, who has a degree in meteorology and also does storm chasing.

Spotters and chasers who come across storm damage sometimes find themselves in position to help Hoosiers even before first responders arrive.

“It’s an unsaid protocol, that if there is damage and help is needed, you should be helping and stop chasing,” Carpenter said, adding that, for spotters and chasers, “no matter what, the most important thing is to report to the National Weather Service, not take a photo.”

Those who want to become trained storm spotters can find more information at the [Indiana Skywarn webpage](#).



## CIVIL AIR PATROL VOLUNTEERS DISTRIBUTE FOOD DURING PANDEMIC

*Photo by Robert Scheer/Indy Star*

Volunteers from the Indiana Wing Civil Air Patrol (CAP), the official civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, typically would be training for search and rescue, preparing for cadet summer camp or conducting an academy at Camp Atterbury this time of year. Instead, they have been responding to COVID-19 by focusing on food distribution throughout the state.

With a network of more than 1,100 Indiana volunteers and a fleet of single-engine aircraft and vehicles, local CAP units have been working with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, Indiana National Guard, and the Family and Social Services Administration to help facilitate logistics for schools and food banks.

Their first mission was a weekly grab-and-go program organized by the Marion Community

School System, which has been distributing a week's worth of food (two meals a day for five days) to Marion children once a week. On average, CAP volunteers have helped the school system distribute more than 30,000 meals every week.

"Indiana Wing Civil Air Patrol volunteers are here for the community. Getting food to those in need serves a vital role we are happy to perform," said Maj. Mendie Hornbuckle, Indiana Group III commander, who has led the CAP team there.

CAP volunteers then started helping two food pantries in Gary by packing and loading vehicles with food in drive-through operations. They "set up the drive-through structure for us and respectfully gave out large boxes of food to almost 500 households, no matter the weather or the crowd," said

Sister Peg Spindler at Sojourner Truth House, one of the food pantries. "This is what it takes to beat such a pandemic — everyone working together — and that's what this partnership is doing."

The CAP's food support mission is ongoing, with more than 170 volunteer days of service performed alongside a dozen food distribution organizations to provide about 700,000 meals (and counting).

"We're grateful for the selfless service CAP volunteers provide as they go out into their local communities and serve others," said Joe Sanders, deputy director of the National Security and Preparedness Center, First Air Force, Air Forces Northern. "Our thoughts are with the people of Indiana during this time of great need."

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The 2020 Indiana Legislative Session wrapped up in March, and quite a few items related to Indiana first responders were signed into law. The items below go into effect on July 1, 2020.



## [HB 1015 – Rights of Professional Firefighters](#)

– Affords certain additional protections to professional firefighters, such as notice from a department regarding reassignments.

## [HB 1032 – Interfering with Public Safety](#) –

Renames the offense of “interfering with law enforcement” to “interfering with public safety,” and provides that a person who enters a marked-off area after having been denied entry by an emergency medical services provider commits interfering with public safety. (Under current law, the offense is only committed if the person is denied entry by a law enforcement officer.)

## [HB 1043 – Firefighter and Police Officers](#) –

Allows a political subdivision to make contributions to volunteer firefighters’ retirement plan. It also increases the maximum age for police officers to begin membership in the 1977 police officers’ and firefighters’ pension and disability fund from 35 to 39 years of age.

[HB 1099 – Low Head Dams](#) – Requires the Department of Natural Resources to establish a roster of low head dams capable of creating hazardous conditions and prohibits certain activities, such as swimming, within 50 feet of a low head dam when warning signs are posted.

[HB 1151 – School Resource Officers](#) – Adds a school resource officer to the definition of “public safety officer.”

[HB 1174 – Youth Helmet Safety](#) – Allows IDHS and ISDH to develop public safety and outreach programs and allows the Fire Prevention and Public Safety Fund to be used to support programs relating to youth helmet safety.

## [HB 1189 – Use of Firefighting Foam with PFAS](#)

– Prohibits the use of Class B firefighting foam containing an intentionally added PFAS chemical: (1) for training purposes; and (2) for testing purposes, unless the testing facility has implemented appropriate measures to prevent releases of the foam to the environment.

[HB 1198 – Public Safety Matters](#) – Defines an Indiana First Responder as an individual employed by or serving as a volunteer for the following: law enforcement, firefighters, corrections officers, public safety telecommunicators, providers of emergency medical services, providers of emergency management services, and any other individual whose duties in serving a public safety agency include rapid emergency response. Additionally, HB 1198 clarifies that EMS providers are not liable for transporting patients who lack the mental capacity to make an informed decision.

## [HB 1209 – Reimbursement for Emergency Medical Services](#)

– Requires certain health care plans to provide reimbursement for EMS runs that do not result in transportation. Such runs must be within the EMS provider’s scope of practice, be performed as advanced life support services and during a response initiated through the 911 system.

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[SB 61 – EMS Personnel Compact](#) – Makes Indiana a member-state in the EMS personnel licensure interstate compact, known as REPLICA. By doing so, Hoosier EMS professionals will be allowed to practice in other REPLICA member states, and EMS professionals from other states can practice in Indiana.

[SB 132 – Department of Homeland Security](#) – Renames the “safety first” license plate to the “first responder” license plate as of January 1, 2021; allows IDHS to require certain information be submitted electronically, unless doing so would cause a hardship; requires QR codes to be displayed in public elevators; merges the Fire Prevention and Public Safety Fund with the Reduced Ignition Propensity Standards for Cigarettes Fund; and requires schools to annually report to IDHS the number of school resources officers employed by the school corporation (and prohibits that information for public release).

[SB 237 – Care of City Police Officers and Firefighters](#) – Clarifies a city shall pay for the care of a police officer or firefighter who suffers an injury while performing the person’s duty or while the person is on duty or who contracts illness caused by the performance of the person’s duty.

[SB 258 – Firefighter Safety](#) – Requires the Board of Firefighting Personnel Standards and Education to establish best practices to improve safety and health outcomes for firefighters. Additionally, SB 258 establishes the best practices fund for the purpose of providing matching grants to political subdivisions and volunteer fire departments to purchase equipment and other gear to implement best practices. Moreover, SB 258 provides that the worker’s compensation rating bureau of Indiana may recommend a premium or rate discount toward worker’s compensation insurance to political subdivisions and volunteer fire departments that implement best practices.

# HAZMAT HAPPENINGS: LEPC PLAN GUIDE

Local emergency planning committee (LEPC) plans are now in process. There are several items that are commonly overlooked while developing a plan. Below are some tips to follow that will help the update process move more smoothly:

- Plans should always include facilities and the chemicals being held on-site, as well as facility maps with vulnerability zones.
- Populations affected by a facility, including schools, nursing homes, hospitals and churches.
- The location of each facility’s emergency response/hazardous material plan should be included.
- A name and complete contact information for the community emergency coordinator as well as the facility emergency coordinator information.
- Training calendars for fire departments, EMS and other responding agencies are vital to the plan and should include information on what operational level the training will complete, as well as how many individuals will reach that level.
- LEPC training calendars should also be included. These training calendars should include training events and exercises for the current calendar year and the next calendar year.
- Typically, LEPCs are required to hold HSEEP-compliant exercises yearly. For 2020, LEPCs are not required to conduct an exercise and will not be penalized if an exercise is not held.
- All LEPC plans must be updated every year and submitted to the Tier II Manager by October 17.

All compliance items for the current calendar year must be submitted before Dec. 31, 2020. For technical assistance or clarification on rules, reach out to the LEPC team at [saratr2@dhs.in.gov](mailto:saratr2@dhs.in.gov).

# INDIANA TO REIMBURSE EMS FOR NALOXONE



Indiana will become one of the first states in the country to reimburse EMS providers for both the administration and the cost of naloxone, a critical drug used to treat the opioid epidemic.

Beginning July 1, 2020, EMS providers will be reimbursed in full for naloxone (Narcan) deliveries through the state's Medicaid program. Naloxone reverses the effects of opioids and has saved countless lives in the fight against opioid abuse.

“This is a significant step forward to ensuring a continuous supply of naloxone is available for EMS provider agencies to administer to patients suffering an acute opioid overdose,” said Dr. Michael Kaufmann, state EMS Medical director. “Likewise, this is a giant step forward for

reimbursement reform within the EMS industry. With this, Indiana will become one of, if not the first state in the country to allow for line item reimbursement of a drug and its delivery.”

Currently, EMS personnel administer the drug under an expiring federal grant. Indiana EMS, as part of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), and the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), collaborated with the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to change the policy. Beginning July 1, Medicaid will cover the cost of the drug itself and its delivery to patients.

“The opiate epidemic did not disappear when the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, and Hoosiers need our help more now than

ever,” said Dr. Jennifer Sullivan, FSSA secretary. “Finding a way to maintain the supply of naloxone kits and the ability for our first responders to use it literally saving life after life is a significant step forward as we support the opportunity for recovery across Indiana.”

Effective July 1, Indiana Health Coverage Programs, which includes the Healthy Indiana Plan, Hoosier Healthwise, Hoosier Care Connect and Traditional Medicaid, will reimburse specialty providers who bill the state after a naloxone administration. This was initially communicated to IHCP providers through its bulletin and further guidance will be published soon. Indiana Health Coverage Programs and IDHS also are planning training sessions to provide guidance and to answer any questions.

**Naloxone**  
A medication called an opioid antagonist used to counter the effects of opioid overdose

**NALOXONE HCl**  
**NASAL SPRAY 4 mg**

**NALOXONE** NASAL SPRAY  
4 mg

**Naloxone Chemical Structure**

C=CCN1CC[C@]23[C@@H]4OC(=O)C[C@H]5[C@@H](C2)O[C@H]1[C@@H](O)C5

# GRANT MANAGEMENT SUMMER UPDATE

## FOUNDATION APPLICATION ROUNDS OPEN

The Homeland Security Foundation Grant program is currently open, and organizations may apply for funds to assist with life safety, standard operations and supplementing current capabilities. More information is available on the IDHS website at [dhs.in.gov/2511.htm](https://dhs.in.gov/2511.htm).

The Indiana Homeland Security Foundation scholarship program is also open. Indiana college students who volunteer with a public safety organization can now apply for the FY 2021 round of the Foundation scholarship. For more information, or to sign up for email updates about the Indiana Homeland Security Foundation scholarship, visit the IDHS website at [dhs.in.gov/foundationsscholarship.htm](https://dhs.in.gov/foundationsscholarship.htm).

Applications must be submitted by June 15, 2020, at 5 p.m. Eastern time.

## FFY 2020 EMPG: EMA PERSONNEL PROJECT

The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Personnel Project will support up to 50 percent of the annual salary expenditures for EMA directors, deputy directors, and administrative assistants employed during January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020, who meet EMPG program requirements. The EMA Personnel Project will support up to three (3) full time positions per county, or any combination of these three positions (i.e., one full-time director, two part-time deputy directors, and one full-time administrative assistant).

While planning for this year's application period, a total budget of \$3 million was set, based on previous years' expenditures. Additionally, to help ensure funding equality across the state, specific funding allocations have been identified for each county in Indiana through a tiered structure. These tiers were arrived at using an average of the previous four years of local salaries, as well as 2010 census data to determine county size. Every effort was made to determine a structure that would cause minimal negative impact to previous budgets while increasing salary allotments.

### 2010 CENSUS POPULATION

Less than 25,000  
25,000 to 75,000  
75,000 to 200,000  
Greater than 200,000

### REQUEST CAP

May request up to \$18,000  
May request up to \$30,000  
May request up to \$55,000  
May request up to \$75,000

## FFY 2020 EMPG COMPLIANCE

As COVID-19 changes the way that emergency managers and first responders operate, IDHS has worked with FEMA to allow up to three of the exercises required for EMPG salary reimbursement to be waived by a real-world COVID-19 after action report (AAR).

If individuals involved in the EMPG salary reimbursement are able to complete HSEEP exercises safely (with social distancing practices in place or virtually) and within January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, these exercises should be reported through IntelliGrants. If individuals are not able to participate in or plan an exercise, the IDHS Grants Management team will work with those individuals to determine how many exercises can be substituted with a COVID-19 AAR.

As this process moves forward, more information will be provided.



# FIREWORKS IN INDIANA

Summer is here and with that comes fireworks 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 webpage](#).



## WHEN CAN FIREWORKS BE SET OFF?

### MOST DAYS (NOT HOLIDAYS)



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

### JUNE 29 - JULY 3



### JULY 4 (INDEPENDENCE DAY)



### JULY 5 - JULY 9



### NEW YEARS EVE



*Red times are protected by Indiana law and are not subject to local ordinances.*

## 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 away.
- 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.

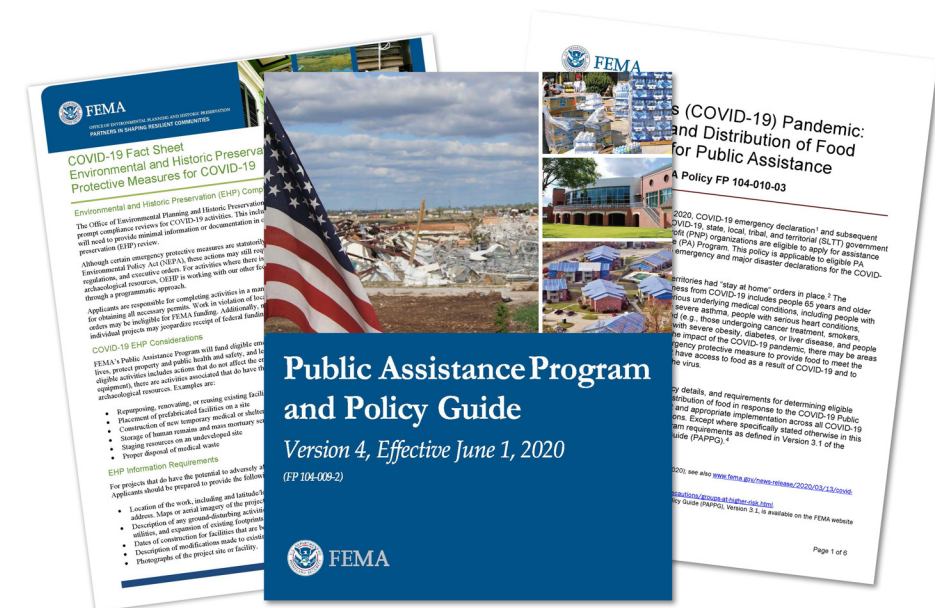


**CLICK HERE**  
for more  
safety tips!

# RECOVERY PROGRAMS WORKING TO ADDRESS COVID-19

For the last few months, Hoosiers across Indiana have been dealing with the unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a part of the state's response to this event, IDHS recovery programs have been assisting affected communities. Staff members with Public Assistance, Individual Assistance and Hazard Mitigation continue to support multiple state functions and are working every day to address a wide variety of issues.

The public assistance program is assisting new applicants for the federal disaster declaration specific to COVID-19, otherwise known as DR-4515. As of May 18, more than 850 different organizations across the state have submitted an official Request for Public Assistance (RPA) to be reviewed by state PA staff and FEMA, with more registrations expected in the coming weeks. IDHS Public Assistance staff have also conducted a series of PA program applicant briefing webinars to address the questions of those who might be eligible for public assistance funding. More information on the webinars, as well as other programmatic details, can



be found on the [IDHS Public Assistance Program webpage](#).

IDHS Individual Assistance staff have supported the State EOC in response to the pandemic, and have also coordinated with organizations such as the United Way, Indiana Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters and the Department of Workforce Development to help address issues such as food availability, mortgage assistance, food bank staffing support and the development of possible disaster unemployment grants. In addition to pandemic-specific tasks, IA staff members continue to monitor flooding concerns related to recent

heavy rainfall affecting multiple areas across the state.

Staff members with IDHS hazard mitigation have continued to support both State EOC operations, as well as the state joint information center, as both have remained operational throughout the duration of the pandemic. It is expected that additional support for hazard mitigation will be requested as this event progresses, and the hazard mitigation program is continuing to work closely with federal partners to ensure all requests are being appropriately addressed.

For more information on IDHS recovery efforts, visit [dhs.in.gov](https://dhs.in.gov).

# IFCA TO CREATE RECRUITMENT PILOT PROGRAM

In rural areas, the standard for any fire alarm is six responders on-scene in 14 minutes, 80 percent of the time. With departmental budget constraints, socioeconomic issues and public misconceptions about the fire service, this National Fire Prevention Agency standard is more and more difficult for the 820 Indiana volunteer and combination fire departments to fulfill because of the decreasing numbers of volunteer firefighters.

The Indiana Fire Chiefs Association (IFCA) is working to change this, investing nearly \$900,000 in a 30-month program to develop and implement a plan for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters in Indiana. The funds come through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response

(SAFER) Grant.

The program will involve multiple initiatives, including a media campaign, recruitment website and volunteer fire officer curriculum.

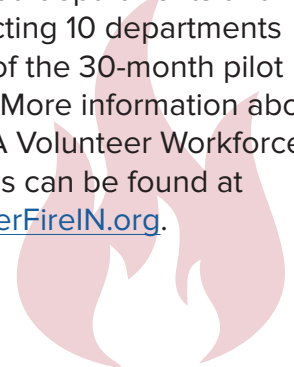
"In the last three decades, the number of volunteer firefighters in the United States has fallen by 12 percent, while the calls for service have tripled," said Pascal Arnes, Indiana Fire Chiefs Association president. "This grant provides an incredible opportunity to educate Hoosiers about the critical shortage of volunteer firefighters in communities across the state."

Less than 25 percent of Americans volunteer their time, and those few give an average of one hour per week. Volunteer firefighters, who carry the same initial training requirements as career firefighters, require a more significant commitment than average Americans are

willing or able to give.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, individuals living in rural areas with populations below 5,000 are twice as likely to die as the result of fire. In Indiana, 75 of the 92 counties are classified as rural and home to nearly 30 percent of Hoosiers. These areas are commonly staffed by volunteer departments, the same departments that are in danger of shutting down completely without the addition of new volunteers and the retention of their current staff.

The IFCA recently closed an application period for interested departments and will be selecting 10 departments as part of the 30-month pilot project. More information about the IFCA Volunteer Workforce Solutions can be found at [VolunteerFireIN.org](http://VolunteerFireIN.org).



**91%** of all the fire departments in Indiana use volunteers.

**74%** of Indiana fire departments are **all** volunteer.

There are currently only **16,500** volunteer firefighters in the state.

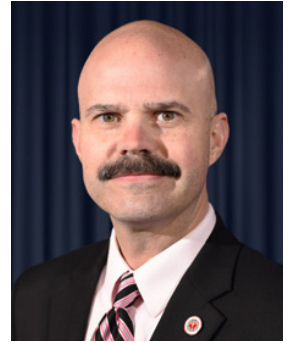
When divided by the **820** volunteer or part-volunteer fire departments in the state, this means that the average department has just **20** volunteers on the roster.

*Information according to the United States Fire Administration's latest survey.*

# MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE MARSHAL

May certainly was a different time this year for IDHS and the Indiana State Fire Marshal staff.

Typically, the Code Enforcement Section at IDHS is engrossed in detailed planning for the Indy 500, and race day is an all-hands-on deck event for the staff. We will take on this important role again when the rescheduled race is held later this summer. The excitement that comes with the Greatest Spectacle in Racing always makes for a great event for the team as they work to ensure the safety of all fans. It will be a much-needed event for all of Indiana this year.



May was also Building Safety Month. This was a good opportunity to raise awareness of overall safety, including disaster preparedness, water safety, resilience and training. We know COVID-19 is not the only crisis that can strike Indiana. Severe weather can hit at any time. We must be prepared when disaster strikes. Families that plan for disaster may not be able to prevent it, but they can recognize when severe weather is impending and take action to reduce injury and death. The expertise of the Code Enforcement staff was utilized often in May as inspectors offered guidance and education to businesses opening to new occupancy guidelines according to the [Governor's executive orders](#). This will continue in the coming weeks.

Arson Awareness Week was May 3–9, and this year was focused on first responders. The 13-member team of the [Fire Investigations Section](#) for the Indiana State Fire Marshal work more than 600 cases a year, and some of those ultimately are ruled arson fires. The investigators are trained to spot crucial evidence of incendiary fires, which helps to educate first responders, law enforcement and the general community. As of June 1, 32 Hoosiers have died as a result of residence fires. The Indiana State Fire Marshal and IDHS play an important role in the education and preparation necessary to protect people from fire dangers. Visit our [Get Prepared site](#) for more.

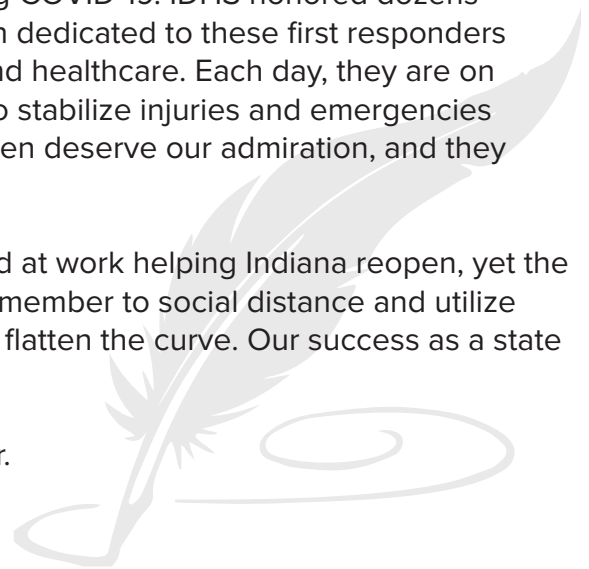
EMS Week (May 17-23) was special this year as the nation was reminded of the important role EMS personnel play in responding to public emergencies, including COVID-19. IDHS honored dozens of EMS personnel via its website and a social media campaign dedicated to these first responders who stand at the intersection of public health, public safety and healthcare. Each day, they are on the frontlines of what can be a person's worst day and work to stabilize injuries and emergencies by providing comfort and healing. These brave men and women deserve our admiration, and they continue to perform their duties with honor and commitment.

Hoosiers should know IDHS and other state agencies are hard at work helping Indiana reopen, yet the risks of COVID-19 remain. As we settle into Stage 3, please remember to social distance and utilize masks whenever possible to continue to slow the spread and flatten the curve. Our success as a state is incumbent on all of us to do our part.

Remember we are here for you, and we are all in this together.



Joel M. Thacker  
Indiana State Fire Marshal



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## NATIONAL PET PREPAREDNESS MONTH

**OBSERVED: JUNE 2020**

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](https://www.getprepared.in.gov).

## POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH

**OBSERVED: JUNE 2020**

June 2020 marks the sixth 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. Consider sharing information about the symptoms and how individuals can receive treatment on social media.

For more information about PTSD, visit [www.ptsd.va.gov](https://www.ptsd.va.gov).

## NATIONAL FIREWORKS SAFETY MONTH

**OBSERVED: JUNE 2020**

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an estimated 9,100 fireworks injuries were treated at hospital emergency departments nationwide in 2018. The most common body parts injured were 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](https://www.getprepared.in.gov).

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## NATIONAL CPR AND AED AWARENESS WEEK

**OBSERVED: JUNE 1-7, 2020**

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 a CPR training course 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 [cpr.heart.org](https://cpr.heart.org).

You can also see how to perform CPR, [here](#).

## NATIONAL LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

**OBSERVED: JUNE 21-27, 2020**

In 2019, 21 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 is credited as the reason for the low fatality numbers. Share lightning safety information before a thunderstorm occurs to help keep the entire community safe.

Visit [GetPrepared.in.gov](https://GetPrepared.in.gov) for more information about lightning safety.

## NATIONAL HEATSTROKE PREVENTION DAY

**OBSERVED: JULY 31, 2020**

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](https://GetPrepared.in.gov) for information about extreme heat safety.

For additional ways to share information in your community, visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov).

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



*The Hoosier Responder is a publication of  
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IDHS Office of Public Affairs at 317.234.6713 or [pio@dhs.in.gov](mailto:pio@dhs.in.gov)*

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