

THE HOOSIER RESPONDER

OCTOBER 2022



RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

A Crossroads for the EMS Workforce

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- Local and State Leaders Role in Emergency Planning
- Cybersecurity Efforts Supporting Local Government
- New Mobile Integrated Health Dashboard
- Indiana Fallen Firefighters Memorial Ceremony
- Indiana's Plan for Communications Blackout
- Free PFAS Foam Collection Program Still Available



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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and the cyber risks to our way of life have never been more serious.

The theme this year is “See Yourself in Cyber.” Those who stay diligent to avoid scams understand how important individual responsibility is in this fight. Nearly 90 percent of cyberattacks are due to human error, that one person who mistakenly opens an attachment at work, putting an entire organization at risk. It happens every day, but it does not have to be that way.

Corporate data breaches reached an all-time high in 2021 as more people worked remotely and normal safeguards from workstations went by the wayside. In the U.S., the average breach cost companies more than \$9 million, with the most expensive occurring in health care. Again, human error led to multimillion-dollar losses.

With more employees back in the office, training has been amplified, and we are hearing more conversations about how we can protect ourselves. The conflict in Russia and Ukraine has presented new and daunting challenges from the cyber world, and players such as China, North Korea and Iran continue to exploit opportunities.

Just this month, an Indiana utility company was hit with a ransomware attack. This is a local problem with local solutions. This is our problem.

The Indiana Office of Technology offers any municipal body a multitude of free or low-cost services to protect government entities from cyberattacks. One key advantage IOT offers for free is online training to all local government employees through its [KnowBe4](#) platform. A full offering of state services can be found on the [IOT Local Government Services website](#).

Additionally, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security soon will administer Indiana’s portion of the \$1 billion allocated across four years for cybersecurity as part of the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act. Details are still coming together on how many dollars will be coming to state, local and tribal governments in Indiana, but 80 percent of the allocation is earmarked for local government, including rural areas.

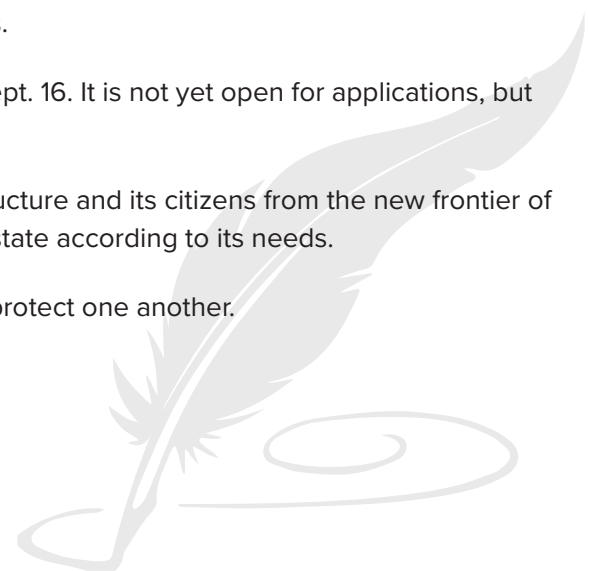
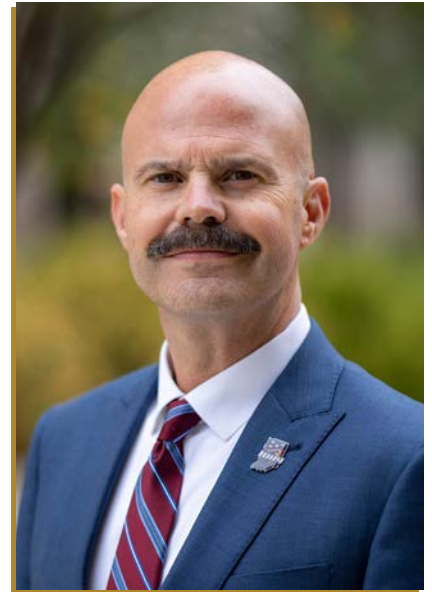
The [State and Local Cybersecurity Grant](#) Program was announced on Sept. 16. It is not yet open for applications, but information about how to apply will be provided in the coming weeks.

Momentum continues to increase for the U.S. to protect itself, its infrastructure and its citizens from the new frontier of online crime. The government is doing its share to better position each state according to its needs.

Each one of us must take ownership of cyberthreats and do our part to protect one another.



Joel Thacker
Executive Director





LOCAL AND STATE LEADERS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN EMERGENCY PLANNING

First responders know practice makes perfect. That is why you will see firefighters doing live burns to give new recruits the chance to experience a fire in a controlled setting or give veteran firefighters a chance to refresh their skills. EMS personnel routinely conduct training to stay up to date on the latest best practices. All of this is done so first responders are prepared and confident in their role when a real emergency occurs.

But first responders are not the only people getting a phone call when a disaster happens. Local elected leaders also are called into action. This highlights the importance of making sure local elected leaders are involved and engaged in emergency response planning.

Angola Mayor Richard M. Hickman says sometimes elected leaders

feel the need to be right in the action of the emergency, but that is not always the case. “You need to be prepared as a leader to know where you fit in that situation. Usually, that fit is not at the scene. It is at another location with team members around to help you make decisions.”

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) Exercise Section works with county emergency management agencies

and first responders to set up exercises to put first responders in a simulated emergency scenario.

“With many of our sponsored exercises at the local level, it is more common to see attendance from first responders than local leaders,” said State Exercise Officer Ashley Baldwin. “We work with the exercise host to invite VIPs from the local level and occasionally from the state level, but not many VIPs sign up to attend. Usually due to competing interests that require their time and attention.”

Baldwin encourages local leaders to attend the exercises to see what their first responders can do and to learn the local leader’s role in an emergency. “Observing the exercise firsthand helps them see the capability gaps for themselves and understand what their hard-working employees do.



Angola Mayor Richard M. Hickman

Additionally, having local leaders engaged in these exercises allows them the opportunity to see how their funding is being spent,” Baldwin said.

Mayor Hickman recently participated in the IDHS Operation Unify Civil Unrest Functional Exercise. Participants were tasked with responding to a scenario where civil unrest was likely to occur. Mayor Hickman was there to observe how the team made their response decisions and participate if the role of the mayor was needed.

“The exercise was perfect for today’s climate. I thought it was good because of the topic chosen. It gives my side, mayor or commissioner, an opportunity to see how this all happens. The response effort does not just happen. It happens because of a lot of practice. I think it is good for us to see what police, fire and

emergency responders have going on,” Hickman said.

Hickman added he learned a lot of response standards already are set up, and that first responders know who is going to take care of the situation at the scene. “Our firefighters, police and more do a good job knowing what they need to do. We need to have those reminders from time to time from these exercises.”

Baldwin said local leaders should be involved in exercises in their towns, cities or regions. Any involvement will help local and state leaders learn about how their constituents will be protected in an emergency and where they can help set preparedness priorities.

“Invite them to preparedness activities like updating a plan, holding a training or attending outreach events. Building good

relationships with your key leaders is important,” Baldwin said. One tip to engage local leaders that Baldwin suggested is to try to identify what motivates interest from your senior leaders and be prepared to focus some of your efforts on that motivator.

Hickman says he finds participating in emergency response exercises helps him know his role in an emergency, and it is a lesson that other leaders need to keep in mind as well.

“It’s important that you don’t guess what you need to do,” said Hickman. “I found these exercises to be very good for folks like me, new mayors, county council and more. Sometimes we do not know where our duties lie. We have a tendency to feel like we have to jump into a situation. Really, you need to be standing back and be the support for all the professionals and first responders.”

PLAN AHEAD WITH THE 2022 INTEGRATED PREPAREDNESS PLAN AND SCHEDULE

IDHS completed the 2022 [Integrated Preparedness Plan](#) and [Schedule](#) with help from stakeholders from across the state. The plan and schedule lay out the collaborative preparedness priorities across the state.

Coordination of preparedness activities is important for the emergency management community to prevent duplication of efforts, ensure resources are not overextended and maximize the efficacy of preparedness activity appropriations. Moreover,

scheduled collaboration presents opportunities for jurisdictions/organizations to fulfill multiple preparedness requirements with a single activity.

Please note the plan and schedule are live documents that are updated as needed. IDHS annually develops an updated plan and schedule for the next three consecutive years; these documents supersede the previous years.



INDIANA'S CYBERSECURITY EFFORTS SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

by Chetrice L. Mosley-Romero, State Cybersecurity Program Director

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and this year's theme is "See Yourself in Cyber." The goal is to demonstrate that while cybersecurity may seem like a complex subject, ultimately, it really is all about people.

The annual recognition comes as Indiana's ascension in cybersecurity collaboration – as a top-tier state nationally – continues to rise at a rapid, yet steady pace. The progress is driven by the release of a second, three-year statewide strategic plan and the success that is being achieved with programs focused on partnering with local government and municipalities while providing a greater level of training and resources for the benefit of all Hoosiers.

Local Government Focus Features Community Conversation Tour, Cyber Ready Pilot Program

As part of the state's ongoing commitment to supporting local government, the Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) is continuing its 92-county community conversation tour. At each stop, IOT representatives meet with county, city and town officials to discuss various information security topics and the free and low-cost services available to local governments from IOT. To learn more, visit: <https://on.in.gov/IOTlocal>.

A second local government initiative is the Cyber Ready Communities (CRC) pilot program. The outreach, led by Chetrice Mosley-Romero, who serves

as the Cybersecurity Program director for the state of Indiana, is occurring in five Hoosier communities – Jasper, Ind., and Dubois County; Nashville, Ind., and Brown County; Kokomo, Ind., and Howard County; Carmel, Ind., and Hamilton County and a northern Indiana community (to be announced soon).

The CRC program is centered on achieving two goals. The first goal and main purpose of the program is to work closely with communities to be cyber ready. This can be accomplished at every local government department level by changing the cybersecurity culture and connecting communities to additional resources and services from state, federal and private partners. The second goal is to help inform the Indiana Executive Council on Cybersecurity (IECC) and state leaders as they continue to develop additional programs to help local governments.

Emergency Manager Cybersecurity Toolkit

The centerpiece of all things cyber in the Hoosier state is the [Indiana Cybersecurity Hub website](#). Featured among the many resources, best practices and tips that are available for free on the website, there is a great deal of "hands-on" information, designed to help local governments get prepared. The practical information includes the [Emergency Manager Cybersecurity Toolkit](#): a free, downloadable "playbook" designed to take out some of the complexities related to cyber and be an invaluable resource with the tools to help local governments prepare for a cyber incident.

IECC Strategic Plan

Within the past year, the [IECC](#) provided Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb the [2021 Indiana Cybersecurity Strategic Plan](#) and the [State of Cyber Report – 2017-2021](#). The strategic plan highlights the cyber policies and initiatives the council will focus on completing in the years ahead. The State of Cyber report outlines all the work completed since 2017 in Indiana by the council, as well as throughout the state by colleges and universities and small businesses. The council completed nearly 80 percent of the deliverables and objectives as part of its “first of its kind” 2018 strategic plan.

For additional information regarding the latest cybersecurity news and trends, visit the Indiana Cybersecurity Hub social media channels on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).



A WELL-DESERVED CITIZEN RECEIVES THE SAGAMORE OF THE WABASH AWARD



Governor Holcomb bestowed the prestigious Sagamore of the Wabash award to Ginny Storar, 75, of Greenwood. The award was presented Sept. 7 at the governor’s office by IDHS Director Joel Thacker. Storar has volunteered her time, energy and money to promote public education about fire safety for more than 25 years as a “crew mom” for Hoosier Burn Camp. Her dedication has prepared more than 4 million children and saved countless lives.



TORNADOES
FLOODING
EARTHQUAKES
HOUSE FIRES
DISASTERS
FOLLOW
NO SCHEDULE





THIRA/SPR DEADLINES COMING SOON

FEMA OFFERS EXERCISE ASSISTANCE AT NO COST

FEMA is offering support for exercise assistance through the National Exercise Program (NEP). State, local, tribal and territorial (SLTT) jurisdictions can request no-cost assistance from the NEP for exercise design, development, conduct and evaluation to validate capabilities across all mission areas.

Fall 2022 requests for support are due no later than Nov. 1, 2022. To submit a request for exercise support, download the [support request](#) form, then email the completed form with supporting documentation to NEP@fema.dhs.gov. Awardees will be notified by Dec. 21, 2022. FEMA will hold additional exercise support rounds in Spring and Fall 2023.

The National Exercise Program is a cycle of exercises across the nation that examines and validates capabilities in all preparedness mission areas of prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery.

For questions, contact FEMA at NEP@fema.dhs.gov.

Emergency Management Agencies have until Oct. 31, 2022, to submit their county Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR).

The THIRA is a process that communities use to better understand their risks and set targets for building and sustaining capabilities to address those risks.

Communities then use the SPR to estimate and describe their current capabilities, indicate and describe gaps between their current capabilities and targets, and identify approaches for addressing those gaps and sustaining current capabilities. Communities also estimate and describe how they have lost, built and sustained capabilities over the previous year, and what funding sources they used to build and sustain their capabilities. Communities note any gaps in the functional areas of each core capability.

Since a community's THIRA/SPR assesses capabilities and resources from all funding sources, this information helps IDHS and FEMA better understand the impact of all grant programs in helping communities build and sustain their capabilities.

If you have any questions about THIRA/SPR, please contact Joshua Kiilu at jkiilu1@dhs.in.gov or Peri Rogowski at progowski@dhs.in.gov.



FEMA



INDIANA MAKES HIGHEST-EVER SINGLE YEAR INVESTMENT IN SCHOOL SAFETY

The Indiana Secured School Safety Board approved more than \$22.9 million in matching state grants, marking the fourth consecutive year of record-breaking school safety investments. The grants will be allocated to 425 schools, which is the largest number of schools ever to apply.

The General Assembly allocated \$19 million the past two years for the Secured School Safety Grant (SSSG). Legislators will set future allocations during this year’s budget session. With the addition of \$3.9 million in funds unspent from previous grant cycles, Indiana was able to fully fund all top priority, eligible requests from all schools that applied. Additionally, the funding will cover all eligible requests for additional training for School Resource Officers and staff.

With this funding, Indiana has invested more than \$132.9 million in school safety since 2013, when the SSSG program was initiated.

For FY23, the Board approved \$22,911,714.45 in school safety funding. The performance period for the grant began on Sept. 1.

“These grants allow Indiana to make a real and tangible impact on students, staff and administrators at schools across the

state,” said Rusty Goodpaster, director of the Secured School Safety Board. “We’re proud to be able to help make these schools safer while Hoosier kids receive a world-class education.”

The Secured School Fund is administered by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. Visit the [IDHS website](#) for a full breakdown of SSSG awards (schools and total award received).

The SSSG issues matching grants for eligible items and schools match those funds at a certain level, either 25 percent, 50 percent or 100 percent. The match requirement is based on the average daily membership of the school district, the total amount of the project or what the request covers.

Eligible items in the grant include funding for school resource officers (SROs) and law enforcement officers in schools; equipment and technology; active event warning systems (no matching requirement); firearms training for teachers and staff that choose to allow guns on school property; threat assessments and to implement a student and parent support services program. Common ineligible requests include vehicles, clothing/uniforms or vape detectors for schools.

The [Indiana School Safety Hub](#) also provides schools with a wealth of resources, training opportunities and other information designed to give schools the tools they need to keep students and staff safe.

ALLOCATION OF FY23 FUNDS

Funding Category	Eligible Projects	Eligible Funding
SRO and LEO Personnel Costs	272	\$15,567,558.92
Threat Assessments	1	\$1,500.00
Equipment and Technology	133	\$6,468,821.16
Active Event Warning System	1	\$1,800.00
Training	12	\$37,161.37
Student/Parent Support Services Program	18	\$834,873.00
Total		\$22,911,714.45

HAUNTED HOUSE PERMIT REMINDER



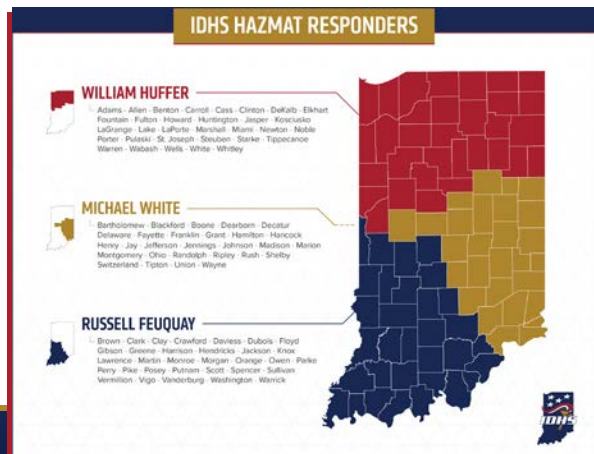
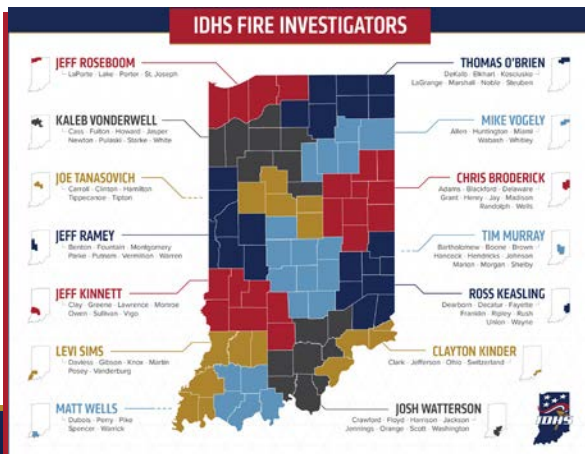
Haunted house operators must get an Amusement and Entertainment permit from IDHS and allow IDHS Code Enforcement to inspect the premises. IDHS field inspectors are looking for:

- Exit signs installed at all required exit/exit-access doorways.
- Obvious/marked exits located every 50 feet.
- No dead-end corridors.
- Fire extinguishers every 75 feet or less.
- Fire sprinkler systems are required unless the floor area of the haunted house is less than 1,000 square feet and travel distance from any point of exit is less than 50 feet.
- No open flames, temporary heaters or smoking is allowed.
- Automatic smoke detectors are required and must be interconnected.
- Maze areas must be at least 3 feet wide and 5 feet high, and one 4x2x2 section is allowed every 50 feet.
- All materials used must be flame-resistant, or flame retardant, and proof must be shown to code officials.
- Groups no larger than 20 people are allowed at a time and must be supervised by a staff member 18 or older with a flashlight.



NEW IDHS FIRE INVESTIGATIONS AND HAZMAT MAPS

IDHS welcomed new staff members in the Fire Investigations and HazMat Sections. These maps indicate the personnel who are your main contact in your county. Please review so you know who you will be working with when you request assistance. Contact information can be found by visiting the [statewide contacts map](#) on the IDHS website.





NEW DASHBOARD SHOWS MOBILE INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE PROGRAMS STATEWIDE

The IDHS EMS Section launched an online tool to help health care agencies and personnel learn more about the growing number of mobile integrated health care (MIH) programs across the state.

The new [Indiana MIH Providers dashboard](#) offers users a map-based look at approved MIH programs, their coverage areas and the services they offer. Users can filter by county, provider name or service type to find specific information. One panel zooms to the counties on the map where coverage is provided, and another panel lets users page through search results to learn about the different providers and how to contact them.

“It’s like Google Maps for MIH in Indiana,” said Indiana MIH coordinator Brittany Fortinberry. “It is a one-stop resource for all of MIH providers’ networking needs and to be aware of how they can work together. It is also for people to know what is in their area so if they are interested as a patient, they can look to see if there are any services nearby.”

Launching simultaneously is a new online form for MIH providers to apply to become an approved program. After the EMS Commission approves a program, the data from the form will be reflected in the new dashboard for public display.

Fortinberry is proud of the transparency the new dashboard provides about MIH programs in Indiana. Before, she had to email a spreadsheet list of providers to share information about them.

“I had hoped to make it a lot more transparent on what is out there in Indiana and create a ‘live feed’

Service	Availability
Hospital dismissal/post discharge follow-up and maximum extension	Yes
Post response follow-up for certain emergencies (such as diabetic at risk/low)	Yes
Diabetic counseling and monitoring	No
Chronic disease management	Yes
Decreased utilization of EMS by...	No
Substance abuse mitigation	No
Mental stress mitigation	Yes
Obstetrics management pro...	Yes
Elderly management programs...	Yes
Immunization and vaccination...	Yes
Other	Yes

to showcase programs and all the good we are doing,” she said. “It is so cool now to do the approval process online and with the click of a button, the program will show up immediately on the map so people can find it.”

State EMS Director Kraig Kinney said the map-based approach also provides better visibility and tracking to show the areas of the state where there are gaps in MIH care. For example, the southern half of Indiana has far fewer MIH programs than elsewhere. Of the 24 approved programs statewide, only one exists in districts 8 and 9, which include 19 southeastern counties. Knowing the disparities can help providers in those areas, and the state EMS Section, recognize where needs exist and where to focus investment.

“Funding is desperately needed in the southern part of the state because that is where there are the biggest health care deserts,” Fortinberry said, referring to counties where hospital services are inadequate or non-existent, which is where MIH programs can come in and make a significant impact for residents.

Fortinberry expects the dashboard to be invaluable for those who want to start or expand MIH programs because they can easily find providers that have

the types of programs that they may be interested in doing too. She anticipates they will reach out to each other to network and offer support. The tool also allows officials in other areas and industry researchers to quickly learn about what is happening in Indiana without needing to ask around for that information.

Besides health care professionals and researchers, the general public will find the dashboard useful when seeking out MIH services close to home.

“It is really an exciting opportunity to leverage an amazing initiative where people may not be aware of the providers, and we are now giving Hoosiers the opportunity to utilize these services that are available to them,” said Ashlee Moore, the IDHS GIS analyst who created the project. “They can go to the dashboard and see coverages around the state and services that could be provided in their county. If they are curious about a service, they can find the contact info through the dashboard and reach out with questions.

“It will help make MIH programs as successful as they can be.”

The dashboard is available via the IDHS website’s [Mobile Integrated Health](#) page.



More than two thirds of fatal fires occur in homes with no working smoke alarms. Let’s change that and **GET ALARMED.**

GetAlarmed.in.gov



EMS Network Full of Opportunity, Short on Solutions

Amid a national crisis for EMS recruitment and retention, renewed efforts to rebuild the Emergency Medical Services network in Indiana have some hopeful for much-needed change. Until then, the number of emergency calls is rising and the number of people — and ambulances — to respond to those calls continues to fall.

A recent study confirmed what those in the industry have known for years: the funding structure for the EMS system is not sustainable and the hours, poor pay and fatigue experienced among career EMS workers have combined to stifle recruitment and drive people to other industries.

“We have made some gains in recent years to support EMS, but most people get the fact that we are in crisis mode right now,” said Kraig Kinney, state director of Indiana EMS, part of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).

Indiana EMS runs have almost doubled, from 758,115 in 2018 to 1,258,158 in 2021. However, the number of ambulances and EMS providers decreased during that same time. For example, in 2020, there were 1,789 emergency ambulances in the state, down from more than 2,000 just two years earlier. Certified EMS personnel (Emergency Medical Responders, Emergency Medical Technicians, Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics) also declined, from 24,145 in 2018 to 23,070 in 2021. And those are just active certifications and are not indicative of how many people are practicing in the EMS world.

Indiana Code defines EMS as an “essential service,” but it stops short of determining who should pay for it. As a result, public EMS operations primarily function on reimbursement rates, what insurance (private, Medicare or Medicaid) will pay to transport someone to the hospital. No transport, no payment. Some jurisdictions contract with private EMS providers.

“A strong EMS system is critical for our country,” said Dr. Eric Yazel, chief medical director for Indiana EMS. “That is something we have almost universal support for once you talk to people in the community about it. Until across the board EMS is viewed as an essential service, we will still be dealing with this nationwide issue.”

Kinney agreed: “EMS must be viewed as more of a profession rather than a trade.”

“The general public does not understand the amount of evolution that has happened in the EMS world,” said Julie Lanzone, a 20-year veteran and director of Parke County EMS. “We are still very much seen as a transport service when we should be seen as transporting practitioners.”

EMS workers are the first faces many people see during what may be the worst day of their lives. The care they provide saves lives, calms fears and sets the path for recovery and treatment. At the height of the pandemic, EMS workers stood alongside all first responders and doctors, putting themselves and their families at risk to serve the public. For some, it became too much.

EMS now is feeling the job pinch harder than ever before, especially in rural areas. Many of those entering the profession are relatives of EMS workers and continuing the

traditions of selflessly serving their communities. In fact, more than 70 percent of 3,200 respondents to the 7th Annual EMS Trend Survey in August said they would recommend volunteering in EMS.

“It’s hard when you see Wendy’s is hiring at \$15 an hour,” said Brady Wiles, director of Cass County EMS. “It’s a huge challenge. The biggest difference I see is six years ago you used to have a line of

What are the most critical issues facing EMS today?

	2022	2021	2020
1	Retention of quality personnel	Retention of quality personnel	Retention of quality personnel
2	Funding and reimbursement	Provider mental health	Funding and reimbursement
3	Recruitment of qualified applicants	Provider safety	Recruitment of qualified applicants

Data from 2022 EMS Trend Survey by EMS1.

But the dilemma occurs when people try to balance the stress of the job with the salary and limited career paths. The same study cited retention of quality personnel as the top issue facing the industry, followed by funding/reimbursement in second and recruitment in third.

people waiting for an EMT position. The last few years, you can’t find anyone to apply.”

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicted the job growth rate of EMTs to be 24 percent through 2024, a trajectory that is sure to amplify the workforce issues already facing the EMS world. Many EMS organizations are offering huge sign-on bonuses — some as high as \$20,000 — to lure people to the job. However, a 2022 study by ESO, a leading data and software company serving emergency medicine, reports more professionals are “leaving to look for more opportunities that are less stressful, more family-friendly, and oftentimes, better pay.”

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The *Journal of Emergency Medicine* cited \$36,450 as the average annual salary for EMS personnel in 2022, which may be on the high side compared to Indiana. It is not unusual for EMS workers to earn \$15 an hour (\$31,200 annually) across the Hoosier state, and some of those positions may not offer full benefits.

Governor's Public Health Commission

The [Indiana Governor's Public Health Commission](#) explored how well Indiana responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted shortfalls in Indiana's public health system. The final report cited many improvements necessary for the EMS system.

Recommendation 23 of the report states to "ensure local level EMS readiness through expansion and sustainability of EMS workforce." The subsequent recommendations to achieve this goal include conducting a needs assessment of the EMS workforce; obtaining funding for recruitment and cost-sharing opportunities for equipment; establishing long-term promotional and retention plans; enhancing training and community paramedicine; and expanding access to EMS services, especially in rural areas.

Once initiated, Indiana will be one of five states nationwide conducting a workforce study for EMS, Kinney noted.

All the highlighted recommendations are critical to turning the tide on EMS recruitment and retention in Indiana. However, experts say much work remains to develop the strategy and tactics to accomplish those goals and enact change. A clear focus is on funding, as the January session of the Indiana General Assembly takes on budget allocations for the next two years.

"I had never stopped to think about the fact that there are places in our state where you

After months of gathering expert input across the board, Kenley said the commission report outlines deficiencies in Indiana's public health system and local health care. The report indicates Indiana ranked 40th in public health metrics in 2021. Before the pandemic (2018-2019), Indiana spent approximately \$55 per person on public health funding compared to a national average of \$91. The commission is suggesting a \$250 million price tag to update Indiana's investment in the public health system.



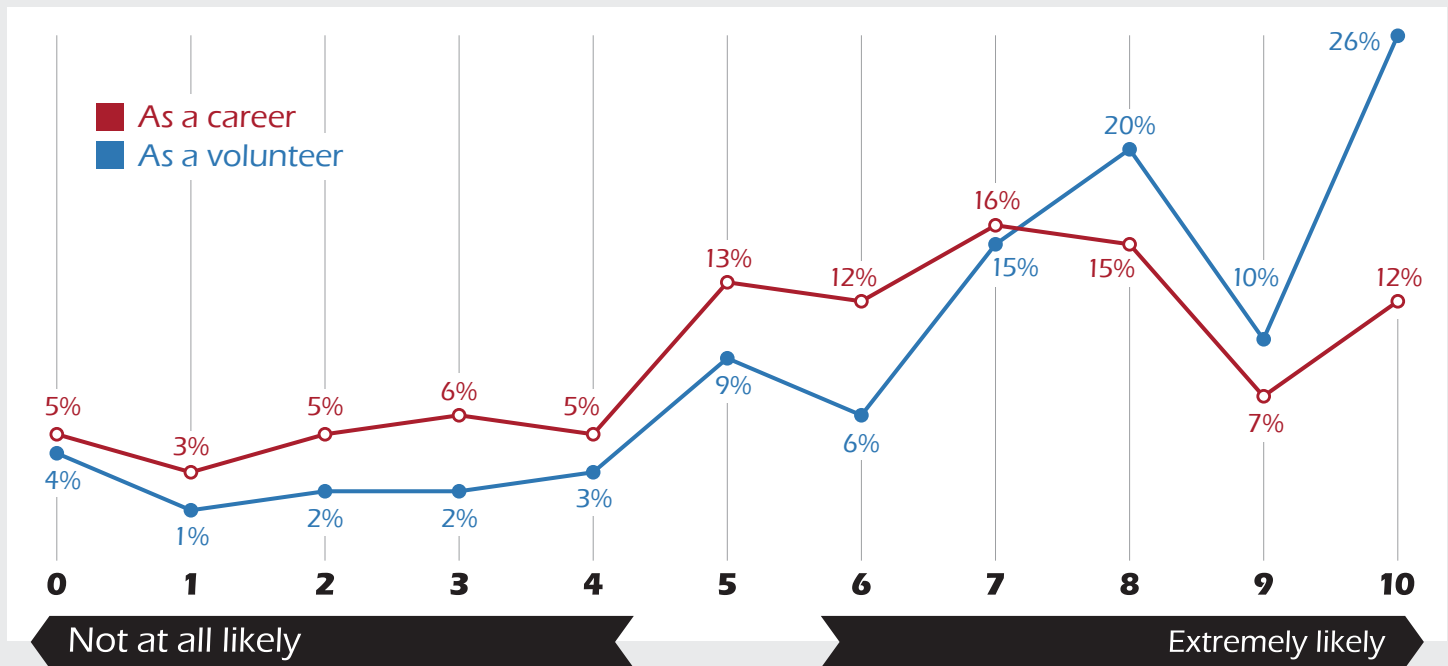
cannot get trained to be an EMS person," said former Sen. Luke Kenley, co-chair of the commission. "It is not like law enforcement (with a centralized Academy). That was really a revelation to me. I never thought about training for these services not being parallel to law enforcement."

"We have many things we can be doing better on, and these changes would appeal to most Hoosiers," Kenley said, adding he is hopeful the upcoming General Assembly will consider the commission recommendations as part of a singular public health bill.

"This is not something that is going to go away," Kenley said.

How likely are EMS personnel to recommend the EMS field to others?

More than 3,200 EMS personnel nationwide were asked about how likely they are to recommend the EMS field to others as a career path and as a volunteer opportunity. They rated their likelihood to recommend from zero to 10, with zero being not likely at all to recommend and 10 being extremely likely to recommend.



Data from 2022 EMS Trend Survey by EMS1.

Education Model

“Our biggest challenge lately has been the lack of qualified candidates applying as well as the competitiveness among companies when it comes to salaries,” Lanzone said. “Being a small rural community (Parke County), we cannot offer the same pay rate that most private companies offer. We are struggling to fill positions that there simply are not enough candidates to fill.”

The delivery of education and training for incoming EMS personnel continues to be

debated. Many interested in becoming an EMT or paramedic cannot afford to stop working and give up an income to attend the training full-time, and others find it too difficult to travel to more

urban areas of the state to attend courses. EMT training can take five to six months or 380 hours while paramedics need 1,000 hours and can need schooling for up to two years.

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Other ideas for a more flexible education and training program include hybrid models that include virtual learning, stipends for students and an expansion of regional training, including some in rural areas where the need is the greatest. Wiles said Indiana should focus on integrating EMS at the high school level to get a potential workforce exposed to the EMS world.

Lanzone suggested a statewide marketing campaign to entice more people to join the EMS field, hopefully to illustrate to the public that “I love what I do, and I love the community I serve.”

The stress to provide quality trauma care in rural Indiana also has a marked impact on the recruitment and retention of EMS personnel. In some counties, it

may take 45 minutes to transport someone to a hospital for a serious injury. More than that, to do so may require an ambulance to be taken out of service for the transport, which can total several hours roundtrip. This situation was so dire in the height of COVID-19 that Indiana contracted with a private ambulance provider to do nothing but transport patients from hospital to hospital for several months. Nearly 3,000 patients were transferred through this process.

Retention

“In the last few years alone we have seen a lot of movement out of the EMS field, including many moving on to emergency rooms,” Yazel said. “This situation is critical now. In four to five years, it could be catastrophic.”

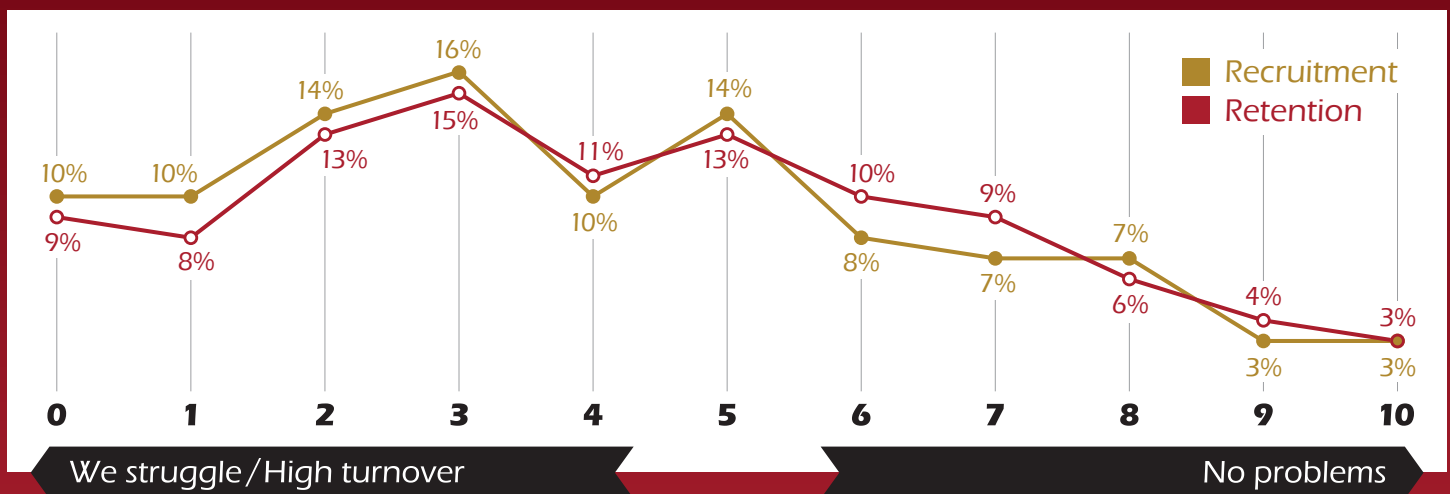
Wiles from Cass County also cited “a ton of turnover, people going to nursing school, going into the fire service and people just getting burned out from an EMS career.” County providers are scrambling to address the pay scale to fill vacancies that put public health at risk.

The average career length for EMS personnel is six years, Yazel said.

“We need to do a better job about wellness, avoid these 24-hour shifts and offer benefits such as retirement and health insurance,” Yazel added. “The burnout rate is extremely high. If we do not improve the retention of these folks, EMS is constantly going to be running around the hamster wheel.”

What is the state of EMS provider recruitment and retention at various organizations?

EMS personnel nationwide were asked to rate the state of EMS provider recruitment and retention in their respective organizations from zero to 10, with zero representing significant struggles in recruitment or high turnover and 10 representing no significant issues.



Data from 2022 EMS Trend Survey by EMS1.

PUBLIC SERVICE STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS WAIVER DEADLINE APPROACHING QUICKLY

The U.S. Department of Education temporarily is easing requirements for public servants to receive student loan debt relief. A [waiver](#) is now available for the Public Service Student Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program which will help more borrowers qualify for debt relief. Applications for the waiver must be submitted by Oct. 31, 2022.

The PSLF program aims to encourage college graduates to join the federal service. Borrowers who worked 10 or more years in federal service, or for a non-profit, the military, or a state, tribal or local government, are eligible to apply for the PSLF program to have their student loans forgiven.

“Because of complex eligibility restrictions, historic implementation failures and poor counseling given to borrowers, many public service servants have not received the credit they deserve for their public service,” a senior White House official said.

The waiver clears obstacles faced by public servants such as:

- Borrowers who did not serve their 10 years of public service consecutively
- Those who served fewer than 10 years can get credit toward forgiveness for service time
- Borrowers can also reapply for the program, even if previously denied

The waiver has been highly successful in reducing barriers for borrowers to receive PSLF relief.

- 89% of the borrowers who applied for the waiver received forgiveness through the PSLF program through June 30, 2022
- The waiver has resulted in more than \$9 billion in forgiveness for over 146,000 public servants

Kiran Ahuja, director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, said the temporary changes make it easier for federal student loan borrowers to get their debt canceled or receive credit toward forgiveness and that program modifications are tied to the Biden administration’s efforts to “recruit, retain and honor our federal government workers,” she added.

Apply for the debt relief program and fill out the waiver here: [Public Service Loan Forgiveness \(PSLF\) Help Tool](#)

Federal Student Aid
An OFFICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

ACT NOW TO CLAIM WHAT YOU HAVE EARNED



TEAMWORK

THE NAME OF THE GAME FOR INDIANA VOAD

When disasters occur, local, tribal and state governments immediately respond to help the community recover. But government officials cannot do it alone. That is why IDHS maintains a key partnership with the Indiana Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).

Indiana VOAD is a collection of volunteer organizations in the state that can help with various types of response and recovery efforts.

In a flood, entire neighborhoods may have homes filled with mud and debris. Indiana VOAD has several volunteer organizations that can come in and muck out the homes. If a family lost their home due to a disaster, Indiana VOAD has organizations that can connect the survivors with temporary housing and work with the family to set them up for long-term housing in the future.

“We meet monthly, so we know who does what and we are not duplicating services,” said Jane Crady, coordinator of disaster preparedness and response for the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and Indiana VOAD president. She added some organizations have the same skill set, but VOAD ensures everyone is on the same page and can spread services across a wide set of survivors.

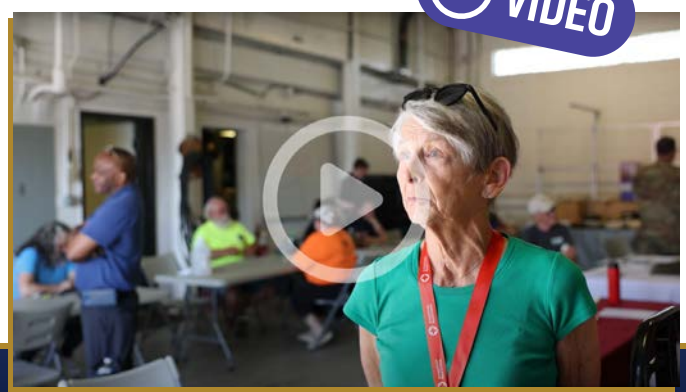
Some of the organizations involved in Indiana VOAD are organizations people likely have heard of before,

like the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army. But there are more organizations involved, like the Catholic Charities Disaster Response, St. Vincent DePaul Disaster Services Corporation, Team Rubicon, Southern Baptist Church Disaster Response and more.

Recently, Indiana VOAD held a Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) exercise at the IDHS Five Points Facility. In a real event, survivors would go to a MARC to receive assistance. Crady said this exercise was a way to get the organizations and IDHS together to educate everyone about the capabilities available.

“We had Indiana Department of Homeland Security employees be our clients, our survivors. We wanted the homeland security members we do not normally work with to know what each of our members does,” Crady said. “We also had some new VOAD members who did not realize what somebody else did. It was very educational, I think, for everybody.”

Watch and hear more about a recent VOAD exercise!



“It is kind of an overview of what disaster help is available,” said Anne Reynolds, a case worker for the American Red Cross. Reynolds said this information will be helpful when she is called in to respond to a disaster. She works with survivors of disasters and helps families get long-term housing, financial assistance, replace items lost in a disaster and more. She used the exercise as an opportunity to learn about other organizations that offer housing assistance so when she is called into a disaster area, she already knows who to call.

Emergency responders know the media and news covering a disaster may fall off in the days or weeks following, but the effect the event has on a community can last months to years. Some of these VOAD organizations are prepared to provide assistance to survivors long after the immediate disaster is over.



“Our organization does disaster case management. We do not get involved until after all the first responders and all the people go and help the survivors in the initial stages. We may not show up until 30, 45 or 60 days after the event,” Terrance Taylor said, a representative for the Saint Vincent DePaul Society Disaster Services Corporation.

Saint Vincent DePaul specializes in a “House in a Box” program. It provides furniture to families as they settle into their newly repaired home or a new home. Based on the size of the family, the program offers beds, chairs, couches, pots, pans and more to fill the home.

The ultimate goal for Indiana VOAD, Taylor said, is for these organizations to work together to fulfill the

unmet need once families have gone through FEMA and state response efforts. VOAD continues to work with the families for years if needed.

Taylor sees the benefits of having a MARC exercise to understand how VOAD works as a whole.

“A lot of times we are off in our own area doing our own thing with the people we are responding to. But you do not get a chance to see the overall picture and how everyone collaborates and works together.”

If you are interested in learning more about Indiana VOAD or learning how to volunteer for the organizations involved, send an email to invoad@nvoad.org.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Indiana VOAD is a division of the National VOAD, which works with volunteer organizations across the country to send them into disaster areas.

The need to organize volunteer groups grew out of confusion surrounding Hurricane Camille in 1969. Crady said charity groups like the Salvation Army, Red Cross, Southern Baptist Church Disaster Response, Catholic Charities and more rushed down to help the survivors, but the charities were tripping over each trying to do the same thing and it was not an efficient effort. To reduce haphazard assistance and offer aid to a bigger audience, seven organizations got together to organize and collaborate before the disaster.

Today, National VOAD is a coalition of more than 70 reputable national organizations and 56 state/territory VOADs, which represent hundreds of member organizations throughout the country.

INDIANA FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL CEREMONY



Eight lives were honored in the 2022 Indiana Fallen Firefighters Remembrance Ceremony on Sept. 29, 2022. The Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana holds this ceremony each year to remember the lives of fallen fighters.

The names of the eight lives honored this year represent fighters who died in the line of duty. Their names were added to a monument outside the Statehouse.



NAMES OF THE FALLEN HEROES HONORED THIS YEAR

PHILIP RILEY

Richmond Fire Department

GARY HINELINE

Chesterton Fire Department

TRACY L. HAYDEN

Decatur Township Fire Department

ROBERT G. CREE

Harrison Township Volunteer Fire Department

MARTIN J. MEYERS

Kokomo Fire Department

KYLE MARTINCIC

White River Township

MARK B. GILLAM

Elwood Fire Department

GERALD J. BROOKS

Indianapolis Fire Department





VULNERABILITIES IN EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEMS

HOW INDIANA WOULD HANDLE A COMMUNICATIONS BLACKOUT

As the world becomes more interconnected, it becomes more susceptible to malicious activity from hackers, terrorists and anyone with even a little technological training. In August, FEMA issued an advisory urging organizations to ensure they patch vulnerabilities in their emergency alert systems (EAS) that make the systems susceptible to a break-in. This is not just a hypothetical situation. In February of 2021, hackers targeted TV alert systems in Jefferson County, Washington, and sent a fake radiological hazard warning to residents.

In the case of a hack or breakdown of Indiana's EAS, the state does have ways to get information out to Hoosiers. U.S. amateur radio operators are volunteers licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) who communicate through allocated

radio frequencies. In Indiana, there are more than 16,000 amateur operators with active licenses. Many amateur radio operators, often called hams, assist public safety agencies using their skills and personal radio equipment to back up or supplement communications. Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) is a status granted to licensed hams who are certified volunteers registered with an emergency management agency.

Lewis Hartman is the former IDHS Communications Director who oversees the Indiana RACES program. Hartman said the "advantage of using amateur radio from an FCC standpoint, is that it's a hobby for these people. So not only do they have equipment at home, but they've also got it at our locations. So even if a disaster is declared in a county, that county may not have

those resources, but the amateurs that reside in the county do."

If the state EOC could not use the EAS system and had to activate RACES, Hartman said the response would depend on the "scale of the activation needed. We might have to create a roster if we go to a 24-hour activation and get into shifts. Still, we might send someone from their home straight to the affected area because they live close. Many amateurs have portable assets and equipment so they can set up an antenna and communicate back to the state EOC."

The time between activations is still busy. IDHS works with county operators on monthly nets, which are scheduled calls on a specific frequency for amateur radio operators to test equipment and relay information. Hartman said the "frequency is selected, and the radio operators from the counties and even their home stations

IERC WRAPS UP AS EMAI APPROACHES

The 2022 Indiana Emergency Response Conference is complete after four days of keynote speakers, classes and networking. Highlights include speeches by John M. Buckman III, James Greeson, Gary West, IDHS EMS Medical Director Eric Yazel, IDHS Executive Director Joel Thacker and more.

Stay tuned for next year's IERC.

The Emergency Management Alliance of Indiana (EMAI) Conference to set to begin Oct. 19 and run through Oct. 21.

This year's theme is "Changing the Challenge". Speakers include Graves County, KY EMA Director Tracey Warner; the FBI's Nathan Livesey; I Love U Guys Foundation Mission Director Carly Posey and more.

EMAI IDHS SPEAKERS

New Emergency Manager Course

Tuesday, Oct. 18, Noon – 5 p.m.
IDHS Staff

WebEOC Overview and Hands-on Demonstration/Practice

Tuesday, Oct. 18, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
Mike Hill and IDHS Staff

Tier 2 LEPC Plan Module

Tuesday, Oct. 18, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
Mike White

Updates from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security

Wednesday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.
Executive Director Joel Thacker and Emergency Management Director Mary Moran

(continued from previous page)

will call into the net. It's like a conference call where they check in and check their equipment so they can reach the state EOC."

These nets are vital to keeping the RACES system in tip-top shape. "We need the counties to participate, so if we ever do have to activate, there will already be that link there, and we won't have to waste time during the emergency."

FEMA is urging EAS participants to make sure EAS devices are protected by a firewall, and ensure that EAS devices and supporting

systems are monitored and audit logs are reviewed regularly for unauthorized access. In the meantime, Hartman says Indiana continues to test and implement strategies new and old. "We have a lot of tools in our toolbox."

If you want to learn more about RACES and how Indiana uses radio to communicate, you can check out the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's [Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service](#) page.



EMS WORLD EXPO

In Partnership With
NAEMT

TAKING INDIANA MIH TO THE WORLD

IDHS EMS SHARES ADVANCES IN MIH AT EMS WORLD EXPO

State EMS Director Kraig Kinney and MIH Coordinator Brittany Fortinberry are in Orlando this week at the EMS World Expo. They are showcasing the progress mobile integrated health care (MIH) has made over the past few years in Indiana.

Their presentation describes the legislative background and changes stemming from the 2019 passage of [Senate Enrolled Act 498](#), which enabled the Indiana EMS Commission to establish and define MIH, create an MIH grant program and more.

“We are explaining Indiana’s state system, through the EMS Commission’s role and through IDHS’ role, that other states could adopt,” Kinney said.

Their presentation and panel discussion afterward are part of the preconference MIH Summit. Last year, Kinney spoke at Crawfordsville Fire Department’s MIH preconference session to more than 100 individual provider organizations, MIH practitioners, hospitals, insurance companies and state agencies. The conference sought out Indiana EMS to learn more about how Indiana has fostered MIH, as this area of EMS gains traction across the nation. Following last year’s talk, Kinney was invited to Ohio to speak to the firefighters association, which considered Indiana’s MIH system an example to emulate.

“Our MIH system is not perfect, but people can benefit from taking elements of ours,” Kinney said. “It allows for local innovation but also tries to tie a state connection among the different providers, through our statute and the MIH Advisory Committee that is representative and makes decisions about the field.”



Fortinberry and Kinney already plant MIH seeds a few times a month as they visit Indiana hospitals and fire/EMS departments interested in starting MIH programs. State EMS Medical Director Dr. Eric Yazel has also been discussing MIH as a priority in community meetings. The reoccurring themes as they speak with local agencies are guidance and funding. The new [Indiana MIH Providers dashboard](#) should help connect prospective and current MIH program providers, and based on the success of the initial MIH grant in 2021 that awarded a combined \$100,000 to six EMS organizations, IDHS is exploring additional funding to support more programs in the next budget cycle.

Meanwhile, Fortinberry and several partner EMS agencies have been speaking about MIH at National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health regional meetings, and she taught an MIH session at the Indiana Emergency Response Conference (IERC) in late September. Speaking and networking at events like the EMS World Expo are opportunities the IDHS EMS Section hopes will help water the growing field of MIH programs back home in Indiana.

“We are trying to get MIH attention so we can get more funding and help MIH grow faster,” Fortinberry said. “If we get national attention, hopefully local people will get more involved and on board.”

FREE PFAS FOAM COLLECTION STILL AVAILABLE



Fire departments still have time to request a [free pickup of any PFAS foam](#) they have on site. The PFAS Collection Initiative is a partnership between IDHS and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management to collect and properly dispose of PFAS foam. As of Oct. 7, 2022, 20,834 gallons of PFAS foam have been collected at no cost to Indiana fire departments. A third-party vendor, US Ecology, removes the foam and disposes of it according to environmental guidelines.

PFAS chemicals exist in many forms today and are known to be connected to four of the top eight cancers that impact firefighters. Minimizing exposure to this foam will improve the health of firefighters across Indiana. In

2020, PFAS foam was prohibited from being used in firefighter training. Now the state is using federal funds to remove this foam, which will save departments thousands of dollars.

This program is one of only a few similar programs in the U.S. As more fire departments across the state learn of the free program, more are signing on and asking Indiana to take containers of PFAS stored on-site at fire stations.

Fire departments can request a pickup of PFAS foam, learn more information about the program and monitor a weekly collection dashboard on the [IDHS website](#).



MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE MARSHAL

For the past 100 years, we recognized Fire Prevention Week as an opportunity to talk about fire safety with your family and develop a plan of escape should a fire break out in the home.

From Oct. 9-15, firefighters across the country are involved in community outreach and leading conversations surrounding the theme of “Fire won’t wait. Plan your escape.” I’m proud of these community risk reduction efforts because our public safety communities have an opportunity to protect the public they serve, their neighbors and their families.

GetAlarmed.in.gov and the [National Fire Protection Association](http://NationalFireProtectionAssociation.org) (NFPA)

offer a host of resources to help you and your family plan for a home fire.

From determining a nearby meeting space to identifying the absolute essentials you need to take with you when you leave the home, practicing this plan gives you the best chance at survival. Typically, you only have two minutes to escape an active fire, which proves how vital working smoke detectors are for your safety.

What many do not think about or do not understand; however, is the difficult road ahead after the fire. You will be working with insurance companies to make you whole again and replace what was lost. Being able to navigate this path will help you recover more quickly.

Here are a few facts to think about to help you prepare.

- Your homeowner’s insurance policy could give you an advance to purchase basic items such as toothbrushes and clothes to help you in the immediate aftermath. Check your policy.
- Take action to prevent further damage after firefighters have extinguished the blaze. This can include boarding up entryways to prevent vandalism and turning off water to the home. Typically, an insurance policy will replace associated costs.
- Report your claim immediately.
- Keep track of your daily living expenses while removed from your home because of a fire. Your insurance policy will include “loss of use” clauses to reimburse you.
- Identify a reputable contractor for estimate repairs.

No fire loss is going to be a walk in the park. Be thankful if there are no injuries and understand that all material things can be replaced. You and your loved ones cannot.

In the end, getting out of a burning building quickly and with essential items and information is the top priority. Your best chance at minimizing damage and danger is to have working smoke detectors and regularly practice fire safety. Your safety is worth the effort.

Be healthy and safe.



Stephen Jones
Indiana State Fire Marshal



UPCOMING TRAININGS

OCTOBER

OCT 18	Lifelines, Logistics and Supply Chain Awareness Workshop	INDIANAPOLIS
OCT 17-19	ICS 300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	LAFAYETTE
OCT 17-31	Driver/Operator Pumper	LAFAYETTE
OCT 20-21	ICS 400: Advanced ICS Command & General Staff	LAFAYETTE
OCT 24-28	All Hazards Incident Commander (L-950)	PORTAGE
OCT 26-27	Public Safety Leadership Development 300	MONTICELLO

NOVEMBER

NOV 2	Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents (AWR 148)	BATESVILLE
NOV 2	K9220: Basic Tracking/Trailing Techniques for K9s	BRAZIL
NOV 5-6	K9320: Intermediate Tracking/Trailing Techniques for K9s	BRAZIL
NOV 19	SAR 530: Lost Person Behavior	BRAZIL

UPCOMING EVENTS

CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH OCTOBER



**CYBERSECURITY
AWARENESS
MONTH 2022**

This year's campaign theme "See Yourself in Cyber" demonstrates that while cybersecurity may seem like a complex subject, ultimately, it is really all about people. This month will focus on the "people" part of cybersecurity, providing information and resources to help educate the public and ensure all individuals and organizations make smart decisions whether on the job, at home or at school – now and in the future.

**Get Ready to
Shake
Out.** October 20, 2022
**Shake
Out**
www.ShakeOut.org

INTERNATIONAL SHAKEOUT DAY OCTOBER 20

This year's International ShakeOut Day is Oct. 20. Millions of people worldwide will participate in earthquake drills at work, school or home. At 10:20 a.m. (local time), join people across the world by practicing earthquake safety.

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE MONTH NOVEMBER

November is Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Month. It is an opportunity to highlight the efforts between federal, state, local, territorial and tribal governments and private sector partners to protect and secure our nation's critical infrastructure and enhance infrastructure resilience.



**Critical Infrastructure
Security and Resilience
Month**

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME NOVEMBER 6

Daylight Saving Time 2022 ends Sunday, Nov. 6, at 2 a.m. Plan on changing your clocks back an hour on the night of Saturday, Nov. 5. You'll "gain" an extra hour of sleep. This is also a good time to test the smoke alarms in your home and change their batteries, if needed.

WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK NOVEMBER 6-12

Cold temperatures, snow, ice and freezing rain are typical throughout Indiana from November through March. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security, American Red Cross, National Weather Service, other state and local partners and emergency personnel work to warn, care for and protect Hoosiers affected by the elements, and encourage all Hoosiers to learn and prepare for weather-related risks that occur in winter.



HARVEST SEASON SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER

Fall is when many Indiana farmers harvest their crops. The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), Hoosier Ag Today and many other state agencies are teaming up to promote roadway safety this fall. Motorists are encouraged to watch out and slow down for farm equipment on rural roads this harvest season.

Farm equipment during harvest season could include tractors, combines, grain carts, grain wagons and large trucks hauling agricultural products. These vehicles are wide, sometimes taking up most of the road, and often travel at speeds no greater than 25 mph.

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



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