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Hall County holds 2nd annual Homeland Security Summit

An estimated 125 first responders and emergency personnel attended the 2nd Annual Hall County Homeland Security Summit held on August 11 at the Hall County Government Center in Gainesville. Governor Nathan Deal and Georgia Emergency Management Agency Director, Jim Butterworth presented a proclamation declaring September as Preparedness Month for Georgia. The event was facilitated by Mark Winne, WSB-TV Reporter.

Speakers from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Georgia State Patrol, Georgia National Guard, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Fire Marshal and Georgia Office of Emergency Medical Services described current threats to public safety and resources available to help mitigate and respond to emergencies. Topics of discussion ranged from monitoring increased activity of homegrown terrorism to search and rescue for lost persons to new legislation regarding the sale of fireworks.

Governor Deal expressed his appreciation for all men and women serving in public safety occupations and for protecting residents in our state. He pointed out that preparedness is not just important for the first responders gathered in the room, but for all residents of Georgia.

GEMA Director, Jim Butterworth spoke about active threats and how the Office of Domestic Preparedness gathers intelligence and monitors suspicious activity. Currently, two active threats of concern are cyber-terrorism and homegrown terrorists.

Another agency, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation is also concerned with homegrown terrorist. Director Vernon Keenan said his agency is specifically following people involved in drug activity, weapons and those making pipe bombs. Crimes against children and the elderly are other areas that the GBI is heavily involved and investigating police-related shootings adds an additional burden on the GBI's workload.

Colonel Tom Carden of the Georgia National Guard described assets including the Georgia Army National Guard, Georgia Air National Guard and the Georgia Defense Force. These very different components of the National Guard can offer law enforcement, traffic control, aircraft support for medical, search and rescue, as well as security support for local jurisdictions during emergencies.

Perhaps the most recognized agency, especially among drivers is the Georgia State Patrol. Captain Mark Perry discussed the three organizational divisions which includes the uniformed division, motor carrier division, and capitol security. Within the uniformed division of the GSP, there are 9 Troops that house 52 Patrol Posts. Also in this division are three DUI units, a motorcycle unit, an aviation unit, an accident reconstruction unit, and SWAT and dive unit. The transportation enforcement

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Governor Nathan Deal addressed participants at the Hall County Homeland Security Summit and presented a proclamation to Director Jim Butterworth declaring September as Preparedness Month.



GEMA Director, Jim Butterworth describes terror threats that are currently being monitored by the Office of Domestic Preparedness. Two threats that are of concern now are cyber terrorism and homegrown terrorists.



Babies Can't Wait program recognized for 100% compliance rating

The Babies Can't Wait Program received good news from their annual determination from the Office of Special Education Programs (in the federal department of education). The program for the state of Georgia received a rating of "Meets Requirements", which included a compliance score of 92.86%!

This rating demonstrates that state and district staff are working hard to ensure that quality early intervention services for children and families in the program are being provided. This rating is especially important because this is the first year that states were scored using a new results metrics system. Under the new system, records had

to demonstrate that children are making progress. Georgia was 1 of only 13 states (out of 56 states and territories) that received a rating of "Meets Requirements".

The Georgia Babies Can't Wait Program had a 100% compliance rating across all 18 public health districts. This shows that BCW staff are making a difference at all levels to improve outcomes for children.

"The Babies Can't Wait program helps families in our district get their children off to a better start," said Angie Hanes, APRN, District Nursing Director. "Identifying challenges in children is very important because we can develop a plan of action for those who need help."

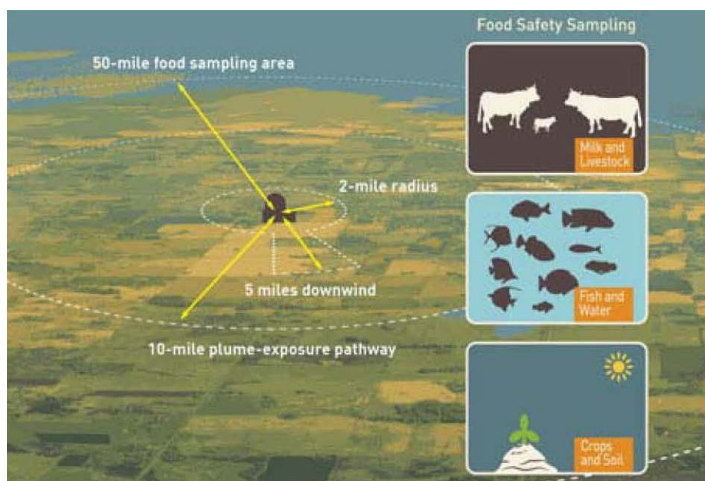
Cross border exercises offer additional opportunities to collaborate

Recently the District 2 Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) staff participated in a cross border Point of Dispensing (POD) exercise with the Southeast Tennessee Regional Health Office. During the exercise, District 2 personnel were advised that a simulated radiation release had occurred and that Tennessee authorities were responding to the incident. Although this event most likely would not directly impact residents in our area, several District 2 counties lie right outside of the ingestion zone for the Sequoyah, Tennessee power plant.

In a real event, residents from the affected 50 mile area could seek assistance from our health district. The exercise scenario called for the opening of a shelter for displaced individuals, and a point of dispensing (POD) to distribute potassium iodide (KI) to affected residents. Shortly after opening the POD, an exercise scenario inject



A drive-thru POD provided empty medicine bottles to individuals exposed to the simulated radiation release.



The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) illustrates exposure pathways for emergency planning.

stated the facility was destroyed by a tornado. A back up POD location was then opened. District 2 EPR personnel were in contact with the Southeast Tennessee public health staff via telephone and email. Mark Palen, District 2 Emergency Preparedness Director attended the exercise. "Participating in exercises and training events with public health professionals from our neighboring states allows us to understand how they might respond during an actual event and gives us an idea of resources that could be shared," said Palen. "It is an opportunity to develop cross

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unit ensures compliance of commercial vehicles and also operates weight and inspection stations. The Capitol Police unit is charged with patrolling and enforcing laws in the capitol hill area.

The Department of Natural Resources is unique with roles in law enforcement, environmental protection, hunting and fishing regulations, and overseeing parks, historical sites and markers. In addition, DNR has a counterterrorism task force, a K- unit, an aviation unit and provides search and rescue in water and on land. Major Steve Adams pointed out that there are only 200 game wardens in Georgia. He said there is no typical day for a game warden. He said that a warden might start his day in a boat on a lake, spend the afternoon checking fishing licenses on a trout stream, and be called out at night to investigate poachers. Moreover, wardens often find people conducting illegal activities, like making and detonating pipe bombs, on government managed lands.

Keith Wages, Director of the Department of Emergency Medical Services spoke about the infectious disease transportation network that was established as a result of Georgia's Ebola response. He described how the network is organized and how transport of individuals can be coordinated by calling 1-888-PUB-HLTH.

New threats to public safety continue to arise daily. This was the message of Dwayne Garris, Georgia Fire Marshal. He pointed to sweet crude, a type of petroleum that is being transported in 30,000 gallon tankers that are not designed for this type of fuel. This product's flammability in its natural state is similar to gasoline. This fuel is

desirable because it takes less refining to make the finished product. He said that trains moving this petroleum roll through most any town that has a rail system.

Next he told the audience about Tannerite, a substance used to make exploding targets. Just 40 pounds of this material when exploded can destroy a car. Currently, it is legal for individuals to have the components to make tannerite, but it is illegal to transport tannerite (when the two components are mixed). Tannerite is intended to detonate when shot by a high-velocity firearm cartridge. Low velocity ammunition, like a shotgun will not cause tannerite to explode. Although the manufacturer recommends using .5 pounds or less, most Youtube® demonstration videos utilize much higher amounts for dramatic effects, such as exploding cars and other objects. This activity is of concern to responders.

The last presentation of the day was from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation's Information Sharing and Analysis Center (GISAC). Jeff Rosler and Jerry Rioux described how information is gathered through surveillance and what happens once the information is processed. They pointed out that one of the hardest parts of the job is finding a balance between protecting civil rights and civil liberties. One of the most difficult tasks is determining when someone goes from protected rights to criminal activity. Currently there are 78 fusion centers across the US that collect, process and share intellegence with law enforcement agencies.

In closing, Hall County Fire Chief Jeff Hood expressed his appreciation to the Governor and all of the speakers for helping make this year's event a success.



Georgia Fire Marshal, Dwayne Garris reported that a new petroleum fuel, known as sweet crude was being transported across the state in tankers that have been modified to hold this fuel. However, these tankers are not designed for this type of flammable fuel and could cause serious harm if involved in a rail accident.



Cross border exercises offer additional opportunities to collaborate

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border relationships and gather information to help us plan for potential threats outside of our jurisdiction that could adversely affect our residents.”

The second phase of the exercise called for an active shooter to arrive at the POD and try to take the supply of medicine being dispensed. This part of the scenario added to the stress level of the participants and resulted in a few “casualties” that were transported by EMS to the local hospital. Law enforcement officers were quick to subdue the perpetrator and secure the facility.

According to the Nuclear Energy Institute, “U.S. nuclear plants are well-designed, operated by trained personnel, defended against attack and prepared in the event of an emergency. Stringent federal regulation, automated, redundant safety systems and the industry’s comprehensive safety procedures keep nuclear power plants and their communities safe.” Still, it is wise to plan for all possible

threats to public health.

In the past, District 2 Public Health has participated with the Southeast Tennessee Public Health team, for tabletop exercises and trainings, as well as a ChemPack exercise in 2011. Additionally, District 2 maintains partnerships and collaborates with bordering North Carolina and South Carolina public health regions.



East Tennessee Public Health exercised their Ambubus during the event. These vehicles are designed to transport individuals for medical treatment during a mass casualty scenario.



The line for the Drive-Thru POD was active but workers kept the traffic flowing though the stations and individuals were able to get their mock medicine in short order.



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