

RC/PIO News & Notes 8-15-2025



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News and Notes

Today marks one week since the violent shooting incident at CDC. From the Common Health Coalition this week: *Last Friday, CDC's Atlanta headquarters was the target of an [attack](#), resulting in the death of a police officer, bullet-shattered windows, and staff sheltering in place for hours. Public health organizations have condemned the attack and the rise of violence against health workers, and CDC staff have requested safety plans that acknowledge the heightened risks in recent years.*

Tropical storm activity is heating up in the Atlantic. New developments in risk communication and exercise planning were also significant components of the past seven days.

Vigilant Guard Exercise



A full-day seminar for the full-scale exercise Vigilant Guard was held Tuesday at the state DPH Emergency Operation Center. The exercise will be held at various sites throughout the state the first week of December. The scenario is a nuclear explosion at the FIFA World Cup in Atlanta. This week's seminar included an overview of the roles, responsibilities, and resources available from federal partners. We heard the finer points on radiation from Ricky Schutter. The DPH EPR Business Operations team updated everyone on policies, practices, and expectations that are key to any response. More exercise planning discussions occurred later in the week at the GEMA State Operations Center.



Erin

Tropical storm [Erin](#) is expected to reach hurricane strength today and has the potential to reach major hurricane strength before the end of its path. While most models do not have Erin tracking too close to the U.S., it is likely to impact rip currents and tides. We will continue monitoring Erin's development throughout the weekend.

Risk Communication Toolkit

CDC and the National Public Health Information Coalition on Wednesday provided an overview and training of their new Public Health Risk Communication toolkit. The resource began development in 2020, was paused for a couple years, and was just recently completed. It provides tips to recognize and address communication challenges such as scientific uncertainty, misalignment of risk principles, inaccurate health information and trust in sources. An on-line training video is expected to be available next month.

Risk Communication vs. Crisis Communication

Risk Communication

- Risk communication within the public health context is the process of sharing information or recommendations with the public so they can make informed decisions about how to manage risks to their health and safety
- Risk communication works best as two-way communication between experts and the audience

Crisis Communication

- Situations involving acute crises may not be the same as situations in which risks evolve over time
- Crisis communication applies to an unexpected emergency that requires an immediate and scaled-up response

If your situation calls for crisis communication practices, please refer to **CDC Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC)** guidance.

Next Week Preview

Next Tuesday is the monthly state DPH EPR meeting. We'll also continue monitoring tropical disturbances from now until the hurricane season cools off in two and a half months.

About "News & Notes"

"News & Notes" is a weekly communication aimed at risk communicators and public information officers within Georgia's 18 public health districts. The goal of the communication is to increase preparedness through the exchange of information about significant events, training and other planned activities. Some information herein may be considered FYUO or For Your Use Only. Please be judicious when forwarding. For questions, comments or to submit information for inclusion, contact Eric Jens at Eric.Jens@dph.ga.gov