



RC/PIO News & Notes |

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A Weekly Update from **Eric Jens, Risk Communicator** – Georgia Department of Public Health

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News & Notes

Hurricane season, hantavirus, FIFA planning and more are in store for highlights this week. FIFA events in the Atlanta and surrounding areas are starting to take shape while the multi-faceted preparedness efforts continue. This includes considerations for international travel, and Ebola among other potential serious health threats as summarized by Dr. Cherie Drenzek in an interview with [WSB](#) this week.

Hurricane Season

The 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook was released last week by NOAA, which calls for a 55% chance of below normal tropical storm activity, a 35% chance of near normal, and a 10% chance of above normal tropical storm activity. The Data Transmission Network hosted their 2026 Summer and Tropical Outlook session earlier this spring. That prediction called for 13 named storms, and five hurricanes, including three major hurricanes. Both organizations pointed out that it only takes one major landfall to make it a memorable and bad season. Hurricane season in Georgia begins Monday.

2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season

- 13 Named Storms
- 5 Hurricanes
- 4 Major Hurricanes (Cat. 3 or higher)
- 1 US named storm landfall
 - 0 Hurricanes
- \$9.36 billion in damage
- Fourth consecutive year that no storms formed prior to 6/1
- The first storm was Andrea on 6/23, marking the latest start to the season since 2014
- First year with no US hurricane landfalls since 2015



Hantavirus

Guests at the Biocontainment Unit at the University of Nebraska Medical Center continue to be checked twice daily for symptoms of hantavirus. At a news conference one week ago today, Governor Jim Pillen, US Health and Human Services Press Officer Peter Cassell, and others talked about the care being provided to the two who are under CDC quarantine orders and others who are in Nebraska following their April cruise ship experience.

On Thursday's ECHO webinar series that featured hantavirus, Georgia DPH Epidemiologist Skyler Brennan said there is a robust surveillance system in place in Georgia that includes all notifiable diseases including hantavirus. She said this helps with the mission of Identifying, Isolating and Informing.



Frozen Findings at FIFA exercise

Thanks to Venessa Sims and Byron Lobsinger for sending pictures from the tabletop exercise held one week ago today at U.S. Foods in Fairburn. 'Frozen Findings at FIFA' brought together multiple disciplines from the State Department of Agriculture and state DPH among others to talk through emergency preparedness and response efforts, especially as they relate to food safety at large scale events.



Ebola

The National Public Health Information Coalition this week provided updates on the Ebola outbreak in Africa and how that is impacting travel in the U.S.:

CDC Expands Ebola Screening to Atlanta; Updates U.S. Entry Restrictions

CDC expanded enhanced Ebola screening to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, adding a second U.S. entry point alongside Washington's Dulles for travelers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and South Sudan.

WHO reports 82 confirmed cases and seven deaths, with additional suspected deaths and nearly 750 suspected cases linked to the Bundibugyo strain.

*U.S. entry measures include restrictions on non-citizens traveling from affected countries, and an HHS rule under **42 CFR 71.40** expanding CDC authority to restrict entry, including lawful permanent residents who have been in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, or South Sudan within 21 days. Read more from CNBC [here](#).*

Next Week Preview

In addition to the start of the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season at the start of the week, there will be a metro communicators coffee meeting Tuesday morning at the Twin Towers cafeteria. There are multiple FIFA planning and exercise planning sessions the rest of the week.

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.

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