



## Around the Region in Homeland Security July 2008

The Northwest Regional Technology Center (NWRTC) is a virtual resource center, operated by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), to support regional preparedness, response, and recovery. The center enables homeland security solutions for emergency responder communities and federal, state, and local stakeholders. This newsletter summarizes homeland security activities affecting the Pacific Northwest, and this issue highlights:

- Background radiation surveys in Puget Sound
- Efforts to raise awareness among the news media about catastrophic events
- Nuclear detection technology testing at the Port of Tacoma
- Upcoming demonstration of emergency communications.

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### Background Radiation Surveys Piloted in Puget Sound

In June, stakeholders around Puget Sound worked with PNNL and the Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) to conduct nearly 100 background radiation surveys on small maritime craft and at marinas and other locations. The Battelle Research Vessel *Strait Science* completed the mapping of 15 harbor areas and selected connecting waterways. Understanding existing radiation levels (the background) in the area is critical to identifying when a new source of radiation appears on the scene. Such a source may be legitimate, or it may represent the incursion of terrorists into U.S. waters.



Small Vessel Preventative Rad/Nuc Detection Pilot Project Manager Bill Peterson led the background surveys in June in Puget Sound with staff from PNNL and SRNL.

The work was conducted as part of the Small Vessel Preventative Rad/Nuc Detection Pilot Project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). Stakeholders involved in the project include DHS Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Seattle Fire Department, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Seattle Police Department, Port of Seattle, Bainbridge Island Police Department, Washington Department of Health, Port of Everett, Port Orchard Police Department, and Washington State





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## INL Teams to Test Emergency Communications

In early September 2008, the Idaho National Guard, Idaho National Laboratory (INL), and Qualcomm Incorporated will team to demonstrate mobile communications for emergency operations. The team will connect the Idaho National Guard's Joint Incident Site Communications Capability (JISCC) with an improvised wireless E911 Public Safety Answering Point. This answering point manages emergency calls (i.e., 911) to ensure that people in distress receive help. The answering point thus provides a mobile emergency operations center to areas devastated by disaster. With this capability, the Idaho National Guard could provide emergency communications and full use of cellular communications. The demonstration will include transmission of voice, data, and pictures/video.

The JISCC supports state, local, federal, or tribal governments when called upon by the Governor of Idaho during a natural disaster or terrorist attack. The capability offers a robust communications system for first responders that supplements the existing communications infrastructure or replaces any of that infrastructure damaged in the event. It includes all of the components necessary for managing a crisis in an emergency operations center. The current configuration of the JISCC doesn't provide for operation of the Public Safety Answering Point if both the regular public switch telephone system and the cellular communications networks are not functioning. In other words, if the local Public Safety Answering Point is damaged, destroyed, or evacuated, people in distress (calling 911 on a cell phone) cannot be linked with the dispatch function for fire, medical, law enforcement, or other emergency services.

INL invites all interested first responders, National Guard personnel, or emergency operations management personnel to view the demonstration. Contact Curtis Papke at (208) 526-4329, cell (208) 360-0208, or [curtis.papke@inl.gov](mailto:curtis.papke@inl.gov) for more information.

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## Upcoming Events

Aug 12 -14, 2008

IBRD Private Sector Resiliency Workshops

PNNL Seattle Office

September 16 -18, 2008

Washington State Emergency Management Association Conference

Quinault Beach Resort and Casino, Ocean Shores, Washington

October 9, 2008

Regional Workshop on Federal Support for Restoration and Recovery from Disasters

Seattle Convention Center

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*Around the Region in Homeland Security* is a monthly report from the Northwest Regional Technology Center, operated by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The goal of the NWRTC is to bring together major stakeholders from across the region that have a vested interest in homeland security issues and provide a collaborative environment that addresses Northwest regional homeland security requirements, needs, and challenges. For more information, contact Director Steve Stein at [steve.stein@pnl.gov](mailto:steve.stein@pnl.gov) or 206-528-3340, Deputy Director Mary Peterson at [mary.peterson@pnl.gov](mailto:mary.peterson@pnl.gov) or 509-372-4655, or see the website at <http://nwrtec.pnl.gov>.