



Around The Region In Homeland Security April 2011

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

- PNNL technologies that are being used to monitor radiation from Japan
- How Google supports disaster response
- An upcoming international exercise dealing with a catastrophic earthquake
- The availability of a recovery framework for a biological incident
- A new guide to legal issues in disasters.

PNNL Technologies Monitoring Radiation from Japan

Technologies developed at PNNL and deployed worldwide are being used to monitor radiation crossing the Pacific from the damaged Fukushima nuclear reactors in northern Japan. On March 16, the monitors were the first to detect radioactive isotope xenon-133 entering the continental U.S., consistent with a release from Japan a few days earlier. The levels were extremely low, less than one-millionth of the amount a person normally receives in one day from background radiation produced by sources like the sun, and therefore posed no hazard to human health or the environment.

PNNL has been on the forefront of developing radiation detection technologies, evaluating biological effects of radiation, and working to understand how contaminants move and change in the environment. This work has included developing methods and instruments for measuring ultra-low levels of radionuclides in support of non-proliferation and treaty verification activities.

Google Supports Response to Major Disasters

First responders have an ally in media giant Google. Google's [Crisis Response website](#) offers an aggregation of information on unfolding disasters. When a disaster strikes, the Google Crisis Response team assesses the severity and impact and determines whether Google can uniquely contribute tools or content to response efforts. For covered response efforts, the site organizes emergency alerts, news updates, and donation information. Google also tries to build tools that can improve communication and collaboration among responders and those affected. Google Person Finder, for example, allows people to locate loved ones who have been impacted by a crisis. Resource Finder provides a map with up-to-date information on the availability of health services. Google may also provide high-resolution satellite imagery to crisis responders and monetary donations to non-profit organizations that provide relief services. In addition, Google can support rebuilding efforts for network infrastructure to more quickly return access to the Internet.

Enterprise Resiliency Experiment to Debut in Northwest

The Enterprise Resiliency Experiment is set to debut in June in the Northwest. The experiment is designed to demonstrate the integration of existing technologies and their capabilities through an exercise simulating a natural, accidental, or intentional disaster. Supported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Defense Research and Development Canada and coordinated by PNNL, the first exercise will use an earthquake scenario to demonstrate the integration of numerous tools developed for DHS through national laboratories, universities, research organizations, and industry partners.

Participating programs include the National Visualization and Analytics Center, managed by PNNL; the DHS analytics centers; the City of Seattle and surrounding counties; emergency management organizations from both sides of the border; Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory; and the Justice Institute of British Columbia. DHS is planning for this type of exercise to be practiced annually in various regions to guide future research and development activities within the U.S. and beyond.

Long-Term Recovery Framework Available

In September, the Seattle Urban Security Initiative partners completed a first-of-a-kind framework to aid recovery from a biological incident. The Interagency Biological Demonstration Project, which was funded by DHS and the U.S. Department of Defense in partnership with the Seattle Urban Area, supported the development of the framework.

Now the framework is available [online](#) through the All Hands website. The framework focuses on the key decisions, actions, and policies that must be addressed regarding long-term recovery from a biological event and can serve to support long-term recovery planning.

A Legal Manual for an Apocalyptic New York

Major disasters like terrorist attacks and mass epidemics raise confounding issues for rescuers, doctors, and government officials. These disasters also pose bewildering legal questions, including some that may be painful to consider, such as how the courts would decide who gets life-saving medicine if there are more victims than supplies.

[New York State Public Health Legal Manual: A Guide for Judges, Attorneys, and Public Health Professionals](#) provides guidance on quarantine, mandatory examinations, seizure of property, and immunity to liability, among others. The document was issued by the New York State Unified Court System and the New York Bar Association in collaboration with the New York Department of Health and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Upcoming Events

April 26 and 27, 2011

[Partnerships in Emergency Preparedness](#) Conference
Tacoma, Washington

June 20-23, 2011

[National UASI and Homeland Security Conference](#)
San Francisco, California

Around the Region in Homeland Security is a monthly report from PNNL's Northwest Regional Technology Center for Homeland Security. For more information, contact Director Steve Stein at steve.stein@pnl.gov or 206-528-3340, Deputy Director Ryan Eddy at ryan.eddy@pnl.gov or 509-372-6622, or Deputy Director Regional Programs Ann Lesperance at ann.lesperance@pnl.gov or 206-528-3223, or see the website at <http://nwrtec.pnl.gov>.



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