

THE HOOSIER RESPONDER

JUNE 2022



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

How data from around the state translates into a safer home for all.

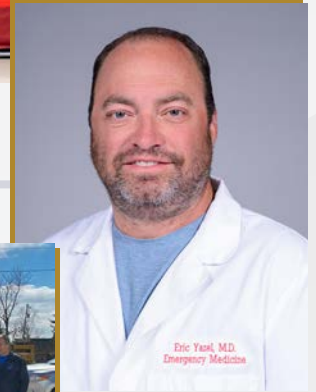
ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- FDIC Wrap-Up
- IDHS Job Postings Dashboard Wins National Recognition
- IDHS Names a New Chief Medical Director
- Parke County EMS Recovers from Fire
- Staying Safe in Large Summer Crowds
- New Federal Cybersecurity Grants to be Distributed Soon



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SAFETY SCRAMBLE



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As you may have heard recently, I am stepping down from my position of executive director at IDHS and retiring from public safety service. My last day at the agency will be June 24. Joel Thacker, current Indiana State Fire Marshal, has been appointed as the next executive director and will take over IDHS beginning June 27.

My goal as a leader is to always leave a team stronger than when I joined. I feel confident IDHS and emergency preparedness across Indiana have improved in recent years, and I am proud to have helped facilitate some of those improvements. Through legislation, restructuring and a strong focus on culture and internal communications, IDHS has come a long way.



The momentum built during my tenure will continue uninterrupted with Joel Thacker at the helm. Joel and I have collaborated closely to guide the strategic direction of the agency, and I appreciate his partnership — and many others within IDHS — in moving the needle on several important projects. I wish him the best of luck as he begins to put his own mark on the future of the agency, and I ask the entire public safety community for its support. At the time of this writing, a new Indiana State Fire Marshal has not been named.

I have given 30-plus years to the public safety community, beginning with my military career and then to the fire/EMS service before closing out my career with IDHS. The time has come for me to slow the pace and enjoy time with my wife and family. We will be relocating to Florida, and I look forward to the next chapter.

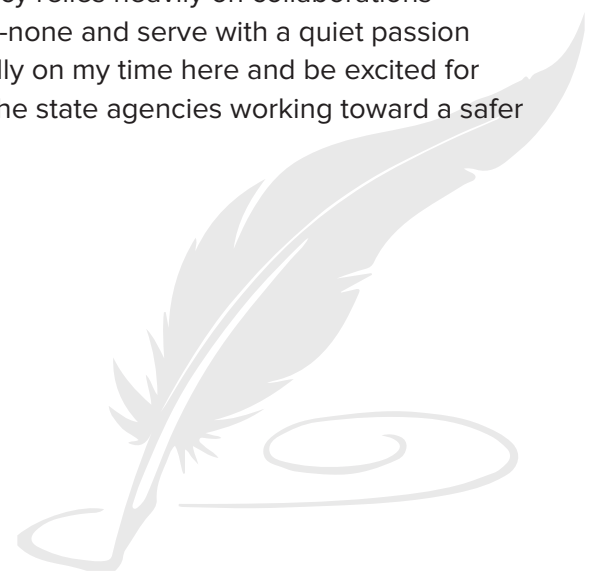
The future is bright for IDHS and the important services it provides Hoosiers. This includes high-quality training for first responders, thousands of safety inspections and certifications each year and the support and resources available to respond quickly and effectively to disasters. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, IDHS served in new and exciting ways, clearly proving the value we bring to respond to disasters affecting all Hoosiers.

The role of IDHS will continue to evolve, and the success of the agency relies heavily on collaborations and partnerships throughout Indiana. IDHS employees are second-to-none and serve with a quiet passion supporting Indiana's public safety communities. I will look back proudly on my time here and be excited for what lies ahead for IDHS. As Hoosiers, we all should be thankful for the state agencies working toward a safer Indiana.

Best regards and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Cox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Steve Cox
Executive Director



WELCOME TO FDIC[®] INTERNATIONAL

FIRE DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTORS CONFERENCE

WRAP-UP

From April 21-30, Indianapolis welcomed more than 30,000 fire industry professionals for the 2022 Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC). Participants attended trainings, workshops, and business meetings as well as explored the expansive exhibit halls. More than 11,000 of those attendees also stated they were firefighters/EMTs or firefighters/paramedics. They also attended the Journal of Emergency Medical Services (JEMS) Conference and Expo, which was co-located with FDIC for the first time.

The week began with FDIC's interactive hands-on training evolutions (H.O.T.), at which firefighters and fire/rescue professionals advanced their skills by participating in live training courses, pre-conference workshops and more than 200 conference sessions taught by world-renowned instructors, presenting new areas of interest within the fire service along with updated content on important topics.

In addition to the education, FDIC's show floor featured live demonstrations, competitions and

challenges and more than 800 exhibitors showcasing innovative products and services.

JEMS Con attendees participated in the JEMS Games, a clinical competition using simulation technology.



The preliminary round involved assessing and providing care during three, high-pressure scenarios. Only three teams moved on to the final game, where they competed in a 20-minute exercise that required managing multiple patients. Miami-Dade County EMS from Florida took home the gold medal Friday morning. The team beat out the New York City Fire Department (silver) and Delaware's Sussex County firefighters (bronze).

The FDIC and JEMS Con will be back next year in Indianapolis, April 24-29.



IDHS PUBLIC SAFETY JOB POSTINGS DASHBOARD WINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION



The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) makes it a mission to find ways to better serve customers. This year, one of those ideas is getting national recognition for the innovative ways IDHS is leveraging geographic information system (GIS) technology. [The Public Safety Job Postings dashboard](#), created by IDHS GIS Analyst Ashlee Moore

and additional team members, won a Special Achievement in GIS (SAG) Award from the state of Indiana’s GIS vendor, Esri.

GIS is a system that takes data and connects it to a map so users can understand the information as well as monitor patterns and context. Using this system, Moore can take the location of a job opening and put it on a map, so job seekers can see clearly where the position is in Indiana. Job seekers can use the map to focus on job openings based on the county they’re interested in working in or surrounding areas.

Moore was tasked with creating this platform to give IDHS public safety partners a better way to fill job vacancies. The result is an interactive dashboard showcasing public safety job postings that have been shared with IDHS. Those searching for jobs can filter information in several ways and easily view details about each position. Agencies submitting a job posting now enter information into a survey form where it can be leveraged across GIS platforms.

“I’m most proud that we took an idea and created something truly unique to benefit the public safety community in Indiana. Our team spent a lot of time on this project. It’s rewarding to find out that industry peers really think this



Ashlee Moore, IDHS GIS Analyst

project is special,” said Moore. “This award came as a complete surprise, and I’m extremely humbled by the experience. This project definitely will stick out as a highlight in my career.”

Before this dashboard, local agencies would submit a form describing their job posting to IDHS. Then the information was published as a PDF link on the IDHS webpage. Mike Beam, IDHS web content manager, brought up the idea of creating something completely new to speed up turnaround time and to provide more information on the job postings to external customers. Moore says this project was a new challenge for her, “perhaps the biggest challenge I had tackled. It

required building a workflow that incorporated multiple Esri products, as well as some GIS technology practices that are unique to IDHS. There was a lot of trial and error.”

If you have a public safety job you need to fill, the Public Safety Job Postings dashboard is ready to go. The postings are divided into the following categories:

- Emergency Management
- EMS
- Fire
- Fire/EMS
- Telecommunications
- Other

Use the [Public Safety Help Wanted Form](#) to submit a job posting. The system is free for all public safety entities in Indiana.

Feedback has been positive from users. Josh D. Henderson with Edinburgh Fire and Rescue says it’s been a great solution.

“Thank you for allowing us to post our opening on the IDHS Public Safety Job Postings dashboard. The website posting was easy to create and only took us a few minutes to complete. We think the Public Safety Job Postings dashboard is an excellent way to share our messages to all our Hoosier Responders,” he said.

IDHS was selected out of 100,000 organizations to win this award. Moore will represent IDHS and travel to San Diego in July to receive the award at the annual Esri User Conference.



MANUELA JOHNSON RETIRES FROM IDHS

IDHS is saying goodbye to a major figure in the response and recovery world. Manuela Johnson, the administrator for the State Disaster Relief Fund, retired after 36 years with the state.

The IDHS Response and Recovery Section assists homeowners and renters whose homes are damaged by disaster events that do not rise to the level of a federal declaration. Some of Johnson’s fondest memories at IDHS were when she and her team were in action helping Hoosiers.

“The times in the EOC when we hand drew maps of the warnings and watches that were declared. In 2005, we had a map where we ran out of colors and symbols. It ranged from heavy snow in the south, to tornadoes and ice storms all at the same time. Every county in the state but two ended up with a disaster declaration,” Johnson said.

Johnson also was a subject matter expert for low-head dams and the state lead for the Indiana Silver Jackets team, a voluntary team of federal and state agencies, regional and professional organizations and higher education members who work to find solutions for natural and man-made hazards to prevent or mitigate disasters.

Johnson says she is moving on to the next chapter in her life and is exploring new job opportunities. IDHS wishes Johnson well as she continues to pursue her passion for public safety.





NEW CHIEF MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF INDIANA EMS BEGINS AT IDHS

Dr. Eric B. Yazel is the new chief medical director for Indiana EMS at the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS). His first day at IDHS was May 31.

Dr. Yazel brings to the role a rich history of public health experience, including leadership positions with health systems, hospitals, emergency medicine and more. As the Clark County health officer, Yazel was recognized for his innovation as well as his success working through the local challenges presented during the height of COVID-19.

“I’m excited for Dr. Yazel to join IDHS as Indiana EMS medical director,” said IDHS Executive Director Steve Cox. “He is an energetic, experienced and well-respected physician who has worked in emergency medicine and public health for many years, and we look forward to him bringing his record of successes to communities across the state.”

By statute, the IDHS executive director appoints the medical director position, which also must be approved by the Indiana EMS Commission. The Commission voted on May 13 to approve Yazel, and the state employee hiring process was finalized a few days later.

Dr. Yazel is a graduate of Ball State University, Indiana University and the University of Louisville School of Medicine.

The EMS medical director is a critical position due to the leadership and strategy it provides emergency medical personnel across the state. Along with the Indiana EMS Section Director Kraig Kinney, the medical director will help guide laws and administrative rules governing the EMS system.

“I feel that I can really make a difference in this position,” Dr. Yazel said of his appointment. “We’re at a critical time for EMS right now. We have a lot of momentum, and I want to get out and be visible in the state to stay in tune with the boots on the ground and understand the challenges of all the EMS systems in Indiana.”

IDHS houses the Indiana EMS Section as well as the office of Indiana State Fire Marshal Joel Thacker.

“Dr. Yazel’s career path to this position will be a tremendous asset to him and to the state as he interacts with EMS agencies across Indiana,” Thacker said. “His experience with large urban services to smaller rural systems will help him to understand the diversity of Indiana’s EMS system.”

The continued growth of Mobile Integrated Health (also known as community paramedicine) and a re-emphasis on recruiting for EMS career paths are two priorities Dr. Yazel outlined. He also hopes to improve morale among EMS personnel and better balance support and resources between urban and rural systems.

“I’m really honored to be coming into this position,” he said. “There are a lot of great EMS minds across the state, and I’m excited to learn and build on success to keep Indiana as one of the preeminent EMS systems in the country.”

Dr. Yazel fills the vacancy created in early April by the departure of Dr. Michael Kaufmann.



Eric Yazel, M.D.
Emergency Medicine

WELCOME TO THE TEAM, DR. YAZEL!



RESIDENTIAL SAFE ROOM PROGRAM UPDATE

More than 1,700 applicants applied for this year's IDHS Residential Safe Room Program, making it the program's most successful year. Torrey Glover, the IDHS State Hazard Mitigation Officer, said the "tornadoes that struck Kentucky and Illinois back in December influenced our residents here. Seeing the aftermath of those storms motivated people to reassess their severe storm preparedness." Glover said he "received more than 40 calls and emails from residents starting the morning after the storms and going for over a week, inquiring about our safe room program."

In an average year, 800 tornadoes are reported nationwide, resulting in 80 deaths and 1,500 injuries. A safe room, a hardened structure specifically designed to meet FEMA criteria and provide "near-absolute protection" in extreme weather events, can survive winds as high as 250 miles per hour. It can be an interior room, a space within a building or an entirely separate structure designed to protect occupants for events that generally last approximately two hours.

There are "two main reasons our Residential Safe Room Program is so important," Glover said. "First,

it provides an opportunity for homeowners who may not have the financial means a way to provide shelter for their families during a severe weather event. Second, it leads to families discussing their severe weather safety plan. Knowing where to go during a storm, whether it is a safe room, bathroom, interior closet or basement, it is critical to have this plan in place before the storm hits."

The Safe Room Program is a reimbursement program. Homeowners pay the total cost of the safe room up front, and they then will be reimbursed for up to 75 percent, with a maximum of \$5,000, of the eligible costs to install a FEMA-compliant safe room at their residence. IDHS randomly selected 23 Indiana residents to participate in the program this year. Glover said personnel are gathering specific details about the scope and size of the safe room plans and confirming ownership of the proposed properties according to program policies.

The 2022 Residential Safe Room Program accepted applications during the months of March and April. IDHS is making it a priority to continue this program each year if federal funding is available. Future application periods will open in March of each year.





EMS FAMILY HELPS PARKE COUNTY EMS RECOVER AFTER FIRE

February 16 was a “night from hell” for Parke County EMS Director Julie Lanzone. She was at home listening to her EMS radio during her late-night bedtime routine when she heard one of her normally unflappable employees come over the radio saying, “Parke County, this is medic base, rush traffic!” She started getting ready to head to the station when she heard him follow up: “There’s a fire in the ambulance station. Dispatch the fire department!”

A speedy eight-mile drive later, Lanzone arrived on scene to find the station still in flames.

The fire originated inside the engine compartment of an ambulance that was used on a run earlier in the evening. Not long after it had been back, employees heard an explosion

and thought it was gunfire. They started checking rooms and discovered the fire in the vehicle bay.

They made attempts to put out the fire, but the smoke became too thick. They were able to save one of the regular ambulances and an empty one that was recently decommissioned. The fire department then arrived and quickly put out the fire. Two of Lanzone’s employees were treated for smoke inhalation at the hospital; one developed severe pneumonia later but recovered.

The smoke not only damaged the building but also wiped out the station’s stockpile of everyday medical supplies. “Not even a Band-Aid or a drop of oxygen” was still useable, Lanzone said. The station also served as the area’s COVID-19 testing and vaccination clinic, and those supplies were ruined too.

By 2 a.m., Lanzone was on the phone with the nearby hospital and other area EMS directors to get help to continue the EMS service. Within an hour, she was able to arrange coverage for the service area and secure new supplies for immediate use. But that was just the beginning. Around 7 a.m. her phone began ringing with people who heard the news and were asking how they could help.

Illiana EMS, which provides mutual aid to Parke County, brought supplies and a fully stocked ambulance ready for action.

“We work hand-in-hand anyway, so they are used to our equipment,” said Illiana EMS Director Eric Shaughnessy. “As rural providers, we’re used to pooling our resources to make sure things are covered.”

Morgan County EMS brought an ambulance fully equipped, and Putnam County EMS came with a jump bag and supplies to fully stock an ambulance, which were loaded onto the decommissioned ambulance to get it back in service.

“It was totally our honor,” said Putnam County EMS Director Kelly Russ. “We stepped up and made sure that they had enough supplies at least for the next couple days. We know being in EMS, that it’s Murphy’s Law: ‘If you don’t plan for it, it will happen.’ So, we made sure to help supply them.”

Indiana Department of Homeland Security EMS District Manager Stan Frank arrived and described the scene as “like a big family.” Many people were on site putting new vehicles in order, and Frank jumped in and helped coordinate donations from other agencies by making calls, sending emails and sharing posts on social media.

Frank said the timeline to get a new ambulance can be more than a year, but in the days following the fire, IU Health sold Parke County EMS one of their ambulances for a dollar.

A local dollar store in Rockville became a drop-off spot for the public to donate supplies. A Facebook post resulted in 40 community members picking up new shelving, containers, trash bags and snacks. On social media, people were sending

prayers and asking if they could fly or ship items to the agency.

One donor, a volunteer firefighter from Vincennes, drove 80-plus miles to Rockville with his personal pack. He said, “Take it. You need it more than I do,” recalled Lanzone. A woman from Sullivan County started a supply chain from Knox and Sullivan counties, picking up donations on her way.

“The amount of donations was absolutely amazing,” Lanzone said, noting that more than 20 first responder agencies and other organizations lent or donated equipment and supplies. “We’re not attached to a fire department, so there are a lot of grants we don’t qualify for. Sometimes we feel looked down on, but this incident proved that’s not true. The kind of support we received made my heart a lot lighter.”

In 2015, Sullivan County EMS also experienced an ambulance fire that destroyed its station. Frank said the situations were similar in that the community rallied around the agency to help it [manage the crisis and recover](#). All the help offered in these situations speaks volumes about the Indiana EMS system.

“We stick together and help in times of need,” he said.

A few days after the fire, Frank, Greencastle Assistant Fire Chief Rob Frank and Putnam County’s Chief Russ and Deputy Anthony Taylor organized a breakfast to give Lanzone a break from the chaos and to talk.

“We wanted to let her know we were supporting her, not just one time, but that we were in it for the long haul,” Russ said.

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Now, about four months later, the station is still unusable. Parke County EMS crews are staying in campers in the station's parking lot. A sense of normalcy is on the horizon, though, as reconstruction on the station has begun and the agency now has four ambulances of its own in service, plus a backup.

Still, Lanzone says every day they find more items they need but do not have. The fire had destroyed all the paperwork, so it was "like starting over," Lanzone said.

On top of the fire, the agency's medical supply and training officer passed away unexpectedly in the weeks that followed. The agency

had been in the middle of its first EMT class. Thus, Stan Frank became the lead instructor, while Putnam County EMS stepped in to teach as well. With the extra help, the class finished with eight students passing.

Lanzone said she is flabbergasted by all the support, and she is proud of how her staff has handled the fire.

"Stress levels were higher than normal, and we were constantly

working through issues that agencies are not typically prepared to deal with. In the end, the staff did well," Lanzone said. "It was trial and error on how to improve conditions and operations while the crews were spread out across the county at volunteer fire stations. The staff worked it out amongst themselves, and they pulled it together very well."

PARKE CO. EMS THANKS THOSE WHO HELPED!

- Air Evac
- Bellmore Volunteer FD
- Boone County EMS
- Brown Township FD
- Brownsburg FD
- Illiana EMS
- Indiana Department of Homeland Security
- Indianapolis EMS
- IU Health Lifeline
- J&B Medical Supplies
- Marshall Volunteer FD
- Melot FD
- Morgan County EMS
- Pike Township FD



- Putnam County EMS
- Rockville Dollar General
- Rockville/Adams Township FD
- Shelburn FD
- Sullivan County EMS
- Terre Haute FD
- The AccuMed Group
- Trans-Care Ambulance
- Vigo County EMA
- Wabash Ramblers 4-H Club

Among many others...

STAYING SAFE IN THE LARGE SUMMER CROWDS

NOW IS THE TIME TO GET PREPARED

With the summer coming into full swing, Indiana is entering the season of festivals, fairs and large gatherings. Now is the perfect time to dust off your safety plan to be sure you are **Ready: Whenever. Wherever.**

Rest assured IDHS is doing its part to ensure these structures and locations are safe and secure. Our field staff stays busy year-round inspecting thousands of sites so Hoosiers can visit with confidence knowing trained professionals have signed off on safety plans.

But a personal action plan is an important factor in overall safety too. Do you have a plan?

The IDHS Get Prepared site ([GetPrepared.in.gov](https://www.getprepared.in.gov)) offers a multitude of resources to help you be prepared for all hazards, either natural or man-made. This includes active shooter situations, a tragic reality in today's world.

No violent attack is completely avoidable, but there are some things you can do to protect yourself and your loved ones should you find yourself in a life-and-death encounter. Awareness is key to preparation, and this can start the minute you arrive at your destination. Being able to think through your actions and your escape routes could make all the difference.

BEFORE AN EVENT OCCURS

See Something. Say Something. This continues to ring true, as being observant of your surroundings and reporting suspicious activity may protect lives. If possible, explore the written safety plan for an event or location, including the location of all exits and potential hiding spots should you need them. Also, becoming trained in programs such as CPR and [Stop the Bleed](#) is another proactive decision that could help you protect others.

DURING AN EVENT

Run. Hide. Fight. Getting away from an active shooter is the best course of action. You are then able to call 911 and help others if necessary. If unable to run away, find the nearest hiding spot away from the attacker's view — preferably not with a large group of people. Try to communicate with police via text message, if possible, but stay where you are until an escape route is established or the threat has passed.

Fighting or confronting an attacker should be the last resort. If that option is unavoidable, attack with a purpose, using anything near you as a weapon to protect yourself and disable the attacker. Everyone wants to be a hero, but you cannot help others if you are gravely injured or immobile due to exposing yourself.

AFTER AN EVENT

Keep your hands visible to arriving law enforcement. Follow all first responder instructions and render aid to others if you are able. For your long-term health, it is always a smart decision for survivors to seek professional help processing the trauma.

By thinking through and planning how you might respond when an incident occurs, you give yourself and your loved ones the best chance at survival. Your smart and calm actions could make a major difference in the outcome of violent attacks.



STATE 911 BOARD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ED REUTER TO RETIRE

A public service career spanning nearly half a century comes to a close later this month as Ed Reuter retires as executive director of the Statewide 911 Board.

Since 2017, Reuter has been at the helm through major changes for the 911 Board, which provides the statewide private Indiana 911 network. Among those changes are network migrations and upgrades (AT&T ESInet, G19 network), deployment of RapidSOS to determine callers' location, distribution of a federal grant resulting in Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) having NG911-capable equipment, equipping of IP-based phones for dispatch centers for use during outages, implementation of voice translation services and the addition of translation services for texting to 911.

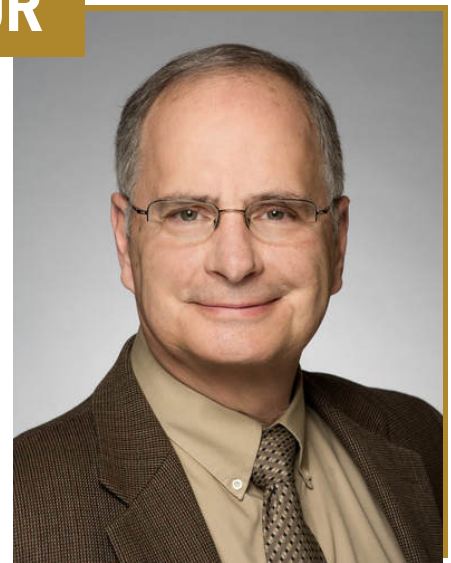
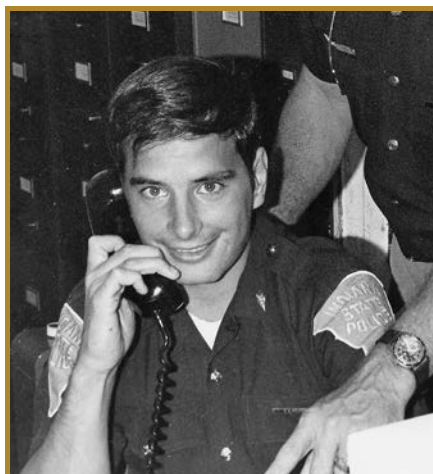
Before his stint on the Statewide 911 Board, Reuter spent a decade as the 911 director at Bartholomew County Emergency Operations Center and, before that, 33 years with the Indiana State Police.

"Sometimes I have to pinch myself. Who would've thought that 48 years ago, I would've been here?" Reuter said. "I never could have imagined I would have

been in this position when I began my public safety career. But my experiences at the State Police and Bartholomew County were building blocks and helped me understand how PSAPs operate — the technology and the people."

Reuter's focus on the people of 911 was a recurring theme of those who have worked with him, like Statewide 911 Board member and State Treasurer Kelly Mitchell.

"He is excellent at building relationships, and he has strengthened the ties of local PSAPs with each other and with our state office," she said. "He has traveled the state visiting and acknowledging the service our dispatchers provide. He has driven hours to attend retirement and award ceremonies. He personally follows up with dispatch directors when there has been a tragedy or loss in their county or on their team."



Indiana Department of Homeland Security Executive Director Steve Cox, who also serves on the 911 Board, echoes the praise on Reuter's impact across the state.

"Ed has been a really positive influence on 911 operations and support during his tenure, and he's incredibly well-respected," he said. "For each board meeting, before finishing, he always shows and gives kudos to specific dispatchers from around the state for saving lives or having led to an amazing outcome. He provides recognition for those individuals in 911 who are not the type who seek recognition but whose jobs are essential."

911 Board Deputy Director Laurel Simmermeyer said Reuter has been instrumental in organizing their office to be highly efficient.

"Everyone who knows Ed knows that he loves people, and this has

made folks across the state and country notice Indiana and the success of our 911 network in the best ways possible,” she said.

Reuter says he is proud of the 911 Board’s collaboration with its vendors and the state of Indiana’s 911 system’s technology. The 911 Board often gets calls from across the nation looking for advice and information from Indiana, due to the state’s wealth of experience with various systems.

“The most gratifying thing was seeing how we’ve grown on the people side, including earmarking money for training,” Reuter said, referring to Senate Bill 158, which this year also set the minimum training standards for telecommunicators. “We’ve invested in technology but also need to invest in the people, because technology

is not worth two cents without trained people.”

Getting telecommunicators classified as first responders and the resiliency of PSAP staff during the COVID-19 pandemic are also sources of pride for Reuter. His office visited all 92 counties and more than 100 PSAPs during his first years as executive director before the pandemic. He credited the relationships built during that time for helping PSAPs make it through the worst part of COVID.

NEW DIRECTOR

Reuter’s successor already has been chosen. In March, the board approved Jeff Schemmer to become the next executive director. Schemmer has been on the board and moves from serving as the 911 director for Hamilton County. Prior to that, he was the

director of the Monroe County Central Emergency Dispatch Center.

“He’s the new and improved Ed Reuter, and he’ll do a great job,” said Reuter, adding that they have similar philosophies and the transition has been smooth.

Reuter noted the outlook for the Indiana 911 system is positive and will include completing the ESInet I3 component, helping counties with geographic information system (GIS) upgrades and working with the ever-increasing costs it takes for PSAPs to operate.

Meanwhile, Reuter and his wife, Lisa, will do some traveling and enjoy their grandchildren, among possible other pursuits.



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION



IT'S ALL IN THE NUMBERS

**HOW DATA AND FIRST RESPONDERS
GUIDE PUBLIC SAFETY**

When Fire and EMS make an emergency run, they are the first in line to evaluate the scene and determine the best course of action. The number of injured, the type of injuries, the needed approach to knock down the fire and eliminate the risks, all those factors play a role in how an incident is handled and ultimately the outcome for the people involved.

Knowledge is taken from every run. These first responders learn from each experience, and that knowledge impacts how they approach a similar event in the future, maybe involving the same person or same neighborhood.

But what happens from there? Vast amounts of data are available via the first responder community, and it is critical this data is used to inform the true risks to all Hoosiers and create the right strategy to reduce those risks. That is the concept behind Community Risk Reduction (CRR).

EMS run data played a huge role at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, helping to inform hospital diversions, ambulance shortages and even the need to transfer and administer vaccines. With more than 90 percent of EMS currently submitting its run data to the state, the Indiana Department of Health was better suited to respond effectively.

A different story exists in the fire service. Only about 40 percent of the 840 fire departments across the state submit their run data to Indiana's [ImageTrend Elite system](#), coordinated through the Indiana State Fire Marshal's office. Beginning July 1, Indiana law requires fire departments to report their run data monthly to be eligible for any grant funds from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

A recently formed Community Risk Reduction Task Force is intent on improving data collection across the state. This data analysis will culminate with a CRR report and a strategy to address risk factors in communities across Indiana.

"The best analogy I can think of when it comes to CRR is doing a surgery with a laser versus a hatchet," said Capt. Beth Gulley, fire and life safety educator with Sugar Creek Township Fire Department. "If we utilize our CRR correctly, we can be more precise and accurate with our efforts, placing our prevention dollars in areas where we can really make a difference."

"The best analogy I can think of when it comes to CRR is doing a surgery with a laser versus a hatchet."

CAPT. BETH GULLEY

Sugar Creek Township Fire Department

Because of the high number of volunteer fire departments in Indiana, the data collection process faces technical challenges. Some rural departments still lack basic internet and computers to upload the data to ImageTrend.

"It sounds weird to say in 2022, but technology is still a barrier for reporting in the state," said Tim Stites, division chief and fire marshal at the Valparaiso Fire Department. "This is due to lack of funding and education. Hopefully through this CRR process, we can identify our weaknesses and strengths and move Indiana to one of the leaders in fire reporting."

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HEA 1314 – Section 41

Reporting response data could affect your future grant funding. State legislators recently passed HEA 1314 in the 2022 Legislative Session. Section 41 of this law requires fire departments to report their emergency response data annually. If a fire department fails to do so, the department may be ineligible to receive certain grants administered by IDHS.



Community Risk Reduction is not a new idea. Efforts to utilize data for a comprehensive understanding of risks have been implemented in many states in the past 20 years. Indiana has struggled to launch a CRR initiative because there was no mandatory reporting law for run data. It is required to report run data to the National Incident Fire Reporting System (NIFRS), and ImageTrend (free to all departments) is able to import NIFRS reports.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has said the modern fire service no longer simply answers the bell — it works hard to prevent the bell from ringing.

Data informs the CRR, which then allows for the identification of high-risk neighborhoods and helps to determine your hazards, build partners, improve safety and form effective strategies with limited resources, the NFPA outlines. CRR is a whole-of-community effort, which has the potential to promote change in assumptions, attitudes and beliefs at all levels.

Benefits of a CRR strategy include:

- Improves ISO rating
- Helps with accreditation
- Identifies new and emerging hazards
- Offsets declining budgets of fire and local governments
- Addresses changing community demographics
- Addresses underserved communities

“The Task Force includes a big cross section of people from across the state, all intent on better understanding the risk landscape for Indiana,” said Rob Miller, a leader in the Code Enforcement Section

for the State Fire Marshal. “At the end of the day, we want to protect people and property by using what we already know and do to mitigate injuries and risks.”



Marshal Joel Thacker said the numbers already have begun to tell a story for Indiana. For example, Indiana has a real problem with people smoking while on oxygen, a combustible combination that has killed several Hoosiers in recent years. Cooking fires, burn pit accidents and even weather risks all should be addressed in Indiana’s CRR assessment.

“We have to look at what we can do better,” Thacker said. “We talk about prevention, but when prevention doesn’t work, how do we keep the injuries minimized?”

Thacker emphasized the need for fire departments to report their data, not because they are being asked to but because it can make Indiana a safer place to live.

“Not everybody is going to report, and that doesn’t hurt me, personally,” Thacker added. “It hurts the departments and the communities by making those areas ineligible for grants to get equipment and improve services.”



INTRODUCING THE EMS AND FIRE DATA MANAGER

ImageTrend data can be “packaged and sent back to local communities to help them understand their risks, fire or otherwise,” Thacker said.

Indiana currently is in the “Identify Risks” stage of the CRR process. Once complete, those risks will be prioritized, and plans will be drafted to address those risks for each community. Miller expects a CRR strategy report to be complete this summer. The task force is working closely with [Vision 20/20](#), a national organization with expertise in CRR efforts in the fire service.

Meanwhile, IDHS employs a data analyst in charge of the ImageTrend system, available for free to all fire and EMS departments. The agency also offers a variety of helpful resources through a ticketing system available on the [IDHS ImageTrend landing page](#).

“The numbers will tell our story for us,” Gulley said. “But at 3 a.m. following a long shift or run, the last thing anyone wants to do is complete a form and submit paperwork. We are working to educate fire departments on the advantages of sharing this data and supporting our efforts.”



Ken Foster is the new IDHS EMS and fire data manager. He administers and maintains ImageTrend Elite, the database that contains all EMS and fire response information for incidents that occur throughout the state.

This information is then used by decision makers to create, maintain and evaluate statewide EMS and fire programs. “High-quality and timely data collection is important to give responders and decision makers the best information on how to implement emergency response programs and community risk

reduction efforts,” Foster said. “Anecdotal evidence is good, but requests backed by data are more effective in convincing local officials and grant agencies of the reality of the needed support.”

Stakeholders include the Community Risk Reduction initiative led by the Indiana State Fire Marshal staff and a statewide task force, the Governor’s Office and the Indiana EMS system leadership. Indiana response data also is shared with the National EMS Information System, the National Fire Incident Reporting System and the U.S. Fire Administration.

As it stands, only about 40-50 percent of fire departments currently submit their data to IDHS. “Right now, we’re only getting a fraction of the complete picture showing where Indiana is thriving or needs support,” says State Fire Marshal Joel Thacker. “We need all fire departments and EMS providers to do their part to make sure we take care of the areas that need our help.”

This critical data will guide the state’s Community Risk Reduction strategy and help inform where resources, training and education efforts should be focused across Indiana.

You can submit your response data via [ImageTrend](#). A few of the data types Foster is looking for are incident type, response time, actions taken and treatments provided.





EMS COMMUNITY SAYING FAREWELL TO A BELOVED IDHS TEAMMATE

A crucial figure of the Indiana EMS community retired from IDHS. Tony Pagano retired April 22 — exactly 37 years from the day he started at the state. He retired for a couple years before returning, so his total tenure with the state comes out to 35 years.

Pagano most recently served as the EMS training coordinator, but he has worn a few hats in his years. His favorite memory with EMS is when the team hosted a state EMS Conference, and Pagano was able to craft the conference speaker lineup. Pagano says he was most happy when he was helping people

solve problems. “My career has been incredible, and I have had the opportunity to work with some of the best people around,” he said.

“Tony Pagano is a name recognized by EMS statewide,” says EMS Director Kraig Kinney. “He has been a fixture of the EMS Section since 1985 and is the point person for all EMS education matters. We will miss his knowledge base and historical perspective.”

Jeff Quinn, EMS education director at the Indianapolis Fire Department, has known Pagano

since 1985. Quinn says Pagano made a significant impact on the EMS world: “Personally, I think the world of Tony! I would call Tony a great person and a true advocate for EMS in Indiana.



“Tony Pagano is a namesake in Indiana,” he added. “If you have been in EMS in Indiana for any length of time, you know his name. He will truly be missed, and our EMS system will not be the same without his passion.”

Pagano does not plan on slowing down too much. He is still thinking through what he is going to do with his new free time. He has a few volunteer activities planned with his church and may do some substitute teaching. He also serves with a Christian school in San Raymundo, Guatemala, which he calls his passion: “Hopefully I will be able to spend more time down there,” he said.

News of Pagano’s departure was greeted with warm wishes and congratulations on IDHS social media pages. You can read some of the comments IDHS received to the right:

“Congratulations on a distinguished career and for all your efforts toward EMS education in our great state!”

STAR AMBULANCE SERVICE

“Congratulations, Tony. It was always great working with you during my 20 years in the field.”

DUSTIN R.

“Thank you for everything you have done, Tony! Congratulations on your retirement.”

MORGAN COUNTY EMS

“From all of us at EMFT, congratulations, Tony. You have been instrumental in the IN EMS program and we thank you.”

EAST MADISON FIRE TERRITORY

“Tony, I hope you enjoy a long and incredibly rewarding retirement. There is no doubt you have had a huge impact on our community and so many of us who have been enabled by your support. Thank you.”

JOHN K.



Pagano left simple advice for his IDHS teammates, which can apply to the entire EMS community: “Don’t ever forget you are here to serve.”





OPERATION LIGHTS OUT EXERCISE SIMULATES MAJOR POWER GRID FAILURE

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security hosted a full-scale exercise on June 7-9 in Madison County to simulate a major breakdown of the power grid due to record-breaking heat and a solar storm that took out a large portion of power and utilities to multiple counties.

The exercise involved Madison County Emergency Management Agency as well as public safety crews from districts 5, 6 and 7 to not only respond to the emergency but also plan for the distribution of essential resources such as water, food and fuel. Operation Lights Out involved dozens of players and simulated coordination at the county, regional, state and federal levels.



PFAS FOAM COLLECTION CONTINUES AS FREE SERVICE FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS

US Ecology, a third-party vendor hired by the state to collect and properly dispose of PFAS foam from area departments, has collected nearly 4,500 gallons of the cancer-causing substance, and more departments continue to request the service.

The PFAS Collection Initiative is a partnership between IDHS and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. A federal grant funds the program, which is intended to remove and properly dispose of PFAS foam for Indiana firefighters free of charge. The state is not paying to replace the foam with a PFAS-free alternative; however, this system allows departments to protect firefighters while also saving them the cost of removing the product.

PFAS foam exists in many forms today and is known to be connected to four of the top eight cancers that impact firefighters. Six Indiana firefighters who died of cancer were added to the Fallen Firefighter Memorial last year.

This program is one of only a few similar programs in the country and follows the success of a program conducted recently in Michigan. As more fire departments across the state learn of the free program, more are signing on and asking Indiana to take containers of PFAS stored on-site at fire stations.

[Sign up for the program](#)

[Visit the weekly dashboard](#)

CYBERSECURITY GRANTS

The federal government soon will distribute the first of four rounds of funding to help states prepare for and protect against cybersecurity risks.

The State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program resulted from the federal Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA). It dedicates \$1 billion to state, local and tribal governments to address cyber threats.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security will administer the grant, and Indiana will process the state allotment through IDHS. The allocations in total (all states) include:

- FY22: \$200 million
- FY23: \$400 million
- FY24: \$300 million
- FY25: \$100 million



The grant is still being built and has not been rolled out to states yet. It will require 80 percent of each state's funding to be to local governments, with 20 percent of the funds designated for rural communities. Each state will submit its own cyber plan and establish a Cybersecurity Planning Committee, as the grant rules require.

The global landscape for cyber threats is more serious than ever with the conflict in Ukraine. Several small attacks from Russia have been thwarted thus far, but global experts predict more on the horizon from Russia and potentially China.

The State of Indiana offers many resources at www.in.gov/cybersecurity while the federal DHS recently rolled out the [Shields Up](#) resource site.

GRANT UPDATES



SECURED SCHOOL SAFETY GRANT

IDHS is now accepting applications for the Fiscal Year 2023 Secured School Safety Grant (FY23 SSSG). The application period will close Thursday, June 30, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. EDT. No late or incomplete applications will be accepted.

The [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for FY23 SSSG includes all the information necessary for a successful grant application for the SSSG program. Before submitting your application:

1. Be registered in IntelliGrants.
2. Have an active bidder number with the state of Indiana.
3. Have an active supplier number with the state of Indiana.
4. Sign up for [grant updates](#).

The period of performance for the FY23 SSSG will be Sept. 1, 2022, through Aug. 31, 2023.

Since 2014, Indiana has awarded more than \$110 million in SSSG grants to support school security. Last year, 392 schools received more than \$19 million in awards.

[Click here](#) for complete information on the SSSG program and the history of awards distributed.

For more information, submit your questions to the [Grant Management support ticket](#).



FY22 EMA SALARY REIMBURSEMENT

For FY22 EMA salary reimbursement, IDHS is reducing the number of required HSEEP exercises from three (3) exercises to one (1) exercise for salary reimbursement. Current policy and guidance documents are being updated to reflect this change. The training course requirement will stay the same.

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE MARSHAL

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE “FIRE SAFE”?

Fire safety has become a bit of a catch-all in the firefighting world lately.

The phrase encompasses everything from burning tree limbs in your backyard and operating a barbecue to buying the right materials to build your house or ensuring school children form an orderly line during routine drills and exercises.

Despite this abundance of caution, rules and procedures to protect people from fire, many Hoosiers continue to overlook the most effective fire safety tool: working smoke alarms. Recent incidents have shown that working smoke alarms provide critical seconds to help people escape residential fires. When not working properly, these devices can mean the difference between life and death.

The National Fire Protection Association reports the risk of dying in a house fire is cut in half when the home has working smoke alarms. Three out of every five residential fire deaths occur in homes without working smoke alarms. A recent smoke alarm blitz in a northern Indiana mobile home park really brought this message to light. Home after home either had no smoke detectors installed or had old, decaying detectors that were neither wired for power nor had batteries. Even today, this is a shock to the system for the firefighting community.

The State Fire Marshal's [Get Alarmed](http://GetAlarmed.in.gov) program (GetAlarmed.in.gov) has distributed and installed more than 10,000 smoke alarms in the past few years. A comprehensive Community Risk Reduction strategy promises to sustain this program in the future while identifying where smoke alarms and education are needed the most. The simple message of Get Alarmed reiterates that nobody should live in a home without working smoke alarms. Whether it be the state or your local fire department, resources exist to equip your home for free with this lifesaving tool. But we need help.

By Indiana law, all rental homes are required to have at least one working smoke alarm on each level. If you are a renter and find yourself without a smoke alarm, contact your property owner immediately for a reminder and contact codequestions@dhs.in.gov if you do not get the proper response. Also, talk to your family about an escape plan should a fire occur in your home. If you visit relatives or loved ones, look around and verify they have working smoke alarms and that they test them regularly. You can learn all about fire safety by visiting the Get Alarmed program page.

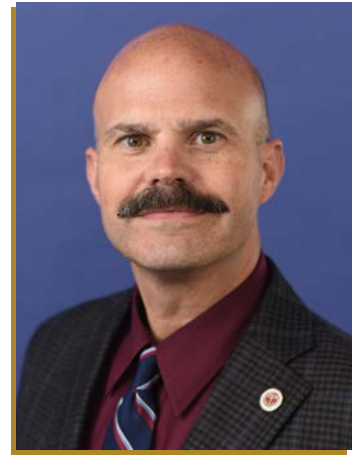
As of June 1, Indiana had reported 42 residential fire fatalities, according to the [IDHS Fire Fatalities Dashboard](#). Many of these occurred in homes with no working smoke alarms; however, sometimes fires are so destructive investigators can never determine if an alarm existed or worked at all. Those families will never know if a tragedy could have been prevented.

Indiana firefighters always arrive on scene with the best training and equipment to do what is necessary. However, to win this battle and best protect all Hoosiers, citizens need to do their part to protect themselves and keep loved ones from facing the same tragedy dozens of families have faced so far this year.

Stay safe,



Joel Thacker
Indiana State Fire Marshal



UPCOMING TRAININGS



JUNE

JUNE 16-17	ICS 400: Advanced ICS Command & General Staff	NOBLESVILLE
JUNE 25-26	K9500: Water Cadaver Search Techniques for K-9s	BRAZIL

JULY

JULY 9	SAR 400: Ground Search I (Technician)	BRAZIL
JULY 15-17	K9510: Advanced Water Cadaver Search Techniques for K-9s	BRAZIL
JULY 20-21	L1301: Continuity Planning	PLAINFIELD

AUGUST

AUG 27-28	K9410: Advanced Land Cadaver Search Techniques for K-9s	BRAZIL
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EMS UPDATE: FORUMS AND COURSES

The IDHS EMS Section is hosting a series of EMS District Forums and Leadership Courses. All forums will cover the same topics and will count toward EMS continuing education credits. The first forum begins in July. Registration is free. You can learn more about the [EMS District Forums here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS



FIREWORKS SAFETY MONTH JUNE

Fireworks can brighten celebrations, and proper fireworks safety can protect spectators from injury and help keep the festivities going longer. For more information including safety tips, legal firework hours and even injury statistics, visit the IDHS [fireworks safety page](#).

LIGHTNING SAFETY WEEK JUNE 19-25

Lightning is a deadly force of nature that kills dozens of people and injures hundreds annually in the United States, according to the [National Weather Service](#). There is little a person can do to protect against lightning when outside, so Hoosiers are encouraged to go inside a building or vehicle during thunderstorms. Learn more about lightning and follow additional safety tips on [the IDHS Get Prepared site](#) to stay safe.

SAFETY STAND DOWN WEEK JUNE 19-25

Taking place each year during the third full week of June, Safety Stand Down highlights critical safety, health and survival issues for fire and emergency services personnel. Learn more by visiting [safetystanddown.org](#).



UPCOMING EVENTS



INDEPENDENCE DAY
JULY 4



INDIANA STATE FAIR JULY 29 - AUGUST 21

It is that time of year again to let loose your excitement for the Indiana State Fair. This year's theme is "Fun at the Speed of Summer," meaning the fair is here to celebrate Indiana's automotive heritage. Visit the [Indiana State Fair](#) website for all your information needs.

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security works 24/7 to protect the people, property and prosperity of Indiana.



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Please direct any questions or comments to the IDHS Office of Public Affairs at 317.234.6713 or pio@dhs.in.gov

The answer to the Safety Scramble is "It's Time To Get Alarmed!"
getalarmed.in.gov