

# THE HOOSIER RESPONDER

SEPTEMBER 2024



## CHANGING WEATHER PATTERNS

*Tornadoes, Derechos and Floods Highlight Need for Better Preparedness*

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- The Indiana Fire and Public Safety Academy's new method for requesting resources
- "When the Smoke Clears": Entire IDHS behavioral health video series is now available
- A 2024 EMS survey and report shines spotlight on Hoosier EMS
- Haunted house safety a high priority during the fall season
- NERIS system to provide generational change to fire data systems
- Campus Fire Safety Month highlighted with event at Indiana State University





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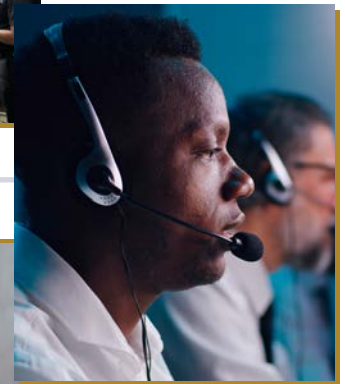
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# REFLECTING ON MY TIME AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF IDHS

As I reflect on my tenure as Executive Director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride for the work we have accomplished together. It has been a privilege to serve alongside dedicated professionals who are committed to the safety and well-being of Hoosiers.

Throughout my time at IDHS, we have faced numerous challenges — from natural disasters to public health crises. But in every instance, I have witnessed the resilience, courage and unwavering commitment of our responders. It is your dedication that has enabled us to adapt, innovate and strengthen our capabilities to protect our communities.

Together, we have enhanced our emergency response strategies, improved coordination among state and local agencies, and invested in training and resources to ensure our responders are prepared for any situation. These achievements are a testament to the collaborative spirit that defines Indiana’s approach to homeland security.

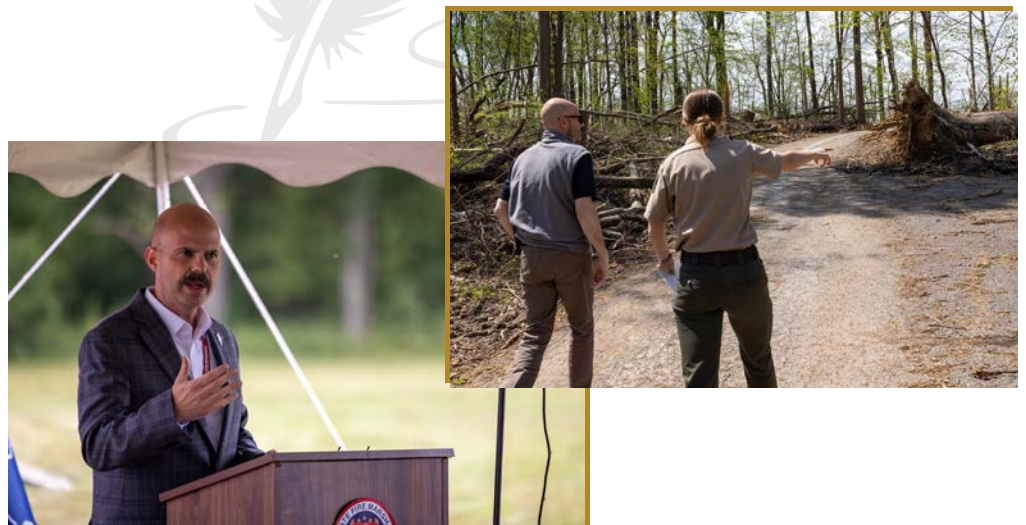
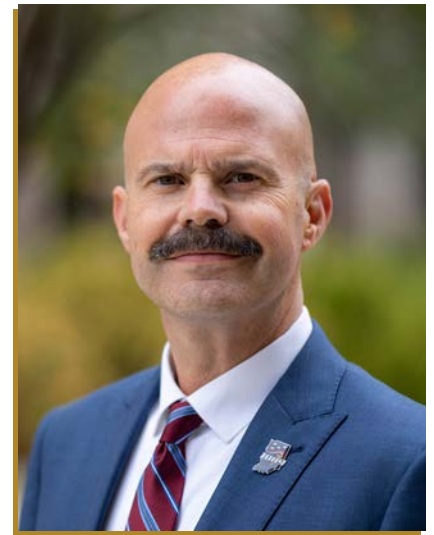
Governor Holcomb sees the great work and momentum achieved at IDHS and has selected Jonathan Whitham as Interim Executive Director. Jonathan has more than a decade of commitment to the agency and has been an integral part of the mission and success at every step of the way. He will continue to be an advocate for IDHS employees and the many Hoosiers impacted by our work.

As I transition from this role, I remain confident in the department’s future and the exceptional team that continues this vital work. Thank you for the opportunity to lead, and for your commitment to making Indiana a safer place for all.

Regards,



Joel Thacker  
Former Executive Director







Part 2 of two-part series

# HOMEGROWN FIRST RESPONDER RESEARCH

## COLLEGE PROGRAMS PRODUCE TECHNOLOGY, FINDINGS TO ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY

Two of Indiana’s largest universities boast programs dedicated to researching and developing solutions to challenges faced by first responders. The IU Crisis Technologies Innovation Lab in Bloomington focuses on creating technology products for first response, while the Purdue Homeland Security Institute in West Lafayette tackles gaps in training and performs testing on the concepts underlying security policies and methods. Together they bring Hoosiers to the cutting edge of the ever-changing world of public safety.

Find the first article, about the IU lab, in the [July issue](#).

### PURDUE HOMELAND SECURITY INSTITUTE

Eric Dietz is the director of the Purdue Homeland Security Institute (PHSI), which since 2003 has engaged in research problems through class assignments or grant-funded projects. The program’s founders felt academia needed to step up to address gaps in public safety and defense.

One such area has been active shooter scenario best practices. PHSI research on past incidents revealed, among other things, that quickly finding an exit to escape a shooter is of utmost importance.

“We tested the ‘run-hide-fight’ guidance and found it should probably be more like ‘run-run-run.’ Every second you run, the better the odds of survival — unless you picked a bad direction,” Dietz said.

To help with that, PHSI’s research has been used by like-minded entrepreneurs to market smart exit sign technology that uses electronic controls and sensors to detect gunshots and guide occupants to a safer exit. Purdue also applied for and received a patent on a special type of exit sign for use at amusement parks.





It may seem obvious, but PHSI found the more exits there are to leave a facility, the faster people can escape an incident. This simple insight can help outdoor venues, like fairgrounds, to consider using service entrances, typically closed to the public, as part of their emergency evacuation plans.

“Evacuating people slowly when people are bleeding out during an active shooter event is a problem. That was a major issue found during the Columbine shooting. So how do you get tourniquet kits in staff go-bags and train how to use them?” Dietz said.

The institute not only uses analysis of past incidents and computer simulations, but also it puts public policies to the test through exercises. For many years, PHSI hosted exercises focused on testing the system of distribution that would administer antibiotics during an anthrax epidemic. They discovered a high rate of misapplication due to an overly complicated algorithm and were able to provide recommendations to improve the rubric that trains nurses how to administer the drugs.



“The more exercises we do, following the HSEEP process, it has us better prepared,” Dietz said. “Like a football team, you play so many times, you make it look flawless. Find partnerships to do exercises more often so you can execute the playbook.”

Election security has been of particular importance in recent years, and as of July 1, Indiana law requires that all counties that use electronic voting equipment must have a system that includes a voter-verifiable paper audit trail. To help Tippecanoe County Board of Election and Registration staff with this type of equipment, PHSI proactively [created short training videos](#) and had them practice setting up the equipment before election time.

“The videos help staff familiarize themselves with the equipment and the systems so not only will they understand how they work but also so they can answer citizens’ questions intelligently and with confidence,” said Tippecanoe elections board staff member Mike Smith.

Videos like the election trainings represent a shift by PHSI away from long written reports and toward videos. Dietz believes brief videos have the power





task-dependent,” Dietz said. “If a picture is worth 1,000 words, video is worth much more, especially if it can replace 200 pages of reading.”

PHSI makes videos for clients, nonprofits and Purdue Extension’s [IN-PREPrepared program](#), which teaches emergency preparedness lessons to rural Hoosiers. PHSI training videos also have enhanced security training for sports organizations, such as the Indiana Pacers and Purdue Athletics, so their security personnel learn about public interactions and discourse.

to reach first responders and policymakers more effectively, especially when time is of the essence.

“We did the math on how many people would respond in the event of a nuclear attack on Chicago. It would be thousands of people. Who do you train, and how? Many of them would be volunteers, so we made more than 300 just-in-time videos that are

“What do staff do when they see a person who seems out of place? Learning how to approach them will provide better customer service but also security, and this is applicable for police, firefighters, EMS and the public,” Dietz said.

## ELECTION SAFETY TIPS

PHSI observed Tippecanoe County polling sites during a real-world election and provided recommendations to improve security, such as poll workers checking for proper identification of other poll workers, poll watchers and members of the news media.

“How do you know who shows up as a poll worker is not a fake or a bad actor?” said Tippecanoe elections board staff member Mike Smith. “You worry about spending money and the difficulty of implementing changes, but it costs nothing to change your mindset and open your awareness.”



Here are a few recommendations for election safety developed by PHSI and the Tippecanoe County Board of Elections and Registrations:

- **Verify instructions:** Election workers should verify any new instructions received by call or text, to ensure they come from a legitimate official source.
- **Create line of site at voting centers:** To prevent tampering, ensure all voting equipment is always easily observable by election staff.
- **Plan for worst-case scenarios:** Meet with local first responders to discuss what to do in active-shooter situations, for example. Provide staff with emergency “go kits.”

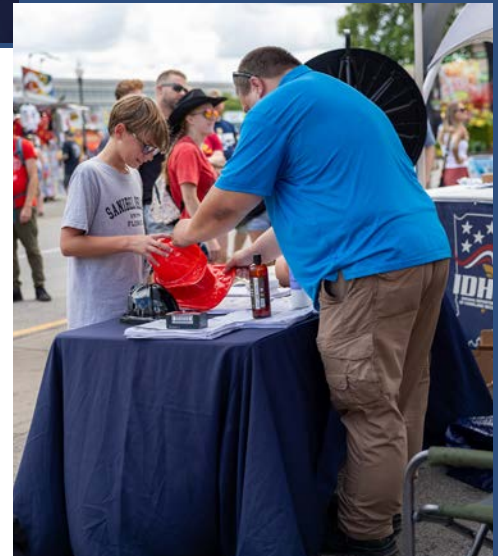


# IDHS AND THE INDIANA STATE FAIR

Thank you to everyone who joined IDHS during the Indiana State Fair. IDHS teammates enjoyed your participation, enthusiasm and curiosity. IDHS hopes you had a fantastic time, won prizes and gained valuable safety insights. IDHS will see you again next year!



INDIANA  
**STATE FAIR**





## FROM THE INDIANA FIRE AND PUBLIC SAFETY ACADEMY

### NEW AGE REQUIREMENT AND REVISIONS TO IAC TITLE 655 IN EFFECT

#### NEW AGE REQUIREMENT

On July 1, Indiana Code 22-14-2-13 slightly changed the age requirements for certification. This change allows for individuals who are 16 years of age to be able to start their fire service training. In the past, high school programs had to request a variance from the Academy to be enrolled in training.

**Note:** *In the Indiana Administrative Code, Title 655 IAC 2-2-1, no individual under age 18 may be certified to provide firefighting or related emergency services. Thus, high school programs will need to request a variance for certification, once their students have completed the program and passed the test if they are under the age of 18 at the time of completion.*

#### IAC TITLE 655 REVISION

Revisions to IAC Title 655 rules are now in effect. They direct how certification and a wide variety of firefighting activity work across Indiana. The [Indiana Register](#) will house the updated version soon.

In the meantime: [Review the revisions.](#)





# NEW METHOD TO REQUEST ACADEMY RESOURCES/EQUIPMENT

The Academy is implementing a new system for requesting training trailer props to improve efficiency and maintain the longevity of resources. Previously, local agencies could request assets on a first-come, first-served basis through Acadis. However, this often leads to trailers and props

moving across the state, which has accelerated wear and tear on the equipment. Requesting equipment in Acadis also proved challenging for some users.

To address this issue, the Academy is introducing a more structured and equitable process

for asset requests. Requests will be grouped regionally each quarter, allowing the Logistics Section to conduct preventive maintenance and reduce unnecessary resource strain. The Logistics Section will carefully evaluate all requests, considering regional demand within each quarter.

Departments wishing to request a training trailer prop will now do so through the Academy's website, following the schedule below:

## Request Schedule:

- Requests are due by Jan. 1, April 1, July 1 and Oct. 1.
- Requests can be submitted at any time, and departments are encouraged to plan well in advance, even for the following calendar year.
- The Academy will approve all requests 30 days before the start of the next quarter.

To submit a request, visit <https://www.in.gov/dhs/training/fire-training/equipment-requests/> and complete the request form. This form will guide you through the necessary information and ensure a smooth request process.

**SUBMIT AN EQUIPMENT REQUEST**





# INDIANA SECURED SCHOOL SAFETY BOARD APPROVES \$24 MILLION TO SUPPORT SCHOOL SAFETY INITIATIVES

In August, the Indiana Secured School Safety Board (the Board) approved the distribution of more than \$24 million to support school safety initiatives in all 92 counties.

The Board voted unanimously to split more than \$24 million across 499 schools/districts, which represent a record number of schools impacted through the Secured School Safety Grant (SSSG) Program in a single year. To date, \$187 million in state funding has been dedicated to the matching grant program since it was created in 2013.

“Since this program began, the focus has been on listening to the needs of school districts while partnering with them to invest in the safety of Hoosier schools,” said Gov. Eric J. Holcomb. “Indiana continues to be a leader in school safety resources made available. With the help of the General Assembly, Indiana continues to step up to support students and staff.”

The amount of funding dedicated to the program for 2025-2026 will be determined in the next

legislative session. However, the program has funded school safety initiatives at record levels for the four previous years. Last year, 474 schools split an allocation of \$29.8 million, which included deobligated funds from previous grant cycle years that was added to the \$25 million allocated to the program by the Indiana General Assembly.

This year, the total amount of eligible funding requests exceeded the amount of funding for the program. Priority was given to first-time applicant schools to

the SSSG Program, which were fully funded for their top priority requests. Charter school groups were capped at \$100,000 in funding for all schools in the group. Remaining schools that apply to the fund regularly were funded at 81% for their top priority items. Applicants to the program rank the priority of items to help the Board better understand the greatest need for school districts.

As in previous years, most school applicants prioritized the addition of school resource officers, which accounted for nearly \$17 million of

Category	Applications	Dollars Allocated
SRO/LEO	308	\$16,799,158.42
Equipment/Tech/Hardware	140	\$5,720,446.55
Student/Parent Support Services	26	\$882,050.11
Training	0	\$0
Firearms Training for Staff	7	\$47,019.80
Active Event Warning System	0	\$0
Site Vulnerability Assessment	2	\$6,050.00
Bullying Prevention	1	\$5,670.00
Design and Construction	22	\$746,193.07
Post-Incident Counseling Services	0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>\$24,206,587.95</b>



all requests. The seven requests for firearms training were granted as a priority, as mandated by recent legislation.

“We’re proud to see hundreds of schools apply to take advantage of this important program to improve school safety,” said Rusty Goodpaster, director of the SSSG Program. “Although the Board had to make some difficult funding decisions based on eligible funding, this year still represents a significant impact for schools across the state and prioritizes the protection of staff and students.”

The Secured School Fund is administered by the Indiana

Department of Homeland Security. A complete breakdown of recipient schools and the total amount of their awards can be found on the [data page of the IDHS website \(under the Grants header in “Selected Annual Data”\)](#).

For security reasons, the use of those funds by individual schools is not publicly available.

The SSSG issues matching grants for eligible items and then schools match those funds at a certain level, either 25 percent, 50 percent or 100 percent. The match requirement is based on average daily membership of the school district, the total amount of the project or what the request covers.

Eligible items in the grant include funding for school resource officers and law enforcement officers in schools; equipment and technology; active event warning systems (no matching requirement); firearms training for teachers and staff that choose to allow guns on school property; threat assessments and implementation of a student and parent support services program.

The [Indiana School Safety Hub](#) also provides schools with a wealth of resources, training opportunities and other information designed to give schools the tools they need to keep students and staff safe.

## NIPSCO PUBLIC SAFETY GRANT OPENS SOON

Northern Indiana utility company NIPSCO will be accepting applications for its Public Safety Education and Training Action Grant starting Oct. 14. The safety grant provides funding for community and youth public safety education programming, as well as first responder training.

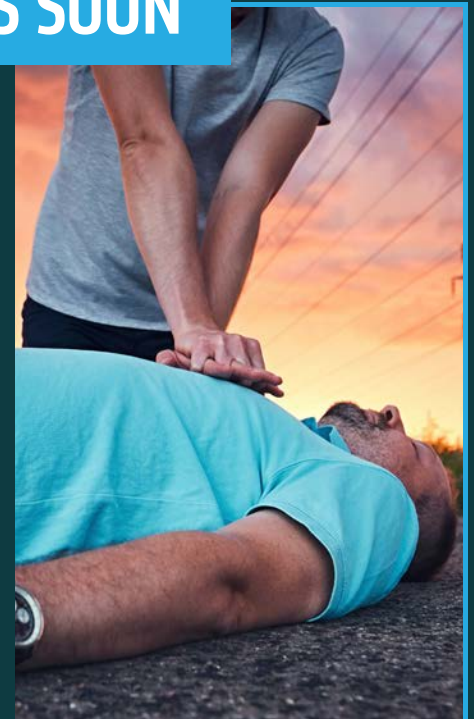
Grants are available between \$500 and \$5,000 for organizations to use for projects such as damage prevention to underground natural gas pipelines, fire or carbon monoxide safety and first responder training and programs.

Project funds must benefit NIPSCO’s **service area**, which covers about a third of the state’s counties.

Previous recipients included fire departments, emergency management agencies, nonprofit organizations and police departments.

NIPSCO awarded \$66,000 to 16 recipients in 2023.

Learn more about the grant and apply at <https://www.nipSCO.com/our-company/about-us/giving-back/safety-grant>.



# NIMS REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPG-FUNDED PERSONNEL

The Emergency Management and Preparedness Grant (EMPG) application period opens in October. EMAs who receive EMPG grant funding as part of their salary are required to complete three tasks to continue to qualify for funding.

**(1)** Complete either the Independent Study courses identified in the Professional Development Series or offered by the National Emergency Management Basic Academy. These can be delivered either through the Emergency Management Institute or at a sponsored state, local, tribal, territorial, regional or otherwise designated location.

A listing of those required courses that must be completed include:

- National Incident Management System: IS 100
- National Incident Management System: IS 200
- National Incident Management System: IS 700
- National Incident Management System: IS 800
- FEMA Professional Development Series: IS 120
- FEMA Professional Development Series: IS 230
- FEMA Professional Development Series: IS 235
- FEMA Professional Development Series: IS 240
- FEMA Professional Development Series: IS 241
- FEMA Professional Development Series: IS 242
- FEMA Professional Development Series: IS 244

Additional information on the National Emergency Management Basic Academy and the Emergency Management Professional Program can be found at <https://training.fema.gov/empp/>.

**(2)** Participate in one (1) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) compliant exercise annually.

**(3)** Certify the completion of the [2024 NIMS/CPG 101 Survey](#). **This is a new requirement for 2024.**

By utilizing this survey tool, IDHS will be able to document that local counties have met this requirement to ensure that Indiana is in compliance with this requirement. **Completion of this survey must be done by Nov. 15, 2024.**

**All three tasks must be completed before EMA expenditures will be reimbursed.**

For more information or assistance, submit your questions to the [Grant Management support ticket](#). The IDHS Grants Section will be available to answer questions at the Emergency Management Alliance of Indiana conference in October.



## LISTEN TO THE IDHS PODCAST

Learn about the high-stakes world of pediatric emergency care with IDHS EMS Training and Education Coordinator Kari Lanham. In this episode, IDHS sheds light on the efforts to ensure children receive the best possible emergency care in Indiana.

Listen online at [on.in.gov/hoosier-homeland](https://on.in.gov/hoosier-homeland) or subscribe to the podcast using one of the podcast services below:







# WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS

An IDHS Video Series on First Responder Mental Health

“When the Smoke Clears” is a four-part video series produced by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), discussing the mental health challenges faced by first responders. It provides valuable insights into identifying signs of depression, PTSD and substance abuse within the firefighting community. The videos, led by a panel of experts, promote open conversations about mental health and offer guidance on when to step in and seek professional help.

Departments, leadership and first responders play crucial roles in fostering a supportive environment and prioritizing mental wellness. All public safety personnel are encouraged to watch and share the “When the Smoke Clears” series. With September being Suicide Prevention Month, it is an ideal time to focus on the well-being of those who serve on the front lines. The complete series is available on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and the [IDHS Behavioral Health webpage](#).





# SURVEY SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON HOOSIER EMS

## NEW REPORT TO PROPEL LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSIONS

A 2024 survey that outlines how emergency medical services (EMS) are provided at the county level will be a road map toward strengthening EMS service for Hoosiers and ensuring the service is sustainable for the future.

Earlier this year, county commissioners in 89 of Indiana’s 92 counties worked with county staff and EMS providers to provide rich data about EMS in the county. This included staffing levels, vehicle counts, pay streams and transport capabilities. The survey and [report](#) of its findings were required from Public Law 67, signed into law this year.

“This really is an opportunity for us to learn where we are at for EMS in Indiana,” said Kraig Kinney, director of Indiana EMS for IDHS. “The survey and report were a chance to have good coordination of county government, EMS

resources, dispatchers and other collaborators looking at how we can fill the gaps and strengthen these services.”

Some of the gaps identified were easy to see. Others take a little more explanation and context. For example, of the 89 counties that reported, 34.1 percent of EMS providers existed as part of a volunteer fire department, which typically faces challenges of decreased staffing, slim budgets and capacity issues.

Providers reported the average response time for an EMS run to be 10-20 minutes, yet the rural nature of some Indiana counties led to nearly 7 percent of the runs coming in 31-40 minutes. Another 5 percent could not identify an average response time.

On the topic of workforce, 34.8 percent of respondents cited wages as a top issue. Additionally, 94 percent identified a problem with EMS personnel leaving the



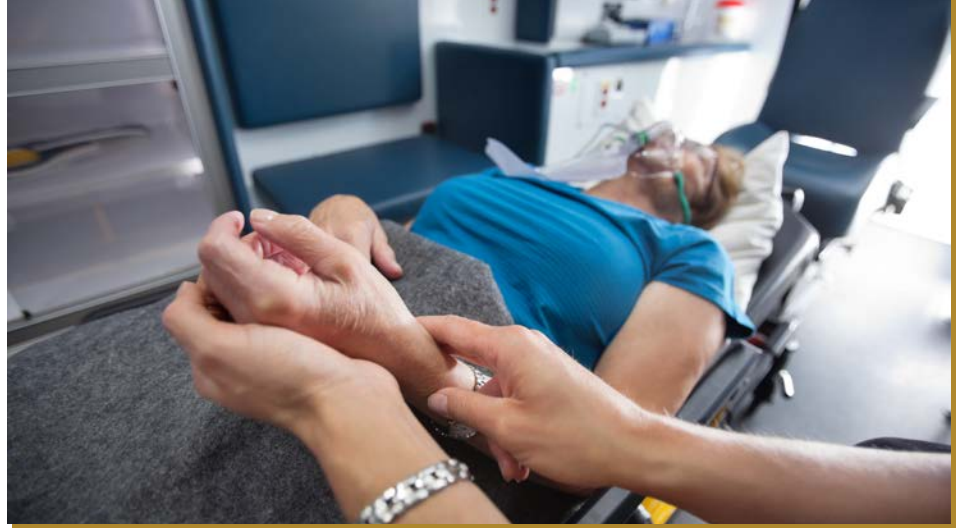


industry for other opportunities in the medical industry such as clinics and hospitals.

“While we have a familiarity with the various EMS systems across the state, having this comprehensive view of the service delivery landscape is extremely valuable,” said Dr. Eric Yazel, chief medical officer for Indiana EMS. “This report will allow us to develop evidence-based initiatives, bolster advocacy efforts and impact countless other areas of prehospital care for Hoosiers.”

The bill to require the survey and report was authored by Rep. Tim O’Brien (R-Evansville).

“EMS providers play a critical role, and it’s our job to do all that we can to ensure they have the resources they need to save lives,” O’Brien said. “We need to do a deep dive into EMS workforce issues to understand why there’s a growing shortage. (This law) does that. Once we have more data, we can identify solutions that ensure these men and women have the resources and support they need to serve Hoosiers.”



One known gap for Indiana is the high number of ambulances being taken out of service to transfer a patient to another hospital for more acute care. Doing so leaves some counties with no ambulance on the street and reliant on mutual aid agreements for a nearby county to respond. In August, Indiana EMS/IDHS entered into an agreement with Heartland Ambulance Service, LLC, to provide nothing but ambulance transfers for strategically identified locations across Indiana. This benefits small EMS operations by freeing up personnel and ambulances from lengthy transports. It will allow for better response times and better emergency treatment and care.

This six-month pilot program will identify the benefits and challenges of taking these important patient transfers out of the EMS acute care scenario.

The survey results were formulated into a report that has been submitted to the Indiana General Assembly. The hope is this report will lead to a summer study committee of legislators, who will gain valuable insight into how critical EMS services are to their districts as well as the instability facing the industry on several fronts.

The [finalized report](#) is housed on the IDHS site and available to the EMS industry, Indiana EMS Commission and others.

## BLEEDING CONTROL KIT DONATIONS

In 2023, the Indiana General Assembly created a Stop the Bleed Donation pool ([Indiana Code 10-19-2.2](#)) to be held by IDHS.

A bleeding control kit is a package of first aid supplies to stop life-threatening blood loss before professional medical care arrives. **Stop the Bleed** is a national campaign to train the general public how to stop or slow bleeding during emergencies. It also seeks to increase the availability of bleeding control kits.

The public may now make donations to the bleeding control reserve on the [Donations webpage](#). Donors may give funds for the purchase of kits or physical kits themselves.

# HOOSIERS ADJUSTING TO CHANGING WEATHER PATTERNS

Frequency of Severe Weather Incidents Concerning as Indiana Sees Uptick in Tornadoes



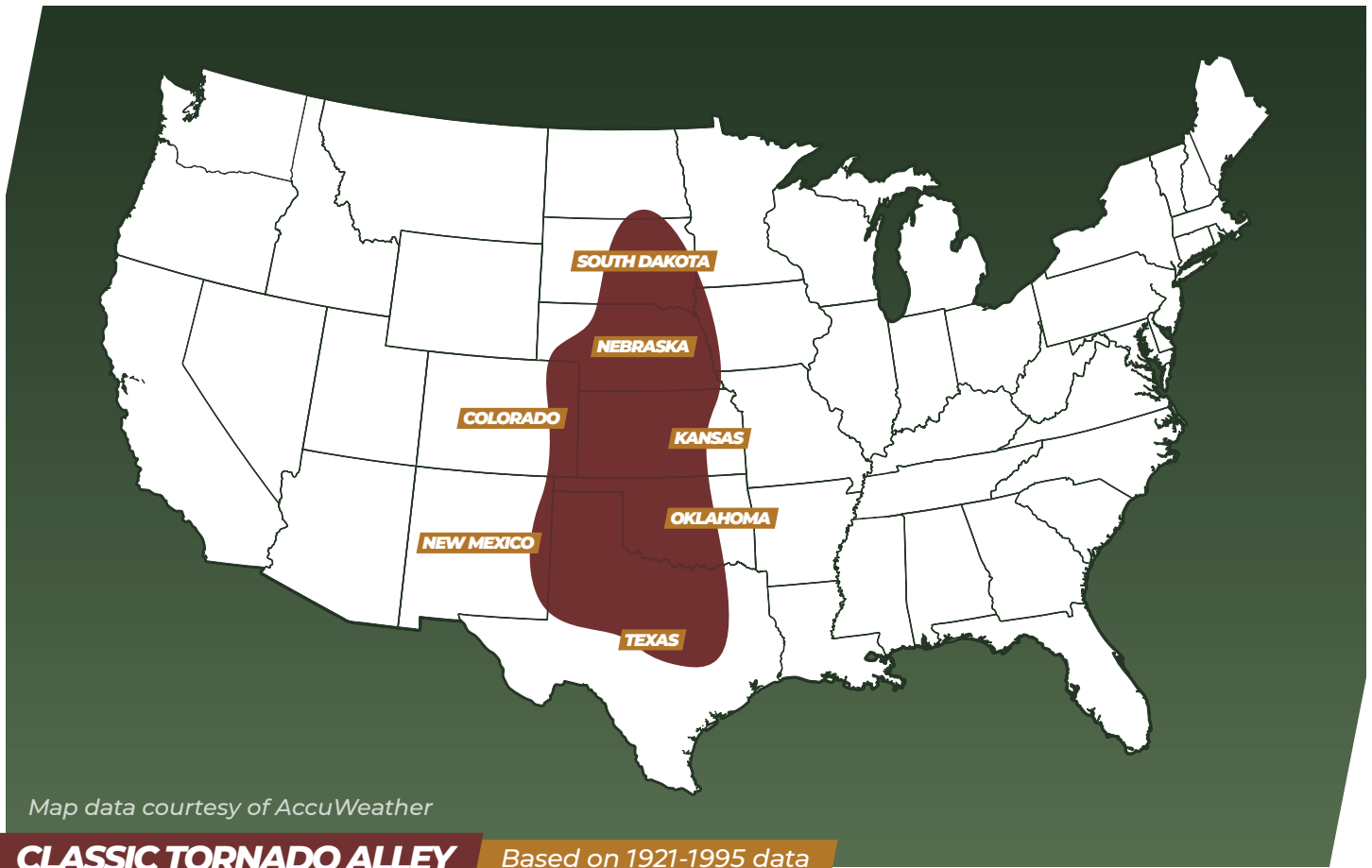
**AS** severe storms approach Indiana, Hoosiers rely on the National Weather Service (NWS) and their local meteorologists to give them the heads-up about what is coming their way. Those meteorologists and the NWS rely on weather patterns, supercomputers, historical data and more.

Predicting tornadoes is still a relatively new science. In 1948, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association called tornadoes “not forecastable” in response to a tornado that damaged a military airbase. But in March of 1948, two members of the Air Force created the first tornado forecast. That forecast started the momentum to create the U.S. Weather Bureau, which would later become known as the National Weather Service.

The term Tornado Alley was coined four years later in 1952. The term has been a bit controversial as scientists debate which states should be included in Tornado Alley. Initially, the meteorologists who created the term were only studying weather in Texas and Oklahoma. Then the term expanded to include parts of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota, where it was believed tornadoes are the most frequent.

Now, data is beginning to show more tornadoes are occurring in southeastern states and the Midwest. Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Iowa, Illinois and even Indiana are entering the discussion.





“The touchdown locations indicate that they are not always in traditional Tornado Alley or Dixie Alley, the two regions with higher historical records of tornadoes,” stated a [2021 geographical analysis of large tornado outbreaks](#) led by Naresh Devineni, an associate professor at City University of New York, and Niloufar Nouri, a Ph.D. student and adjunct lecturer at City University of New York. “Multiple studies have also shown evidence of an eastward shift of tornado activity. Our study complements these efforts by analyzing the clusters of large tornado outbreak days between two 31-year periods.”



That study analyzed large tornado outbreak days from 1950 to 2019, which it defines as a storm system that impacted several counties with tornadoes rated EF2 or greater in one day. The study broke the time frame into two periods, 1950-1980 and 1989-2019, to determine the trend of where Tornado Alley is located.

As of August 2024, the states with the most confirmed tornadoes are Texas, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois and Missouri, according to NWS. It is a mix of both the traditional understanding of Tornado Alley and the changing opinions.

“We have increased our efforts to better inform and prepare all Illinoisians to plan for more severe weather,” said Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. “Last year, Illinois led the nation with 133 tornadoes. But this year (as of August 2024), Illinois



develops more of its rural area and we turn that into living space and commercial space, that puts more of our infrastructure and our citizenry at risk.”

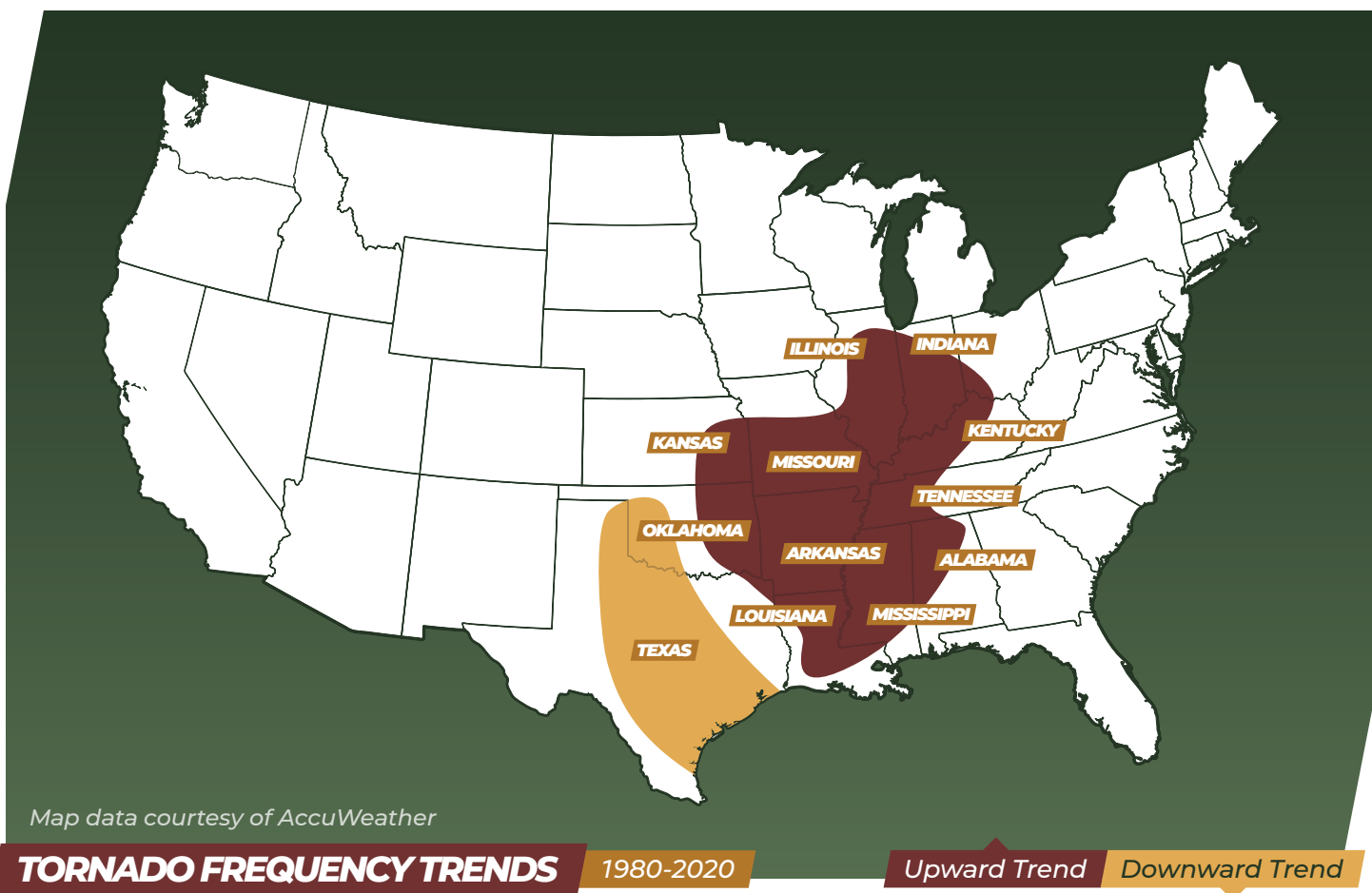
NWS meteorologist Sam Lashley said Indiana averages about 25 tornadoes a year, but in the past two years, there has been a definite increase. Indiana has already experienced 50 unconfirmed tornadoes in 2024 ranging from EF0 to EF3. Fifty-four (54) confirmed tornadoes were reported in 2023, according to the NWS Storm Prediction Center.

has already seen 124 tornadoes. So, we are poised for another banner year with severe weather.”

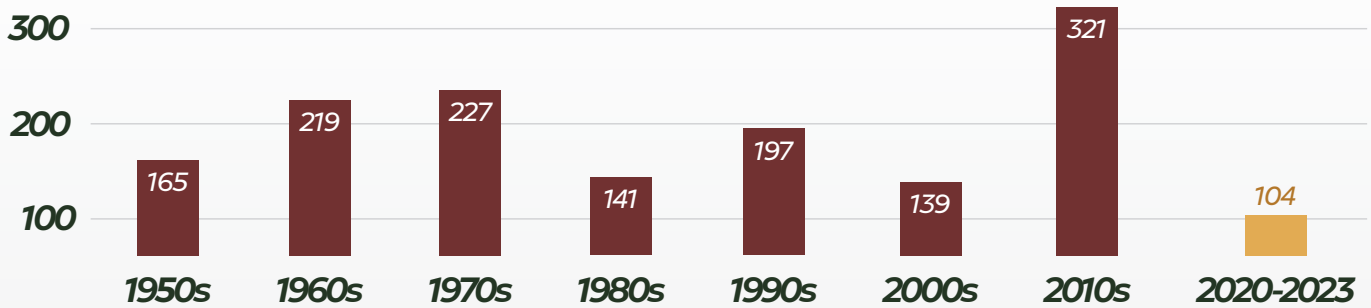
“This summer it feels like we’re having a storm every six days that is spawning a tornadic event,” said IDHS Director of Emergency Management and Preparedness Mary Moran. She and her team have been extremely busy working with local officials this summer responding to severe storm events in Indiana. “It is impacting us. What is happening is as Indiana

Lashley says it is hard to predict if this difference in confirmed tornadoes will continue because numbers have gone up and down. Numbers were down from 2020 to 2022:

- 2020 – 16 tornadoes
- 2021 – 19 tornadoes
- 2022 – 15 tornadoes







## TORNADOES IN INDIANA *By decade*

But In 2011, there were 72 confirmed tornadoes in Indiana. IDHS created a [Tornado History Dashboard](#) showing the paths of confirmed tornadoes dating back to 1950.

What the Hoosier State has seen, Lashley said, is a steady increase in the number of derechos in Indiana. Derechos are widespread, long-lived windstorms that are associated with a band of rapidly moving showers or thunderstorms. “High winds and heavy rain,” described Lashley, adding that derechos can be just as damaging as tornadoes and occur more often than tornadoes.

“Tornadoes get the publicity. When people hear the term tornadoes, they think of these big, large tornadoes, which they should. But in Indiana, 85 to 86 percent of tornadoes are actually the weaker EF0 and EF1s. Those are short-lived and cover very small areas,” explained Lashley. “These derechos can stretch from lower Michigan to Kentucky, even Tennessee, and you’re getting widespread 60 to 70 mile per hour winds.

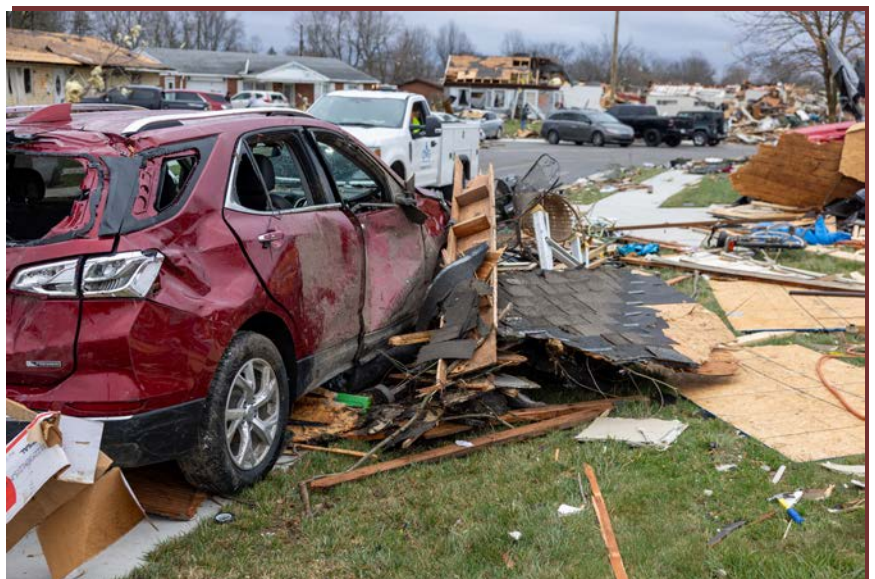
“They will impact a lot more people, but they’re categorized as severe thunderstorms, which a lot of people tend to ignore, unfortunately.”

Couple the derechos with periods of droughts and it creates a bad impact on

flood-prone and non-flood-prone areas. Heavy rain on dry land means the land will not be able to absorb it as quickly, causing more runoff and flooding. That pattern is likely to continue.

“When the rain does occur, it’s occurring more frequently all at once, followed by long stretches of no precipitation. So, we’ve got these two extremes fighting each other and future projections down the road, like 50 years, show more rainfall but at the same time more days of dry weather,” said Lashley.

Climate change does play a factor in the power behind severe thunderstorms, according to Lashley: “With climate change brings warmer climate and more moisture. Those are the two main ingredients that



fuel stronger severe thunderstorms. If you look at the long-term patterns, we would think we would be seeing an increase.”

The challenge with these weather patterns is in the response and recovery from these storms. Federal assistance is hard to obtain because agencies like FEMA have a monetary and economic threshold that needs to be met.

“The challenge that we’ve seen these last couple of years is that we’re having all these isolated tornado events and none of them get us to the threshold for disaster recovery,” said Moran. “Now we’re in this situation where we have all of these small disaster events that are a disaster for the community and the state, but there is not really any dedicated funding to recover.

“Luckily, we do not have catastrophic events where we compete with states like Florida and Texas. But then on the downside, we don’t get catastrophic events and so we’re kind of left hanging out on our own. So local resiliency and individual resiliency are going to start to play a bigger part as things change.”

The need [to prepare](#) ahead of time does not fall solely on the backs of local and state government officials. Hoosiers also play a role. Insurance is a crucial tool for



homeowners and renters. Insurance will help victims recover faster than if they go through the process for state and federal help.

“Hoosiers are woefully uninsured and underinsured. Because people 10 years ago got a mortgage and ensured their house for, say, \$200,000. Well, now, because of the cost of building materials, the replacement value has skyrocketed. What we’re finding as we go into these communities is that even people with insurance don’t have enough insurance to recover,” said Moran. “What I’m worried about for citizens is that these events are going to keep happening more and more frequently and be more and more intense, and a huge chunk of us Hoosiers don’t have the ability to take care of ourselves in that situation.”

## FLOOD INSURANCE

It is important to remind Hoosiers that general homeowners insurance normally does not include coverage for flooding events. Most Hoosiers need to purchase a separate policy to cover flood damage.

Moran says that the importance of flood insurance has been a hard message to get homeowners to understand.

“The traditional places where people have flood insurance,

already have it because they know that it floods over and over again. But with these flash flooding events, I’d say probably 80% of the time they don’t happen in a flood plain. So, you’re going to have all of these people who don’t even think about needing flood insurance,” explained Moran.

Learn more about flood insurance options in Indiana on the [IDHS Flood Insurance webpage](#).





TORNADOES  
FLOODING  
EARTHQUAKES  
HOUSE FIRES  
**DISASTERS**  
FOLLOW  
NO SCHEDULE





## FRIGHTENING SAFETY CODES

# HAUNTED HOUSE SAFETY IS NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

On a bright, hot day in August, IDHS code official Joshua Phillips felt a chill run up his spine as he entered an abandoned factory in Wabash. He was there to conduct an inspection of a haunted house appropriately titled, [The Nightmare Factory](#). Despite the lights remaining on and the animatronics being turned off, walking through the haunted house still had an air of spookiness.

“I’m not a big fan of things jumping out at me,” admitted Phillips. “But as Halloween gets closer, I may consider having them turn on the animatronics.”

The silent corridors were in stark contrast to what thrill-seekers will experience each weekend in September and October, the peak of haunted house season.

Frights were not the goal of Phillips’ visit this summer day; he met with local building officials and the fire department to go through the brand-new haunt to make sure anything scary was manufactured and not real. Phillips inspects haunted houses to ensure proper safety protocols are met. He looks for exits out of the maze every 50 feet, that all surfaces are covered with fire-retardant spray and more.

This is the first year for The Nightmare Factory, and its management team has been working closely with IDHS to make sure it is safe to open for all visitors. While entertainment is the haunted house’s goal, safety is what IDHS is after. IDHS inspects more than 100 haunted houses each year to ensure they stick to state fire and building codes.

“It’s a haunted house, but I don’t want anyone to get hurt. We want them to come, have a good time and have memories, not injuries,” said co-owner Ashlee Ryman, who owns the haunted house with three others.





Meeting [Section 320 of the Indiana Fire Code](#) and [Section 411 of the Indiana Building Code](#) is required by Indiana law for any haunted house that is open to the public. It is hard work for the owners to meet these standards. Fire and building codes can be confusing for anyone trying to open a business to the public. In a profession where the goal is to give visitors goosebumps, meeting regulations can be a challenge.



“When you’re a normal person that’s not familiar with that stuff, it’s hard to read that. There’s a lot there,” said Ryman.

That is why Phillips has been working with this team along the way. Multiple emails, phone calls and meetings were held to ensure the haunted house had the correct sprinkler, fire alarm and voice alert systems.

“That’s one thing a lot of owners don’t understand: the voice alert system,” explained Phillips. “An actual voice that comes across telling people to get out of the building. Just a buzzer and flashing lights going off will not alert anyone in a haunted house.”

“There is a lot more to it than people realize,” Ryman said about getting life-safety systems set in place.

The idea to own a haunted house started with Ryman and her friends after one of them created a haunted house in their garage for family members and it grew in

popularity. This passion project became a reality when they found an abandoned factory.

The creepy ambiance was there, but due to the size of the building, getting it ready to host thousands of guests on weekends took three years and a million-dollar investment from the co-owners. They were determined to do it the right way, so that is why they started conversations early with IDHS, to learn what they needed to do.

“Ashlee’s been helpful to my aspect because she’s never had any problem reaching out and asking me safety questions,” said Phillips. “I’m not a code consultant, but if you have a question, I will help steer you in the right direction.”



“He’s amazing,” said Ryman. “I have his phone number. Any questions I have, I can send him a text. He’ll answer it promptly before I do something. That’s huge!”

Phillips gave all three attractions at The Nightmare Factory the IDHS seal of approval, allowing them to open on time for spooky season.

Already, The Nightmare Factory team has its eyes on the future. It is purchasing new equipment to create more attractions for next year and also will change this year’s attractions to keep the experience fresh.

“Usually, haunted houses will change 25 percent of their layout every year. So, basically, in five years, you have a brand-new haunt so people don’t get bored,” explained Phillips.

When that does happen, an IDHS code official will be there to keep safety top of mind.

# HAUNTED HOUSE PERMIT REMINDER



Haunted house operators must get an **Amusement and Entertainment permit** from IDHS and allow IDHS Code Enforcement to inspect the premises. IDHS field inspectors are looking for:

- Exit signs installed at all required exit/exit-access doorways.
- Obvious/marked exits located every 50 feet.
- No dead-end corridors.
- Fire extinguishers every 75 feet or less.
- Fire sprinkler systems are required unless the floor area of the haunted house is less than 1,000 square feet and travel distance from any point of exit is less than 50 feet.
- No open flames, temporary heaters or smoking are allowed.
- Automatic smoke detectors are required and must be interconnected.
- Maze areas must be at least 3 feet wide and 5 feet high, and one 4x2x2 section is allowed every 50 feet.
- All materials used must be flame-resistant, or flame-retardant, and proof must be shown to code officials.
- Groups no larger than 20 people are allowed at a time and must be supervised by a staff member 18 or older with a flashlight.

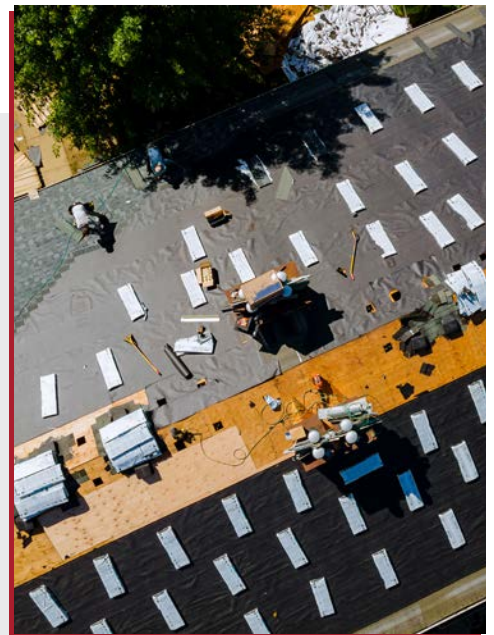


## TIPS FOR HIRING A CONTRACTOR

As an Indiana homeowner, you may have been affected by multiple major storms this year. During times like these, you can find yourself in the vulnerable state of needing to find a way to fix your home and steer your life back toward a sense of normalcy.

Contractors can be a good option, but make sure you follow this checklist before handing over any money. These tips can save you from a world of headaches in the end.

- Get 2-3 estimates
- Verify the contractor's license and insurance
- Check at least 3 local references
- Require a written contract
- Down payments should be minimal
- Do not make the final payment until the job is complete
- Keep all paperwork related to your job

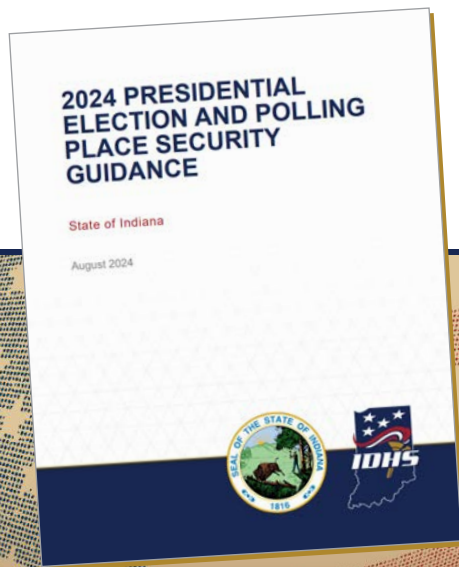




# ELECTION AND POLLING PLACE SECURITY GUIDANCE

The 2024 Presidential Election is less than two months away. County officials already are putting plans into place to ensure each polling site is safe and secure for voters and polling staff.

IDHS has released the [2024 Presidential Election and Polling Place Security Guidance](#) to aid county officials as they prepare for the November election.



This document provides information on election preparedness and emergency response activities, should a natural, man-made or technological incident occur during election processes. The document was developed in conjunction with guidance from the Indiana Secretary of State, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

This guidance should be used as a support document for existing county Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) and Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans (CEMP).



## #PROTECT2024

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) launched [#Protect2024](#) to help election officials and election infrastructure stakeholders protect against cyber, physical and operational security risks during the 2024 election cycle.

The website houses information like simple steps election officials

can still take in 2024 to enhance their organization's security baseline. It breaks down steps to protect emails, websites, election systems, the office and staff.



CISA also developed a comprehensive [Physical Security Checklist for Polling Locations](#).

This checklist serves as a vital tool for election workers, offering a series of questions to assess existing security measures and identify areas for improvement.

Visit the [#Protect2024](#) website for more information.



# NERIS SYSTEM TO PROVIDE GENERATIONAL CHANGE TO FIRE DATA SYSTEMS

## REPLACING A 1970s SYSTEM WITH LATEST FIRE DATA ANALYSIS TECHNOLOGY

A major change is coming to how fire and EMS data is kept and used to keep communities safe.

For decades, the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NIFRS) has served as the national repository for emergency run data, and many state and local dispatch systems have tailor-made systems to tap into NIFRS to produce reports and dashboards. Beginning this year and continuing through 2025, the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) will launch and replace the antiquated NIFRS system that has served public safety personnel since the mid-1970s.

That means nearly 27,000 fire departments across the country must be onboarded to the new system.

“IDHS and the Indiana State Fire Marshal’s Office are committed to helping fire and dispatch centers stay informed and updated on this major rollout,” Indiana State Fire Marshal Steve Jones said. “In the end, our state will be safer and better prepared for emergencies with the new NERIS

system, and the upgrade will be a welcomed addition to the emergency services provided across the state.”

NERIS will support state, local, territorial and tribal fire services by offering data and information that will be critical in effective and safe emergency response. While this type of fundamental change in data collection will be significant, the greater good from this change will be more informed emergency personnel and an enhancement to the overall safety of the community. The rich data and information will be essential in emergency response as well as long-term community risk reduction for all Hoosiers.

“The existing system, NIFRS, does not fulfill modern data analysis and decision-support requirements of fire and emergency responders, and it is technologically antiquated,” said Rebecca Harned, a spokesperson for U.S. Fire Administration (USFA). The USFA, part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is leading the NERIS rollout.



“NERIS will be the leading resource for comprehensive information and advanced analysis on fire-related issues in the United States,” Harned added. While it will be a challenge to engage such a large stakeholder group in this national rollout, USFA intends to “foster a major shift in how fire service leaders and firefighters apply data analysis to inform critical decision-making day-to-day.”

Additionally, NERIS was built with a focus on compatibility to integrate easily with CAD systems, GIS programs and other dashboard-specific programs that fire and EMS departments rely heavily on to operate. The new NERIS platform is built for the long term and will evolve and transform over time to meet the growing needs of emergency personnel. In short, this implementation of NERIS is long overdue for the fire and EMS personnel who need it the most.



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

- [Basic NERIS information](#)
- [Beta testing process for NERIS rollout](#)
- [Subscribe to the USFA newsletter](#)
- [Follow USFA on social media](#)
- [Look for NERIS webinars](#)
- [Email the NERIS information desk](#)
- [Subscribe for updates from IDHS and the Indiana State Fire Marshal](#)
- [Embracing Change: The Transition to NERIS for Incident Reporting](#)



## NEW LAW TO STOP SURPRISE AMBULANCE BILLS

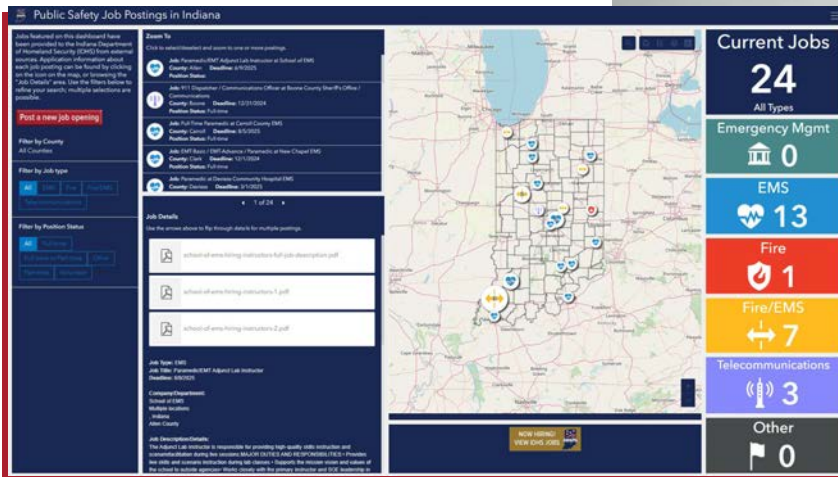
In August, Gov. Eric J. Holcomb ceremonially signed into law new legislation that protects Hoosiers from surprise ambulance bills following out-of-network ambulance transportation.

House Enrolled Act 1385 now prohibits an out-of-network ambulance provider from billing an insured individual for any amount that is additional to what the individual pays the health insurance company. The health insurance company must charge the covered individual the same amount that it would have if it had been an in-network ride.

The new law also allows for out-of-network ambulance providers to receive payments from health insurance companies at locally set rates or at a capped rate based on Medicare benchmarks.

Additionally, health insurance companies must now make payment to ambulance service providers within 30 days of a claim. Previously, there was no established time frame for when a payment had to be made to an ambulance provider.

Go to [iga.in.gov](http://iga.in.gov) to read the full details of House Enrolled Act 1385.



## A USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCE

# THE IDHS PUBLIC SAFETY JOB POSTINGS DASHBOARD

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security provides an online [public safety job postings dashboard](#) as a resource for those looking to enter the public safety workforce in Indiana. This dashboard includes job postings from external sources around the state. Jobs types posted include openings in emergency management, EMS, fire and telecommunications.



More than two thirds of fatal fires occur in homes with no working smoke alarms. Let's change that and **GET ALARMED.**

**GetAlarmed.in.gov**



## OFFICERS PERFORM LIFESAVING CPR ON INFANT AT MOORESVILLE KROGER



On Aug. 1, 2024, Mooresville Police Officers Ryan Russell and Eric Leap were dispatched to a report of an unconscious infant at a Kroger in Mooresville.

Officer Russell arrived first and found a 1-year-old child unconscious and not breathing. He immediately began performing CPR. Officer Leap arrived a few minutes later and took over CPR until the ambulance arrived. He continued providing lifesaving care while the child was loaded into the ambulance.

The officers coordinated with Indianapolis Metro Police to escort the ambulance to Riley Hospital, where the child received further treatment and was stabilized. Their quick actions helped save the child's life.



Ofc. Ryan Russell



Ofc. Eric Leap

## CASS COUNTY EMA DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR RESCUE VICTIM FROM BURNING VEHICLE

Cass County EMA Director Rocky Buffum and Deputy Director Michelle Roland were leaving a lunch meeting when they were alerted to a nearby single-vehicle accident.

Buffum and Roland arrived on the scene to find a vehicle on fire with a person trapped inside. Acting quickly, they used a fire extinguisher to suppress the flames and pulled the victim from the burning car. They provided first aid for burn injuries and other trauma until additional public safety personnel arrived.



# NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH



PREPARING FOR THE UNEXPECTED

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

[National Preparedness Month](#) serves as a critical reminder for individuals, families and communities to take proactive steps in preparing for emergencies. Disasters — natural or man-made — can strike at any time. Being prepared can make all the difference in ensuring safety and reducing the impact of such events.

This year's theme for National Preparedness Month is "Back to Basics." This theme emphasizes the importance of returning to foundational preparedness principles that can be easily overlooked as people go about their busy lives. Here is a brief overview of how to stay ready for any situation.



## BUILD AN EMERGENCY KIT

One of the most crucial steps in preparedness is assembling an emergency kit. Your kit should include enough supplies to last you and your family at least 72 hours.

Essential items include:

- Non-perishable food
- Water (one gallon per person per day)
- Medications
- A first aid kit
- Flashlights
- Batteries
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio

Remember to add essential documents such as identification, insurance policies and necessary medical records, and keep those documents in a waterproof container.

It is important to consider the specific needs of all family members, including pets. For older adults, additional considerations like extra medical supplies, mobility aids and copies of prescriptions should be included.



## CREATE AN EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

In the chaos of an emergency, having a plan for how your family will communicate is essential. Start by designating a contact person outside your immediate area. This person can act as a relay point for family members to check in and share information. Keep in mind, phone calls may be hard if cell towers are overwhelmed, but text messages may still go through.

## ESTABLISH A MEETING PLACE

Ensure all family members know where to go if you need to evacuate your home. Establish a meeting place outside your neighborhood and another outside your city. Make sure everyone knows the routes to these locations.

## KNOW BASIC FIRST AID

Knowing basic first aid can save lives in an emergency. Take a first aid course to learn how to treat injuries, perform CPR and use an automated external defibrillator (AED).

## PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS EFFORTS

Individual preparedness is essential, but community preparedness can amplify those efforts. Get involved with local organizations like the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or volunteer with organizations like the American Red Cross. These groups provide training and support to help communities prepare for and respond to disasters more effectively.

National Preparedness Month is more than just an awareness campaign — it is a call to action. Visit the [National Preparedness Month webpage](#) and follow IDHS on [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly known as Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) to learn more preparedness tips and view basic first aid videos.



# FEMA

## FEMA RELEASES ITS 2023 RESILIENCE ANNUAL REPORT

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released its [2023 Resilience Annual Report](#) report, highlighting the agency's substantial progress in supporting communities before, during and after disasters. The report details efforts aligned with FEMA's strategic goals: instilling equity in emergency management, leading climate resilience initiatives and ensuring national preparedness.

In 2023, FEMA restructured its Resilience Division to streamline operations, make critical investments through resilience grants and enhance support for underserved communities. The report underscores FEMA's commitment to reducing barriers, increasing accessibility to resources and fostering collaboration with state, local, tribal and territorial partners, particularly those in underserved areas.

Key takeaways from the report include FEMA's advancements in climate resilience, such as the establishment of Community Disaster Resilience Zones and the implementation of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Direct Technical Assistance initiative. These initiatives focus on identifying and supporting vulnerable communities most at risk from natural disasters. FEMA's emphasis on equity also led to significant legislative reforms and increased funding to underserved areas, promoting inclusive access to hazard mitigation and preparedness programs.

# INDIANA FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL CEREMONY



Twelve lives were honored in the 2024 Indiana Fallen Firefighters Remembrance Ceremony on Sept. 5, 2024. The Professional Firefighters Union of Indiana holds this ceremony each year to remember the lives of the fallen.

The 12 people honored this year were firefighters who died in the line of duty. Their names were added to a monument outside the Statehouse.





# NAMES OF THE FALLEN HEROES HONORED THIS YEAR

**DAVID F. PHELPS**

Prairietown Fire Department  
2023

**BERNARD J. NOLL**

Southwest Allen County Fire Protection District  
2022

**TRUMAN RHODES**

Knightstown Fire Department  
1899

**DONALD NEISWINGER**

Owen Valley Fire Territory  
2022

**CHARLES G. SCUDDER**

Knightstown Fire Department  
1899

**MARK SUTTON**

Orland Fire and Rescue  
2022

**KYLE T. OSGOOD**

Farmland Volunteer Fire Department  
2023

**THOMAS M. BRANSON**

Indianapolis Fire Department  
2021

**BRUCE A. NETHERCUTT**

Goshen Fire Department  
2023

**MICHAEL KREPS, JR.**

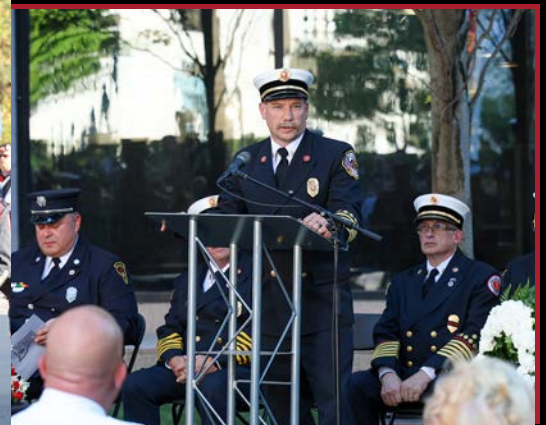
Dunkirk Fire Department  
2021

**JACK K. RONCO**

La Crosse Volunteer Fire Department  
2022

**CLARENCE ROELL**

Batesville Fire Department  
1960





Illinois State Fire Marshal James Rivera and Indiana State Fire Marshal Steve Jones with local firefighters at the event.

## CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY SPOTLIGHT AT ISU EVENT

On Sept. 12, 2024, students and faculty at Indiana State University in Terre Haute witnessed a powerful lesson in fire safety during a side-by-side burn demonstration. Hosted in collaboration with the Illinois State Fire Marshal's office and the Terre Haute Fire Department, the event highlighted the critical importance of fire sprinkler systems in preventing devastating fires in student housing and campus buildings.

The demonstration featured two mock rooms set ablaze simultaneously — one equipped with a fire sprinkler system and the other without. As flames quickly engulfed the room without sprinklers, the crowd

saw firsthand the difference a sprinkler system can make. Within seconds, the sprinkler in the second room activated, extinguishing the fire before it could spread.

“There is no better way to witness the ravages of fire and the lifesaving benefits of sprinkler systems than through live demonstrations like this,” said Indiana State Fire Marshal Steve Jones. “Education is key, and we aim to show the public that fire sprinklers are essential to keeping our students safe.”

With September designated as [Campus Fire Safety Month by Governor Eric Holcomb](#), events like this are sobering reminders

of the need for vigilance.

“We’ve lost too many lives from preventable fires in college dorms and off-campus housing,” said Jones. “Codes and standards exist





because of those tragic events, and our goal is to ensure that students and universities follow best practices.”

One of the primary messages of the event was the necessity of maintaining working fire safety systems, especially in residence halls and apartments.

“Check to make sure all sleeping rooms and common areas have functioning smoke alarms,” said James Rivera, the Illinois State Fire Marshal. “For optimal protection, all smoke alarms in the home should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.”

In addition to the technical aspects of fire safety systems, personal accountability was emphasized.

“For many students, this could be their first exposure to a fire safety lesson since they were in elementary school,” Rivera added. “Since this is the first-time many students have lived away from home, it’s more important than ever for students to understand how to create a fire safety escape plan and practice that plan.”

As the side-by-side burn demo concluded, the message was clear: Fire safety systems like sprinklers and alarms are vital to protecting lives. Students, faculty and staff need to be aware of fire hazards and take action to minimize risks. With the proper precautions, tragedies can be avoided.



## OUT IN THE FIELD

# DAMAGE ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Emergency response personnel in districts 8, 9 and 10 completed a three-year integrated preparedness cycle with damage assessment full-scale exercises this summer.

IDHS hosted Operation Tornado Tango in Bloomington, Madison and Evansville to give county emergency management agencies and other local partners the opportunity to practice managing response and recovery activities following devastating tornadoes.

Exercise players managed a mock emergency operations center and mobilized damage assessment teams to go into the local community to evaluate damage from the storms.

“Damage assessments are an integral part of the recovery process and help affected communities apply for financial assistance from the state and federal governments,” said State Exercise Officer Ashley Baldwin.

Altogether, the Tornado Tango exercises mark the end of the three-year training series for the southern districts. Next year the districts will begin a series of trainings focused on dealing with a major communications failure.



# MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE MARSHAL

As I travel throughout the state, it has become clear to me how effective community engagement requires buy-in from every level of a local fire department. From firefighters to company officers, and fire chiefs to EMS workers, each role plays a crucial part in fostering strong community relationships and promoting fire safety. It is the human interaction that is most effective in making our communities safer.

**Firefighters** often are the first point of contact with the community. Their day-to-day interactions, whether during emergency responses or community events, set the tone for public perception. By positively engaging with citizens, firefighters can build trust and rapport, making community members more receptive to fire safety messages.

**Company officers** play a pivotal role by leading by example and setting the standard for community engagement. They can organize and lead community outreach programs, such as station tours or school visits, ensuring that these initiatives align with the department's overall engagement strategy. These station tours are not the time for company officers to leave it up to the new probationary firefighters. They need to be engaged and display themselves as leaders in every way.

**Fire chiefs** set the vision and are instrumental in prioritizing community engagement at an organizational level. By allocating resources, setting department-wide goals for community interaction and fostering a culture that values public education and outreach, chiefs can ensure that engagement remains a core focus of the department's mission.

**EMS personnel** have unique opportunities to extend our reach into the community during medical calls. They can provide valuable fire safety information and identify potential risks in homes, extending our fire prevention efforts beyond traditional boundaries.

When all levels of the fire department work together on community engagement, the impact is significant. A multi-faceted approach ensures our fire safety messages reach a broader audience and is reinforced through various channels. For instance, a coordinated effort might involve:

- Firefighters conducting home safety checks
- Company officers organizing community fire safety workshops
- EMS workers providing fire safety literature during medical calls
- Fire chiefs partnering with local organizations to expand outreach efforts

While paperwork and administrative duties are necessary, they should not overshadow the importance of human interaction with our communities. By involving all levels of the department in engagement efforts, we can distribute the workload and ensure that community interaction remains a priority. It requires a concerted effort from firefighters, company officers, fire chiefs and EMS workers alike. Together, we can create a more resilient, informed and safety-conscious community.



Stephen Jones  
Indiana State Fire Marshal



# UPCOMING TRAININGS

## OCTOBER

<b>OCT 1-3</b>	Science of Disaster	<b>LaPORTE</b>
<b>OCT 2-3</b>	Medical Countermeasures: Point of Dispensing	<b>FORT WAYNE</b>
<b>OCT 9</b>	Testing an Emergency Operations Plan in a Rural EOC	<b>PLAINFIELD</b>
<b>OCT 14-15</b>	Hazardous Weather and Flooding Preparedness	<b>INDIANAPOLIS</b>
<b>OCT 24</b>	Senior Officials Workshop for All Hazards Preparedness	<b>ASHLEY</b>
<b>OCT 24-25</b>	Team Approach to Foodborne Outbreak Response	<b>PLAINFIELD</b>

## NOVEMBER

<b>NOV 3</b>	Light and Fight	<b>RENSSELAER</b>
<b>NOV 4-7</b>	Cybersecurity First Responder	<b>MERRILLVILLE</b>
<b>NOV 13-14</b>	Advanced ICS Command & General Staff (ICS 400)	<b>SOUTH BEND</b>
<b>NOV 19-22</b>	CTOS Preventative Radiological/Nuclear Detection WMD Training	<b>CROWN POINT</b>

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH OCTOBER

This month-long observance emphasizes the need for robust cybersecurity practices to protect Indiana's residents and businesses from growing threats like data breaches and online fraud.



## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK OCTOBER 6-12

Fire Prevention Week raises awareness about fire safety, highlighting the importance of smoke alarms and escape plans, which are crucial for reducing fire-related injuries and fatalities in Indiana homes.

## MOBILE INTEGRATED HEALTH (MIH) WEEK OCTOBER 6-12

MIH Week promotes innovative health care delivery models in Indiana, such as community paramedicine, which improves access to care and reduces hospital admissions, particularly in rural areas.



## Get Ready to ShakeOut.



## INTERNATIONAL SHAKEOUT DAY OCTOBER 17

On International ShakeOut Day, Hoosiers participate in earthquake drills, which are critical for preparedness in Indiana. Hoosiers are vulnerable to seismic activity from the New Madrid and Wabash Valley seismic zones.





## NATIONAL FIRST RESPONDERS DAY

OCTOBER 28

National First Responders Day honors Indiana's first responders by recognizing their bravery and dedication to safeguarding communities across the state, especially during emergencies and disasters.



## HALLOWEEN

OCTOBER 31

## CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE MONTH

NOVEMBER

This month raises awareness about protecting Indiana's critical infrastructure, including power grids and water systems, essential for the state's safety, economy and daily life.



## WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS WEEK

NOVEMBER 10-16

Winter Weather Preparedness Week prepares Indiana residents for severe winter conditions, emphasizing the importance of readiness to prevent accidents and disruptions during the colder months.

## VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 11



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



Indiana Department of Homeland Security  
302 West Washington Street • Indiana Government Center South • Room E208  
Indianapolis, IN 46204 • 317.232.2222 • 800.669.7362



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