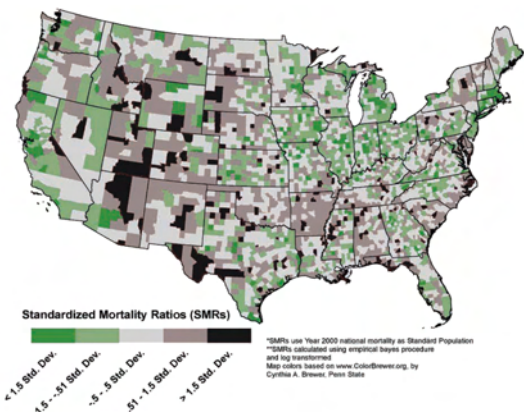




## Severe Weather Causes Most Hazard Deaths

Chronic, everyday hazards account for the majority of natural hazard fatalities in the United States, and people in the Northern Great Plains and the South have the highest rates of natural hazard mortality, according to University of South Carolina researchers.

In a paper in the *International Journal of Health Geographics*, geographers Dr. Susan Cutter and Kevin Borden tracked the mortality frequency of various types of hazards in the United States, and mapped the frequency by county.



Darkest areas indicate highest mortality. Full-color, high-resolution image available through the University of South Carolina. Or via: [www.ij-healthgeographics.com/content/7/1/64](http://www.ij-healthgeographics.com/content/7/1/64)

Heat and drought cause the highest percentage of hazard-related deaths in the United States, accounting for 19.6 percent of total fatalities.

For more information and detail, please see the article on page 4.

## Fire Departments Rely Increasingly on Volunteers

With state, county, and municipal budgets shrinking due to the present economic downturn, budgets for first responders are often being downsized. While departments suffering from these cuts almost always see diminished resources for equipment or training, the fiscal consequences are also having an effect on staffing levels in many areas of the United States.

Layoffs, as well as overall department downsizing, have been most pronounced among fire departments. The loss of highly-trained fire personnel also translates into fewer HAZMAT responders, as most local resources for the mitigation of HAZMAT emergencies are centered around fire departments. Emergency managers and elected officials in the affected jurisdictions are trying to mitigate the public safety risks inherently posed by reducing staffing levels among first responders.

These cutbacks are forcing an increased reliance on volunteer firefighters and mutual-aid agreements which often were reserved for serious emergencies. The budget cuts are likely to continue as counties and municipalities see further declines in tax revenue, so additional downsizing is also likely to follow.

For more information and detail, please see the article on page 5.

## Recent Disasters

DERA members and affiliates have recently tracked or assisted response efforts resulting from the following disasters or emergencies.

- North Dakota flooding - Severe weather in North Dakota set off a massive effort to prepare several towns and cities for imminent flooding.
- "Swine Flu" epidemic - Propagation of the H1N1 Virus strained the mitigation capacity of many countries, developing and developed.
- Italy earthquakes - An earthquake measuring approximately 6.3 struck L'Aquila, Italy killing approximately 300 and rendering 70,000 homeless.
- Indian Ocean cyclones - Cyclone Aila made landfall in late May. Between damage in India and Bangladesh, at least 330 people were killed and nearly one million rendered homeless.
- Eastern U.S. Flooding - Severe storms, flooding, mudslides in West Virginia.
- Atlantic Ocean crash - Air France Flight 447 crashed into the Atlantic on June 1<sup>st</sup> resulting in 228 fatalities.

For more information and detail, please see the article on page 7.

Disasters.org is the quarterly newsletter of DERA International. News items and articles are always welcome.  
ISSN 1521-1592 Editor: Kevin J.D. Wilson  
Membership in this Nonprofit Association is open to all who share our commitment to effective disaster preparedness and response.  
See Back Page for Membership Application  
The Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association, International  
P.O. Box 797, Longmont, CO 80502 (USA)  
E-Mail: [DERA@disasters.org](mailto:DERA@disasters.org) News Items: [editor@disasters.org](mailto:editor@disasters.org) <http://www.disasters.org>

## **DERA International**

P.O. Box 797  
Longmont, CO 80502

DERA is a Nonprofit, U.S. IRS 501(c)(3) Disaster Service and Professional Association Established in 1962  
Incorporated in the State of Wisconsin.  
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**ARRL**  
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[www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)

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Colorado Nonprofit Association  
[www.ColoradoNonprofits.org](http://www.ColoradoNonprofits.org)

**EM Forum (formerly EIIP)**  
[www.emforum.org](http://www.emforum.org)

**EMLRC**  
Emergency Medicine Learning Resource  
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[www.emlrc.org](http://www.emlrc.org)

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Foundation for Amateur International Radio  
Service  
[www.fairs.org](http://www.fairs.org)

**Florida VOAD**  
Florida Voluntary Organizations Active in  
Disaster  
[www.fivoad.org](http://www.fivoad.org)

**NIAR**  
National Institute of Amateur Radio (India)  
[www.niar.org](http://www.niar.org)



## **New Member Roster**

**Gerard McConaha**  
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**Seopaul Singh**  
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**Ed Tangredi**  
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**Keith Carson**  
Lake Worth, Florida

**Rita Shaver**  
Rockville Centre, New York

Welcome to DERA!  
*Our mission is to help you  
achieve your professional  
and personal goals!*

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## **Send Us Your News and Photos**

What have you done recently? Your news and insight strengthens our network! Send photos and news to [editor@disasters.org](mailto:editor@disasters.org)

## **Letter from the Chair**



As I sit down to write, we have just entered the 2009 hurricane season in North and Central America.

Hurricanes get a lot of attention because they can be forecast and tracked. A forecast is exactly that - a prediction prior to an event, subject to change. For people that don't live in a hurricane area, it may be difficult to understand the extreme power of the winds and the rains. Equally as disturbing is a prediction that your area will be hit and then the storm takes a different track. Many people think that all the preparation before a storm that changes direction is just wasted effort. Similarly, because they "rode through" a storm or multiple storms and the outcome wasn't "as bad as they had expected," often people will become complacent and not take precautions when the next storm is predicted.

For folks in areas where blizzards or heavy snow storms occur, precautions need to be taken as well. The fact that the last storm wasn't as bad as it could have been doesn't indicate that the next one will be less severe.

I live in a county where tornadoes occur frequently. It is one of the top tornado counties in the United States. Most occur on the eastern plains and, while they damage crops, the loss of life is typically minimal. In the past 18 months we have been under many tornado advisories. My family has been fortunate that the damage has not been in our neighborhood.

I have family in western Arkansas whose town has been hit by tornadoes before. Recently the siren went off. There was little warning before the twister came through town. While their home escaped undamaged, the house 80 feet away was destroyed. More than 600 homes, businesses and municipal buildings had major damage.

Floods are prevalent, too. Most of the time we are fortunate that forecasting can let us know when and where the water will crest and allow for appropriate actions. Sometimes it may be a very heavy rain

that causes localized flooding. Perhaps a storm drainage system is simply overwhelmed.

These are just some of the natural hazards we all need to be prepared for, but there are also many man-made hazards and issues beyond our personal control. All of us need to be prepared to take care of ourselves, our families and possibly our neighbors for an extended period of time before help arrives.

DERA is dedicated to Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response. Each of us needs to be prepared, respond to our family needs and work to assure that others are taken care of during times of crisis.

I encourage you to take personal responsibility for your day-to-day preparedness. The impact from most disasters catches people by surprise. If you are not a member of DERA, I encourage you to join. We always welcome new ideas and assistance from others worldwide.

Sincerely,

Howard Pierpont  
DERA Board Chair

## Earthquake Simulations

### "Indoor Earthquake" Simulator Provides Engineering Data

Researchers from North America and Japan have recently completed a large-scale architectural test by using giant "shake tables" to simulate a series of earthquakes. The program, sponsored by universities and the National Science Foundation (NSF) Network for Earthquake Engineering Simulation, ran its latest major test on July 14<sup>th</sup> using earthquake simulation hardware built at Japan's Hyogo Earthquake Engineering Research Center in Miki. This test was conducted to gather data about the survival rates of current-generation, mid-rise buildings built primarily of wood.


Though many wooden structures are not built into the mid-rise height, testing wooden structures of this variety is nonetheless important given the prevalence of wooden buildings in both Japan and the Western United States, according to statements by Japan's National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention (NIED) and the NSF. The structure which was

used for testing was a full-scale, seven-story wooden building similar in appearance to many metropolitan office buildings or apartment complexes. The first story served as a concrete and steel reinforced "retail" entry floor, while the upper floors were almost entirely wooden in their construction. Though the basic architecture is similar to conventional buildings, the test structure had a small amount of additional bracing in addition to sway and shock dampers to reduce damage dealt to the structure by prolonged shaking.

The building successfully withstood four consecutive earthquakes; two 100-year events and two 500-year events

Following the first four tests, the structure was subjected to a reproduction of the 1994 Northridge event magnified to 1.5 times the original strength. An earthquake of this magnitude is classified as a 2,500-year event. After each test, the building was inspected for signs of damage. Following the fifth test, the structure was found to have suffered only minor damage, none of it structural, and was deemed safe for occupancy. The engineering data from the tests are still being analyzed, but the NSF and other partners are anticipated to release information pertaining to the retrofitting of existing wooden structures to make them better-suited for earthquake resistance.

Further Information Available from NSF or online:  
[www.news.colostate.edu/Release/4299](http://www.news.colostate.edu/Release/4299)



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## Attention All Members: 2009 Dues are now due

Please check your membership expiration date shown on the mailing label of this newsletter. If you haven't yet paid your 2009 dues, please save DERA the cost of mailing a reminder by making your payment now. You have two convenient methods:

### Express Renewal by Mail

Just send us your address label with a check for your dues. Dues rates are shown on the last page of this newsletter. Show any changes needed to your mailing address, or update your email or phone if these have recently changed.

Mail to:

DERA Membership  
P.O. Box 797  
Longmont, CO 80502

### Online Renewal

[www.disasters.org/renew.htm](http://www.disasters.org/renew.htm)

## National Weather Service Reporting Changes

The National Weather Service has changed the criteria for hail and wind reports. Weather spotters and SKYWARN teams should now report hail only if it is one inch or larger, rather than the previous "pea-size" estimate, and winds should be reported beginning at 58 miles per hour.

The goal, according to the National Weather Service, is to allow more precise reporting of conditions related to severe thunderstorms, while reducing the number of public alerts issued for minor storms and less damaging hail.

Source: NWS Indianapolis Regional Office. Dan McCarthy, Meteorologist-in-Charge. Further information regarding the change can be found at:  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/sym/pd01005011c022006curr.pdf>



**WORLD HABITAT DAY - call for nominations  
for Scroll of Honour Award 2009**

Every year on the first Monday of October, the United Nations calls upon the world to reflect on urbanization and human settlements priorities.

This year World Habitat Day will be celebrated on 5 October 2009 under the theme of **Planning Our Urban Future**. The Global celebrations in 2009 will be hosted in Washington, D.C.

At the celebrations, the annual **Habitat Scroll of Honor** will be awarded for outstanding contributions in shelter provision and sustainable urban development.

UN-HABITAT is calling for nominations for this most prestigious award. Deadline for submissions is 15 August 2009. Nominate an individual, non-governmental organization, a government, city or other outstanding initiatives that have contributed to making cities more sustainable.

For more information, contact  
whd@unhabitat.org

or visit the UN-HABITAT website at  
**www.unhabitat.org/whd**

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## **Tracking Project BioShield**

On July 24<sup>th</sup> 2009, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on the status of Project Bioshield. The project, established by a 2004 bill of the same name, aims to create a strategic vaccine reserve, while enhancing existing medical procedures for dealing with CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear) events. Though the program is geared towards mitigating damage from deliberate incidents of terrorism, the GAO's report outlines how departments have used BioShield's legal and physical resources to combat non-malicious public health emergencies.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) together with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have worked to determine what CBRN agents pose the greatest likely threat. These departments have then assessed which medical countermeasures (MCMs) are most effective and included them in their

procurement cycles. To combat the list of possible biological threats, the departments have moved to procure large quantities of antiviral drugs, broad-spectrum antibiotics, as well as diagnostic hardware.

During the early stages of the H1N1 influenza outbreak earlier this year, the Food and Drug Administration and HHS used BioShield resources in the form of emergency use authorizations, thereby allowing for emerging tests, and authorizing the use of antiviral drugs such as Relenza and Tamaflu on children younger than the approved age.

The entire GAO report, along with threat identification, and the entire list of emergency use authorizations by the FDA and HHS, is available online at <http://www.GAO.gov>

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## **Job Announcements**

### **Analyst**

The Human Rights and Business Project of the Danish Institute for Human Rights is seeking an analyst to join our team in Copenhagen. The position involves providing support to advisors in consultancy projects, strategic research and methodology and tool development.

Candidates should have a relevant academic background and one to three years working experience related to human rights and business issues.

Applications in English should include a cover letter, CV and short writing sample. Please email by August 17, 2009 to:

personale@dcism.dk

For further information, please visit:

[www.humanrightsbusiness.org](http://www.humanrightsbusiness.org)

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### **Environmental Specialists**

Are you looking for challenging work? Do you want to contribute to Latin America and the Caribbean?

You can make a difference at the Inter-American Development Bank. We are searching for outstanding individuals to fill these positions at our Washington, DC headquarters.

We need Environmental Specialists to assist in providing direction and leadership in mainstreaming strategic environmental priorities in the IDB's development portfolio, supporting the enhancement of sustainability value and outcomes of operations, and providing advice and expertise to identify and manage environmental and social risks.

Requirements of these positions include at least 6 to 8 years of experience in the field of environmental policy and programs with an advanced degree in the natural sciences, environmental management or a related field.

For full job descriptions, responsibilities and requirements, please go to:

[www.iadb.org/careers](http://www.iadb.org/careers)

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**Canada Excellence Research Chair in Green  
Mechatronic Automobiles**

The University of Waterloo is seeking a world-leading researcher to fill the most prestigious automotive research chair in Canada. The chairholder will be awarded \$10 million in government funding over seven years, which will be matched by the university and other sources.

As chair, you will be at the forefront of Canada's efforts to be a global leader within the emerging automotive high-tech industry. You will lead the synthesis of various research programs at the university, in such fields as sensors, software, machine intelligence, collaborative driving and platooning, active safety systems, and green powertrains.

We are looking for someone with a reputation for distinguished research and experience in managing large research projects. Please email curriculum vitae and a statement of your proposed research program to Dr. George Dixon at: [dgdixon@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:dgdixon@uwaterloo.ca) by August 17, 2009. Full details at: <http://www.research.uwaterloo.ca/institutional/funding/cerc.html>.

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### **Hazard Deaths, from Page 1**

Following heat and drought, deaths are most frequently caused by severe summer storms (18.8 percent) and winter weather (18.1 percent). Earthquakes, wildfires, and hurricanes are responsible for fewer than five percent of hazard deaths. The study looked at data for the years from 1970 to 2004, so did not include fatalities from hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Ika.

Dr. Cutter says that her analysis confirms that everyday hazards such as severe weather and heat in fact account for the greatest percentage of fatalities. "Part of that is, I think, due to improvements in mitigation for seismic events. We don't really have that many people who die in earthquakes. That's related to improved building codes and so forth."

"The important message..." Cutter says is that "we don't really know how many people die from natural hazard-related causes because the government doesn't keep good statistics."

"How can you as a local emergency manager figure out" how to best go about protecting lives when "lives are being lost in your community and you don't know how or why? That's a pretty important piece of information."

Cutter says, "If you're an emergency manager and most of the deaths in your area are related to heat, that's a very different strategy for mitigating that threat than if you thought most of the deaths were going to be attributed to flooding or hurricanes."

Cutter says that since the "death map" was published, she's received a number of calls from emergency managers who want the data for their communities. "We're in the process of downscaling it to the state level," she says, "and will probably do a web application so people can come in and look at their state" to see what in specific is contributing to the mortality rate.

The problem is partly defining how to count natural hazard deaths. If a person has a heart attack shoveling snow after a blizzard, it's probably a hazards-related death. But not everyone in the medical community would report it that way.

Source: *Natural Hazards Observer*.

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## Special Thanks

The DERA Board of Trustees extends special thanks to two members for their exceptional contributions to our organization.

**Howard Pierpont** obtained a \$1,500 contribution to DERA from the Intel Corporation, which gives matching funds to nonprofit organizations for whom Intel employees and retirees volunteer. Howard, and Intel retiree, contacted Intel and arranged for them to add DERA to their list of approved nonprofits, then provided documentation which allowed Intel to match Howard's time and money contributions to DERA. DERA received

the first \$1,500 check from Intel in March. Howard recently pointed out that many other companies have similar programs to support the nonprofits where their employees and retirees volunteer, and he suggested that all members inquire whether their employers might be willing to donate to DERA.

**Claude Baker** has made many significant contributions to DERA in recent years including the recent donation of a professional Epson negative, film, transparency and print scanner to assist in our documentation and educational outreach program. Claude has regularly provided DERA with equipment and funds for our disaster response mission and his liaison work with tropical storm forecast centers has been a critical component in shaping our readiness posture. For many years, Claude has provided HF radio coverage for DERA teams in the field and has been a ready resource for interagency contact information, weather warnings and personal networking.

Please join me in thanking Howard and Claude for their continuing support and all their special contributions to DERA.

Jay Wilson  
Trustee

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### *Fire Departments, from Page 1*

One common concern in areas suffering cutbacks is a potential loss of specialists. Volunteers and volunteer professionals make up around three quarters of the firefighting force of the United States, and these firefighters have a high level of fire response training, similar to their paid counterparts. The past few decades have seen a fair amount of standardization in the base level of firefighter training. Additional training however, such as HAZMAT technician training, is frequently consolidated among paid responders due to cost and length of training.

Disparities between the training level of paid and volunteer forces becomes an issue when trained responders are forced to relocate to find work, leaving their old department without their expertise. From layoffs and "shift-brownouts" to mandatory furloughs, departments are having to make difficult decisions. Where it is possible for cities to do so, increasing

local reliance on volunteers seems to be a common solution.

All-volunteer forces may be fairing slightly better, but they are still feeling the pinch as reimbursement budgets sink and new recruits are often difficult to come by. Resources available for replacing equipment, apparatus-maintenance and special training are also dwindling in some areas.

Economists and lawmakers in California have warned that the ongoing budget crisis in that state could spill over into responder layoffs or fire station closings. Sacramento is planning to reduce its force by at least fifty unless the state provides financial assistance. Colorado's annual budget furloughed a large number of state workers, but narrowly avoided reducing staffing among state troopers and other responders. Many municipalities in the state of Ohio have moved to lay off or furlough workers according to the Associated Press and local news outlets. Cincinnati is furloughing all of its first responders for at least two days per month, while in Columbus several hundred firefighters stand to be laid off contingent to funding at the ballot. In Maine, Portland's fire department has been losing positions for nearly two years, but the rate of loss has been accelerating. Tulsa, Oklahoma's fire department has recently accepted eight unpaid days per year as an alternative to extensive layoffs.

DERA wants to hear from you. What cutbacks (if any) have you seen among first responders in your country, state, county, or city?

We welcome comments and insight from all members and their professional contacts. What do you expect to result from these trends? Further, how should emergency response plans be updated to reflect these changes?

Send observations and comments to [editor@disasters.org](mailto:editor@disasters.org).

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## NC Emergency Communication Exercises

By Catherine Lawhun

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, North Carolina ARES members participated in a large-scale emergency management drill that simulated the effects of a substantial

earthquake. The exercise involved serious damage affecting structures, specifically communications facilities that are not "earthquake resistant" with a special emphasis on cellphone towers and other vulnerable communications hardware.

This exercise was timed to overlap with a state-wide communications-interoperability drill that tested existing backup hardware and procedures. The focus of the exercise was communications interoperability and the scenario depicted a massive degree of communications infrastructure failure from the initial damage as well as subsequent overload. Amateur radio operators played a key role in the simulation. The success of the drill could not have been possible without the volunteers manning both the state and the Cleveland County EOCs. Congratulations to the Shelby Amateur Radio Club and ARES of Cleveland County.

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## GAO Bomb Tests

An ongoing investigation by the Government Accountability Office has revealed serious weaknesses in the security measures in place at numerous federal buildings. The investigation saw undercover GAO agents smuggle components for bombs past Federal Protection Service guards, then assemble explosive devices in public restrooms and proceed to move the explosive device from place to place inside the secure building. The GAO's sting was designed to test the preparedness of existing security measures being taken to safeguard employees and officials who spend time in secure federal buildings.

The explosives which were smuggled in during the course of these tests were components of liquid bombs, each "assembled" in about five minutes inside the buildings in question. Mark Goldstein, who designed the investigation and reported the findings to Congress says that each device cost approximately \$150 to make, and could be assembled entirely from chemicals available on the Internet or from stores.

In his Congressional report, Goldstein observed that "in a number of the locations, three or four of them, guards were not even looking at the screens that would show materials passing through. If a guard had been looking, they would have seen materials not normally brought into a federal building." These are the risks when security policy is "budget-driven, not risk-driven," noting the comparative lack of

funding which also translates into occasional manpower shortages.

The buildings targeted by the GAO agents all belonged to the very high security classification, essentially one tier removed from vital national security buildings such as the White House. The DHS Headquarters building in D.C.'s Nebraska Avenue Complex is one such very high security building.

At a Senate hearing in early July, Gary Schenkel, the director of the Federal Protection Service took responsibility for the failures, and worked to outline both problems and potential ways forward. DHS meanwhile has issued statements regarding the GAO's bomb investigation, enumerating recommended fixes to the Federal Protection Services' policies regarding attack preparedness.

*Further information is available at*  
<http://www.GAO.gov> and  
<http://www.DHS.gov>

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## CSB Investigation of ConAgra Explosion

In early June, the U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) dispatched an investigative team to the site of a major explosion and fire at a processing plant in Garner, North Carolina. The CSB released a statement on June 18<sup>th</sup> explaining the probable cause of the explosion and the resulting fire and collapse which left three dead and dozens injured. According to the CSB, the explosion was precipitated by a natural gas leak and buildup. The leak likely started in the plant's pump room during the installation of a new gas pipe feeding an upgraded water heater. "To supply gas to the water heater, a new gas line several inches in diameter was installed between a gas main on the roof and the pump room. This installation was completed during the week before the accident."

"On the morning of the accident, one of the contract firms was working with ConAgra personnel to put the new gas line and heater into service. As part of that activity, the line was

purged to remove air. The CSB is examining the possibility that gases inside the line were likely purged and vented directly into the pump room, in the interior of the building, leading to a flammable gas cloud and an explosion. Examination of the physical evidence may aid in this determination."

CSB Chairman John Bresland explained that the mission of the CSB "is to prevent accidents like this from happening, and we do that by thoroughly determining the causes, issuing detailed public reports, and seeking changes to regulations, industry standards, and practices across the country." Safety recommendations and a full report will follow upon completion of the investigation.

*Further information is available at*  
<http://www.chemsafety.gov>

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## Volunteers Wanted

***Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering for one of the following positions...or if there is a special project you would like to undertake with DERA sponsorship:***

**Board of Directors.** Two Board positions become vacant on the first of July. If you would like to serve in one of these key decision-making positions, please submit a letter of interest and a resume with references. The nominating committee will contact you to set up a telephone interview.

**State Liaison Officers and Assistants.** These are the "front line" jobs in DERA. State Liaison Officers represent DERA to state and local officials, establish good working relationships with agency staffs, VOADs and other NGOs, and provide media relations in time of emergency. Our aim is to have a primary and two assistant liaison officers in each U.S. state and territory, with comparable positions for our international membership. Please submit a letter of interest and a resume with references. The Liaison Coordinating Committee will contact you to set up a telephone interview.

**Regional Planning and Response Coordinators.** These positions coordinate the activities of State Liaison Officers with territorial responsibilities generally following FEMA Regional boundaries. Please submit a letter of interest and a resume with references. The Liaison Coordinating Committee will

contact you to set up a telephone interview.

☐ **Newsletter Editor and Assistant.** Our Newsletter Editor, Catherine Lawhun, has taken on responsibilities as Director of Operations for DERA emergency response missions. Kevin J.D. Wilson is editing the newsletter while the search for an editor is conducted. Lawhun and Wilson will work with the new editor for an orderly transition over the course of a few newsletter editions. Please send a letter of interest and resume.

☐ **Webmaster Assistant.** Design and management of [www.disasters.org](http://www.disasters.org)

☐ **Peer Review for DERA Monograph Publications**

☐ **Speaker's Bureau Coordinator and Assistant**

☐ **Assistant for Financial Development and Grants**

☐ **National Contingency Plans Chief and Assistant**

☐ **International Program Assistant**

☐ **Online EOC Coordinator and Watch Officers.** DERA maintains an online EOC at [www.dera.us/eoc](http://www.dera.us/eoc). The site needs an overall coordinator and several individuals to watch world and national events and post updates. Everything can be done from a web browser at home or even a WiFi hotspot.

☐ **Student Awards and Scholarship Coordinator.** Arranges publicity for the program, coordinates with program sponsors, and presents awards.

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## NIAR Responds to Catastrophic Storm

DERA's partner in India, the National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), is providing ongoing communication and other assistance in response to the Aila Cyclone. Over three hundred deaths have been reported, and though reports vary, approximately one million people are currently homeless as a result of the storm, which caused widespread damage in India and Bangladesh.

Initially, a three-member team of the Hyderabad-based NIAR deployed to the Kolkata region with ham radio equipment to assist the state government in relief work.

DERA member and NIAR director Ram Mohan said NIAR had received a request from the District Magistrate's (DM) office, asking them to send ham radio equipment to the flood-affected areas of the district to help them conduct relief and rescue. According to Mohan, NIAR immediately sent a team to Kolkata with satellite radio equipment.

"We have been informed that the situation in some of the flood-affected places of the district has improved a little. We are trying to keep in touch with the district administration ... [regarding] the present situation," Mohan said.

NIAR representative Ambarish Nag Biswas, a deployment coordinator, said NIAR teams would help the government stay informed regarding the ongoing situation. "Apart from informing those who are engaged in rescue and relief work as to where people might still be stranded, we would be able to keep track as to whether any outbreak of disease occurs or whether anybody goes missing. These problems occur when the water level starts receding. We would subsequently be able to inform the DM immediately so that they can take quick action. We have been asked to set up these temporary radio stations at Dhamakhali, Kultoli and Sandeshkhali," Biswas said.



NIAR team members, Ms. M. Bhanumathy, VU2BL, and Ms. S. Yamini, VU2YAM, operating at State Civil Defense HQ, Kolkata.

NIAR Chairman Mr. S. Suri, VU2MY, and Ram Mohan, VU2MYH, have been DERA members since 1996. NIAR and DERA have collaborated on numerous disaster responses around the world, including the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami.

Extensive coverage of NIAR's disaster

efforts has been provided in *The Times of India*, *The Hindu*, and *Calcutta's The Telegraph*.

For additional information regarding the NIAR support of the current disaster, please visit them online at [www.NIAR.org](http://www.NIAR.org)

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### Recent Disasters, from Page 1

- Indian Ocean crash - Yemenia Flight 626 crashed into the Indian Ocean on June 30th resulting in 152 fatalities with only one survivor.
- Southern U.S. severe weather - Tornadoes in Arkansas.
- Chile flooding – Severe weather and flooding in Chile.
- China disaster recovery - Landslides, mudslides, and severe weather in China's Sichuan province slow recovery efforts from last year's devastating earthquake.
- India tide - Mumbai is anticipated to experience an exceptionally high tide in the coming days, and authorities are moving to brace the city against potential flooding.

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## Support DERA with Logo Items

The DERA online store now has a wide range of items such as these:



There is something at the member supply store for every need and budget. Easiest way to get to the store is by our home page at [www.disasters.org](http://www.disasters.org) and click on the "DERA Supplies" link on the right.



# ***Disaster Preparedness Projects***

## **Guidelines for Student Awards**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this program is to achieve improvements in community, regional and national disaster preparedness and response capability. DERA Preparedness Project Awards are intended to encourage students at all levels to undertake projects which study the effects of disasters and evaluate preparedness/response alternatives, as well as to initiate meaningful improvements and undertake mitigation efforts in the home, school, industry, or community.

**RECOGNITION AWARDS:** DERA will award certificates of recognition (and in some cases medals and/or monetary awards) to students for meritorious research projects and field work.

**WHO IS ELIBIBLE TO RECEIVE AWARDS?** Students 8-18 years of age are eligible.

### **HOW TO APPLY FOR AN AWARD:**

1. Any teacher, tutor, youth group leader, community official, EPYCS committee, fire or police chief, emergency management professional, sheriff or DERA member may nominate a student for an award by sending the student's name and a brief summary of the project to DERA, along with a statement to the effect that the student's work is meritorious and deserving of recognition. The award certificate will be sent to the person submitting the nomination for appropriate presentation to the student.
2. Coordinators of science, safety, and engineering fairs or similar organized competitions may request any reasonable number of blank certificates prior to the event and will be authorized to issue them as appropriate to deserving students. Following the event, coordinators should send DERA the names of students receiving the awards, and a brief description of their projects.

**WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS QUALIFY FOR AWARD?** All commendable projects related to disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, recovery, safety or similar topics are eligible. Projects should be appropriate to the student's level of study. The following are a few examples of such projects:

- Severe weather studies
- Floodplain reviews and risk analyses
- Home safety audits, or projects to reduce household hazards
- Geological studies, seismic risks, volcanic effects
- Community warning system evaluations or improvements
- Historical analysis of risk factors, climate change, or transient phenomena
- Environmental exposure measurements or materials safety studies
- Constructing or operating weather stations, seismographs, or water level gauges
- Water quality, food safety, and sanitation studies
- Public safety, epidemiology and health studies
- Communications systems for detection, warning, or incident management
- Probability modeling or mathematical analysis of hazards, risks, or similar data
- Reviewing apartment building fire plans or analyzing effectiveness of escape drills
- Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) studies or fire safety projects
- Building, bridge, or dam engineering studies, safety verifications, and structural analyses

**OBTAINING AWARD MATERIALS:** To nominate students for awards, or to obtain materials for organized events, please contact:

**DERA Awards Program  
PO Box 797  
Longmont, CO 80502**



# WANTED

## Members

Add your strength to ours!

*Join our international network of prominent leaders, professionals and volunteers active in all phases of emergency preparedness, community safety and disaster response.*

## Speakers

Whether you are a well-known subject matter expert or just have interesting experiences to share, organizations around the world are looking for program speakers.

*DERA links members with an interest in speaking to audiences through our Speaker's Bureau. We also produce Podcasts, Webcasts and preparedness teleconferences which require little or no travel.*

## Writers

DERA offers numerous opportunities for publication: Our highly regarded Monograph Series is a peer-reviewed special publication for stand-alone research papers, field reports and preparedness guides, normally 12-36 pages in length. Our quarterly newsletter, Disasters•Org, gives members the opportunity to publish either a regular column or special articles.

*DERA provides members with the opportunity to gain professional recognition through high-quality publications.*

## Watch Officers

DERA operates an online Emergency Operations Center at [www.dera.us/eoc](http://www.dera.us/eoc)

*We need additional Watch Officers to keep the site updated with breaking news and situation reports. Watch Officers can post updates from anywhere they have access to the web. Even if you only have limited time and irregular schedules, you can be an important part of this program.*

## Regional and State Coordinators

Network where you live and work! DERA program coordinators and assistants attend key meetings in their state or region and network with all who might have an interest in DERA programs.

*DERA aims to provide every state with a program coordinator who provides liaison between governmental agencies, other nongovernmental organizations, and DERA members in the area.*

## International Program Coordinators

Since our founding in 1962, DERA has been very active in supporting international preparedness and relief efforts and we have sponsored emergency response teams throughout the world.

*DERA international program coordinators represent DERA within each country where DERA members have a presence and seek opportunities for cooperation, mutual assistance, and program development.*

**Learn more about DERA at [www.disasters.org](http://www.disasters.org)**

Please join us: We'd be honored to have you as a member.  
You may apply for membership online or use the form on the reverse.

**Professional Affiliation**  
**Membership Application**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country, if not USA or Canada: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Radio Callsign: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Select Membership Classification**  
**Enclose Check or Money Order for Dues Payment**  
**Amounts are in U.S. Dollars**

**Individual Membership - Professional**  
\$50.00 per year  
\$25.00 for Student, Retired or Unemployed

**Nonprofit Organization**  
\$75.00 per year

**Individual Membership - Management Level**  
\$75.00 per year

**Governmental Office**  
\$95.00 per year

**Lifetime Individual**  
\$450.00

**Small or Startup Business**  
\$125.00 per year  
*Please contact us for corporate membership*

**Foreign currency and drafts are credited at commercial exchange rates. All checks must be payable through a U.S. bank.**  
*Add \$5 per year if you wish newsletter sent by Airmail, or \$20 for Global Priority Mail. Rates good for 2009.*

**Join online with any major charge card at [www.disasters.org](http://www.disasters.org)**

or mail this application with check or money order to

**DERA Membership  
P.O. Box 797  
Longmont, CO 80502-0797  
USA**

Please tell us if a member referred you so we can thank them: \_\_\_\_\_