



DHS Releases National Preparedness Guidelines

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The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced today publication of two important tools to organize and synchronize national efforts to strengthen preparedness: (1) the National Preparedness Guidelines, which establish a vision for national preparedness and provide a systematic approach for prioritizing preparedness efforts across the Nation; and (2) the Target Capabilities List, which describes the collective national capabilities required to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters and other emergencies.

"The National Preparedness Guidelines and Target Capabilities List are the culmination of extensive efforts to define the specific plans and capabilities our nation must possess in order to address catastrophic threats," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "These documents will help focus policy, planning and investments at all levels of government and the private sector in order to strengthen our collective capabilities and better prepare for major incidents."

Publication of the Guidelines and Target Capabilities List fulfills a major component of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8, "National Preparedness," and establishes a framework for understanding what it means for the nation to be prepared for all hazards. There are four critical elements to the National Preparedness Guidelines:

1. **The national preparedness vision**, which provides a concise statement of the core preparedness goal for the nation.
2. **The fifteen National Planning Scenarios**, which collectively depict the broad range of natural and man-made threats facing our nation and guide overall homeland security planning efforts at all levels of government and with the private sector. They form the basis for national planning, training, investments and exercises needed to prepare for emergencies of all types.
3. **Universal Task List (UTL)**, which is a menu of some 1,600 unique tasks that can facilitate efforts to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from the major events that are represented by the National Planning Scenarios. Although no single entity will perform every task, the UTL presents a common language and vocabulary that supports all efforts to coordinate national preparedness activities.
4. **Target Capabilities List (TCL)**, which defines 37 specific capabilities that states and communities and the private sector should collectively develop in order to respond effectively to disasters.

Developed through an extensive process that involved more than 1,500 federal, state and local officials, and more than 120 national associations, the Guidelines replace the Interim National Preparedness Goal issued on March 31, 2005. They also integrate lessons learned following Hurricane Katrina and a 2006 review of states' and major cities' emergency operations and evacuation plans.

For more information on HSPD-8 and the National Preparedness Guidelines, visit www.dhs.gov.

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