

Training CD a hit with emergency groups

NICS has a hit CD that has attracted fans around the country.

It's not pop or country music, though. In fact, it's not music at all. This CD is a training program for emergency planners and responders.

NICS first offered the copyrighted program, "*Protecting the Public in a Hazardous Materials Emergency*," on its website in October. Demand jumped dramati-

To help build awareness —

NICS to manage brownfields project

NICS will manage a Brownfields Assistance Program for the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

The program is part of an effort by the WV Department of Environmental Protection and the WV Economic Development Office to learn the development potential of several hundred potentially polluted sites across the state.

The agencies will encourage local governments and development authorities to clean up and find new uses for these sites.

The DEP and EDO have signed an agreement to coordinate the brownfields cleanup and reuse effort.

Cleanup projects may be eligible for assistance under the state's Voluntary Remediation and Redevelopment Act (VRRRA).

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cally in mid-December when the USEPA mentioned it to its internet ListServe subscribers.

Other organizations repeated the offer on their websites and in their newsletters. As a result, NICS received requests from every state in the union and from several foreign countries.

The CD is doing well on the charts, perhaps because the release came in the wake of terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. The price tag helps too. It's free.

"We had to have a supply of discs made to meet the unexpected demand," said Dr. Jan Taylor, NICS vice president and project director. "That put us behind in filling requests. We appreciate all

Annual Report Available

The NICS annual report for fiscal year 2001 is available for downloading in PDF format from the NICS website. It is also available in print by calling (304) 346-6264 or by sending an email request to rmyers@nicinfo.org.

those who waited patiently for their copy."

Taylor said NICS is "pleased to make the training package available to the emergency planning and response community."

The training consists of modules that can be put together into a

workshop to fit the individual needs of emergency planning and response agencies.

A local instructor can conduct a workshop with the material. NICS can also conduct workshops for those who do not have the time or resources to do it themselves.

NICS has already conducted

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Review service helps assure good legislation, regs

A fresh set of eyes and an independent viewpoint.

That's the formula for a service NICS offers groups that write legislation and regulations about chemical risk issues. The issues include safety, health and environmental concerns.

"Based on our experience, there comes a time in the process of writing laws or regulations when those who have been intensely involved need to step back and have a fresh set of eyes and independent mind look at the draft product," said NICS President Mark Scott.

Quality assurance reviews are a useful way to detect inconsistencies, affirm original goals, and identify possible implementation problems, Scott said.

NICS brings objectivity to the task, Scott said. "We are an independent, nonprofit research and

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The telephone book might not be the first place you think of when you want to learn how to shelter in place, but think again.

Phone books in some areas include a community interest section in the white pages. Phone companies include the section as a public service in areas that may face chemical, nuclear or natural emergencies.

The section typically lists numbers for police, fire, paramedic units and social services agencies. They often tout local points of interest. In chemical producing ar-

the information or updates to the phone company three to four months before the telephone book is to appear. A phone company representative can tell you about when that will be.

Do not wait until the last minute or until the phone company contacts you to send in the information. By that time, the phone book may be about to go to press.

Third, launch an awareness program when the phone books appear. Issue a news release calling attention to the information. Send the news release to newspapers, local radio and television

Stickers give key workers access in emergencies

Key employees who arrive at chemical plants during emergencies in West Virginia's Kanawha

Valley can now get through police lines to restricted areas.

They can, thanks to a bright red, reflective sticker

on their company identification cards.

Evaluations of recent incidents showed that key plant employees were unable to get through police lines promptly, if at all, during emergencies.

The Kanawha Putnam Emergency Planning Committee's traffic diversion subcommittee solved the problem with the stickers. Law enforcement, fire officials and plant representatives were part of the project.

The KPEPC supplies the one-inch stickers to area plants. The plants then issue the stickers and retrieve them when an employee leaves the company or changes jobs.

"A police officer can see the stickers easily with a flashlight, even in the rain," said J. R. Bias, KPEPC administrator.

The stickers may be placed on the front or backs of company identification cards, Bias said. **nics**

Public utility commissions in each state may require that basic emergency numbers be included in phone books. Beyond that, phone companies foot the sizeable bill for the community interest pages. **nics**

Look in the phone book

Some phone books offer a way to distribute shelter-in-place information that will be handy all year long

reas, they may tell how to shelter in place.

From an emergency planning viewpoint, phone books are a good way to distribute shelter in place information. They reach almost every home in an area. Plus, the information stays there year round near the telephone.

Distributing shelter in place information is a challenge. Folders are useful, but they often reach only a small audience. They may get tossed or lost easily.

Calendars are a better choice, especially if they are widely distributed and appealing enough to merit a permanent place in a home.

Phone books are ideal, but their use involves some planning.

First, the LEPC or other group in charge of the information has to let the phone company know they are in charge. An annual reminder in writing would be advisable.

Second, the group must give

stations, cable channels that have a community interest page and post it on web sites.

Verizon, which provides telephone service in 30 states, includes a community interest section in many of its phone books.

"One problem we have is finding the owner of information," said Judy Stanley, manager of Verizon's regulatory group. Changes in people, organizations and responsibilities make it difficult to keep track of where to get information or updates, she said.

She advised information providers in Verizon's service area to work with the directory services group.

Not all phone books have community interest pages, Stanley said. They appear only where there is an ongoing risk of natural disasters, such as floods, or from man made facilities such as chemical and nuclear plants.

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The DEP has received \$1 million from the USEPA to fund a revolving loan program for brownfields assessment and cleanup projects. The West Virginia Development Authority will administer the funds.

The Brownfields Assistance Program led by NICS will:

- Develop a comprehensive database of sites with development potential and that are eligible for cleanup help under the VRRRA;
- Raise awareness among local governments and development authorities about possible cleanup projects and resources that may be available;
- Hold a statewide workshop to share promises and problems of cleanup projects, and
- Provide access to technical and financial assistance for cleanup and reuse projects.

NICS has been involved in brownfields work since the mid 1990s.

NICS helped develop regula-

tions and guidance manuals for environmental professionals.

Under an agreement with the DEP, NICS also writes and administers the tests given to those who want to become licensed remediation specialists. **nics**

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education organization. We are not part of any government agency, business or trade association.

“Most of our review service is related broadly to chemicals or the environment,” Scott said. NICS performs reviews for legislative and regulatory agencies at the local, state and federal levels.

Reviews have included:

- An industrial safety ordinance in California for a county board of supervisors to determine whether the county could implement and enforce the ordinance, land-use aspects of the ordinance, and its overall public safety elements;
- Three investigation reports on chemical accidents for the

USEPA to determine the technical soundness, overall approach and completeness of the reports and to recommend ways to improve future accident investigations, and

- Assumptions used by two federal agencies to develop shelter-in-place policy recommendations for communities near a chemical weapons storage depot.

NICS’ reviewers include Ph.D.s and Professional Engineers. Their experience includes public policy development, regulation development, public administration, risk analysis, management and communication, and research methods.

Contact NICS for details. **nics**



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workshops in Rhode Island and Ohio. Workshops are being planned in other states.

“We can conduct workshops for single groups or for several groups in an area,” Taylor said.

Funding for workshops may be

available from state emergency response commissions or from private industry

The CD is available through a form on the NICS website. To get there, click on the first item in the “New” box. **nics**

Act now to reserve training dates

LEPCs that may want NICS to conduct its workshop on “Protecting the Public in a Hazardous Materials Emer-

gency” should act soon to reserve a date. Details about the workshop are on the NICS website.



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In the Comments box, we would like to hear any thoughts you have about the newsletter.

Thanks for the help.

Kids learn to shelter in place in custom “house”

Industry group, firefighters team up for community educational project

An Indiana group has created a real life prop for teaching elementary school children how to shelter in place.

Volunteers for Industry Partners for Safety Awareness (IPSA), an industry group in Marion County, built a room-size “house” big enough for 10 children. It opened in October 2001.

The house is an addition to an interactive village operated by county firefighters to teach children fire safety. The village is located in the Indianapolis Firefighters’ Union Hall.

The shelter-in-place training house has two doors, windows and a wall thermostat. A generator under the windows makes colored

smoke to simulate a hazardous materials emergency.

After watching a video on how to shelter in place, children get to close windows, seal doors with towels, and shut off the thermostat in a make believe emergency.

They also learn how to tell the difference between a fire when they need to go outside and a hazardous materials emergency when they need to stay inside.

While the training is intended for elementary age children, older students and adults use the facility as well. An estimated 4,000 children and adults will take the training each year.

Volunteers from the Indianapolis Firefighters’ Union Hall con-

duct the training. The house is open five days a week.

The project earned IPSA an award last year in a competition sponsored by the USEPA’s Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office (CEPPO).

“IPSA was creative in building its shelter-in-place house around an existing training tool,” said Mark Scott, NICS president. Scott chaired the committee that chose IPSA for a CEPPO award. “They made the house a fun way to learn an important lesson early in life.”

For more information about the project, call IPSA Board President Tom Lingafelter at (317) 337-4028. His email address is: telingafelter@dowagro.com. 