



**News & Updates
from the REMS TA
Center, Fall 2018**



Test of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) RESCHEDULED for October 3, 2018

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), has postponed and rescheduled the nationwide test of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) for Wednesday, October 3, 2018. FEMA and the FCC will conduct a nationwide test of IPAWS and its [Emergency Alert System \(EAS\)](#) and [Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEA\)](#) to (1) assess the operational readiness of the infrastructure for distribution of a national message and (2) determine whether improvements are needed. The WEA portion of the test will commence at 2:18 p.m. ET, and the EAS portion will follow at 2:20 p.m. ET. This test message will be sent to cell phones that are connected to wireless providers participating in WEA, which is why it is important to make state and local education agencies aware in advance.

Since learning time will likely be disrupted, school safety partners, including the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students and its REMS TA Center, and the Youth Preparedness group within FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness Division, highly encourage state and local agencies to use the time to provide a teachable moment about emergency preparedness. For example, state and local emergency management and education agencies can do the following:

- Craft a customized message notifying the community of the upcoming IPAWS test, while also providing information that is specific to your region. For example, you may want to provide details about your local emergency notification systems or describe how your agency plans to communicate with school populations during real emergencies.
- Ensure that messaging sent about IPAWS is accessible to those with access and functional needs. [FEMA has prepared an accessible version of the announcement](#) about this month's test that can be shared with the whole school community.
- Recommend that schools and school districts plan a drill or exercise to coincide with the IPAWS notification. For example, many schools are required to conduct annual evacuation drills, and the interruption from the IPAWS notification on September 20 could serve as a marker to conduct this drill. If planning a drill or exercise at this time is not possible, emergency planning teams at schools and school districts can be encouraged to use this event as an impetus to set their calendar of drills and exercises for the school year.
- Share details about the need for schools and school districts to create a [Communications and Warning Annex](#) as a part of any comprehensive and high-quality school emergency operations plans (EOPs) and as recommended in the [Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#).

- Post the fact sheet that FEMA created in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) to describe IPAWS and its EAS and WEA systems to agency Web pages, and share them via social media and other dissemination channels.

Our nation's Federal partners are committed to strengthening the [National Preparedness System](#), and this test provides just one example of that commitment. Access [updated fact sheets](#) about this test via the FEMA site.

Have questions about this test or need general support with emergency preparedness planning? Contact the REMS TA Center, your national school safety technical assistance center, at info@remstacenter.org or 1-855-781-REMS [7367].

Recognizing National Preparedness Month and Back to School Season: Reinforce the Whole School Community's Role in Ensuring Food Safety



It's back to school time and National Preparedness Month this September, and the REMS TA Center hopes that you are having a safe, healthy, and happy school year thus far. As we enter the middle of September and the second month of school for many, we want to offer one example issue for your focus this fall: ensuring food safety.

Everyone is at risk for foodborne illnesses, but children are among the most vulnerable to food poisoning. Unfortunately, in a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) study,

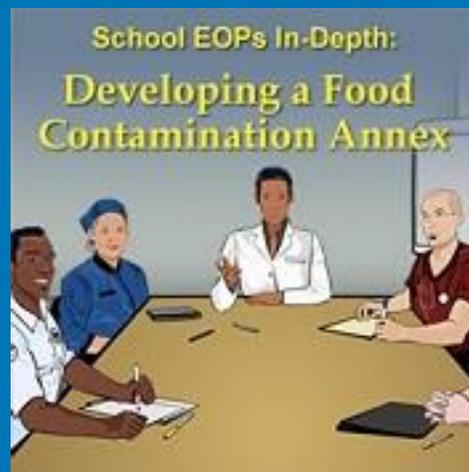
only 28 percent of participants were aware that certain types of people (like young children) have a higher risk of getting food poisoning. To support education agencies across the country as they work every day to ensure food safety, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the USDA have teamed up to help schools and school districts promote awareness about food safety to students, families, and staff.

The REMS TA Center encourages all education agencies to share the following food safety basics with families, caregivers, and the whole school community on how to prepare and pack school lunches safely, as well as how to ensure food safety while tailgating held during sports events at campuses this fall.

- **Clean:** Wash hands with soap and warm water, and surfaces with soap and hot water before and after handling food. Rinse raw produce in water before eating, cutting, or cooking.

- **Separate:** Avoid spreading bacteria from one food product to another. Use two separate cutting boards — one for raw meat and poultry, and one for produce or ready to eat foods.
- **Cook:** The only way to make sure meat and poultry is safe to eat is to ensure it reaches the safe minimum internal temperature needed to destroy harmful bacteria. If sending soups, stews, or chili to school, be sure to heat the food to 165°F, as measured by a food thermometer, before pouring it into an insulated container.
- **Chill:** At room temperature, bacteria in food can double every 20 minutes. To avoid this, make sure to chill all perishable foods within two hours (one hour in temperatures above 90°F). Discard any perishable foods that were left at room temperature longer than that.

School emergency planning teams can get support with [developing a Food Contamination Annex](#) as a part of high-quality school EOPs by accessing the REMS TA Center's online course. They can also encourage food service staff to download the USDA's FoodKeeper application for [Android](#) and [iOS](#) devices to access quick information about storage times for food or beverages.



Learn more about key food safety practices at Foodsafety.gov, by following [@USDAFoodSafety](https://twitter.com/USDAFoodSafety) on Twitter, and by liking [Facebook.com/FoodSafety.gov](https://facebook.com/FoodSafety.gov).

Promote Opioid Abuse Awareness Throughout National Recovery Month and National Preparedness Month



Each September, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services leads the nation in hosting National Recovery Month to increase awareness and understanding of mental illness and addictions, as well as celebrates people in recovery from these conditions.

Education and emergency management agencies are key partners in the fight against addiction, including addiction to opioids, which can help in the management of certain types of pain, but also pose serious health, financial, and social consequences when misused. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2016, [3.6 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 reported misusing opioids](#), and in 2015, more than 4,000 youth aged 15 to 24 died from a drug-related overdose; [over half of which can be attributed to the use of opioids](#).

Schools, school districts, and institutions of higher education (IHEs) may find the threat of opioid misuse and abuse affects their population in several possible ways:

- Students may use or abuse opioids themselves, leading to issues with drug dependence, addiction, and even the potential for overdose;
- Parents and families of students may be dealing with addiction issues at home, with family members using or abusing opioids themselves (and caregivers and family members may be unaware that opioids they have in the home are being taken by their children);
- Teachers and other school staff may have opioid use or abuse issues;
- Use by any member of the school community might bring drugs physically to school grounds (and in some cases, lead to drug dealing on or around school property);
- Corollary issues that result from drug use and abuse might affect school members or the community as a whole, including property crimes, fighting, vandalism, the presence of weapons, presence of other drugs or alcohol, etc., affecting the overall safety of the environment, and students' sense of safety at school.

These and other potential issues that might arise from opioid misuse and abuse, with the status of the opioid crisis as a public health emergency, make it a threat that schools, school districts, and IHEs may want to consider including as part of their comprehensive high-quality EOP.

ED's Office of Safe and Healthy Students and the REMS TA Center identified the following resources that provide additional information on preventing drug abuse and misuse and opioid overdoses, and that can be used to support the development of EOP annexes that address opioid.

- [Naloxone in Schools Toolkit](#), National Association of School Nurses. This Web page provides several resources to help school nurses and others plan for and respond to opioid emergencies, such as sample protocols, reporting forms, and presentations. Users are required to create a free account to access the materials.
- [Opioid Overdose](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A variety of information and links to additional materials on opioids is available on this Web page, including how to reverse the effects of an overdose, information for patients on how to prevent opioid misuse, and promising state strategies to help prevent prescription drug overdose.

- Opioid Overdose Prevention Toolkit, SAMHSA. Information is provided to groups such as first responders, community members, and prescribers in this online publication, such as steps to take if you suspect an overdose.
- [Opioids](#), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). On this Web page, NIDA describes opioids, provides data on recent trends on the prevalence of drugs, and offers related resources, such as articles, publications, and policy briefs.
- [Substance Abuse Facilities Data](#), SAMHSA. This Web page lists Federal, state, and local government facilities and private facilities that provide substance abuse treatment services.

Federal School Safety Commission Listening Sessions Complete

The Federal School Safety Commission, led by ED in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Justice, completed the final public listening session planned for this year on August 28 in Montgomery, Alabama. Since March, the Commission has been hosting listening sessions for the public, along with meetings and field visits, to discuss key topics in school safety with national, state, and local experts and stakeholders. In the coming months, the Commission will produce a report on its findings for release to the field.

FEDERAL SCHOOL SAFETY COMMISSION

U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Justice

ED's Office of Safe and Healthy Students and its REMS TA Center will continue to share details about Commission events, resources, and findings via social media and our Website. You can also access videos and transcripts of each event via the ED Website: <https://www.ed.gov/school-safety>.

Did you attend public listening sessions held in your state? Share details about your experience via the REMS TA Center's Community of Practice (CoP): <https://rems.ed.gov/COP/Default.aspx>.

'Drop, Cover, and Hold On' With the Rest of the Nation on October 18, 2018

The REMS TA Center is proud to participate, along with FEMA and our state and local partners, in [The Great ShakeOut](#), a global earthquake drill for communities, schools, and organizations to improve earthquake preparedness. The Great ShakeOut encourages schools, IHES, and community partners to learn what to do before, during, and after an earthquake and to “Drop, Cover, and Hold On” every third Thursday of October. The

2018 ShakeOut will be held at 10:15 a.m. ET on October 18, 2018. Get tips on how to participate below.

Participate through The Great ShakeOut

- [Register](#) your school or IHE to participate in one of the Official ShakeOut Regions and receive email updates.
- [Download resources](#), including audio and video broadcasts, manuals, posters, custom flyers, and web banners, to spread the word about The Great ShakeOut and prepare for an earthquake.
- [Drop, Cover, and Hold On](#) during The Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drill and practice what your school or IHE will do after the shaking stops.

Participate through the REMS TA Center

- [Collaborate](#) with colleagues and subject matter experts to discuss trends and ideas and enhance your emergency operations planning and earthquake preparedness.
- [Conduct tabletop exercises](#) with leaders and managers to practice your EOP and Earthquake Annex.
- [Assess](#) your knowledge of concepts fundamental to emergency management and creating and evaluating EOPs.
- [Evaluate](#) your existing EOP against Federal recommendations in emergency management planning.
- [Develop and revise your school EOP](#) using the recommended Federal planning process.
- [Request a FREE training](#) for delivery on-site on a variety of emergency management topics.

Connect

- Twitter: [@ShakeOut](#) follow the conversation [#ShakeOut](#)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GreatShakeOut>
- Instagram: [@greatshakeout](#) follow the conversation [#ShakeOut](#)
- Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/shakeout/>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/greatshakeout>

Updates to SITE ASSESS — the REMS TA Center's Free Mobile App for Conducting Site Assessments

Last fall the REMS TA Center released [SITE ASSESS](#), our free and secure mobile application for conducting K-12 site assessments. Users can add customized questions into the assessment, upload images directly within the application, export data into Word or Excel for aggregation, analysis, and recordkeeping, and learn about fundamental site assessment topics (such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design). We are excited to share that this month we released an update to the application with enhanced features based on feedback from the field, which included **deleting assessments, deleting questions permanently, and adding custom questions permanently**, allowing users to further customize the assessment to their local and state requirements. The update also included a prompt for users to input their GPS coordinates to help aid in recovery efforts and coordinate with agencies such as FEMA. This new version of SITE ASSESS has an optimized user experience in the data export section so that users can easily aggregate/analyze data, save data for recordkeeping, and send their assessment to team members for collaboration.



If you have already downloaded SITE ASSESS prior to this update, it may have automatically updated or is pending approval to update depending on the settings on your mobile device. We will also be enhancing the application next month so that IHEs may also use it to conduct a site assessment of multiple buildings and grounds on their campus. Stay tuned for more announcements about these new launches!

Register for the Final Webinar in Our Evacuation and Reunification Series

- The first webinar, [Reunification After a Community-Wide Disaster: Planning Tools for Schools](#), on the topic of post-disaster reunification (when a disaster affects a whole community), was hosted at the end of May with our partners at FEMA and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- The second webinar, [Emergency Evacuations: Planning for the Whole School Community](#), on the topic of evacuations with a focus on inclusive planning, was hosted in June with ED's Office of Special Education Programs, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, and Salem-Keizer Public Schools.



Have a Question? Need a Resource? Seeking Research Support? We're Here to Help!



Curious about a school safety topic? Wondering how to approach planning for a unique threat or hazard at your site? Need resources to support your higher ed emergency preparedness efforts? No matter the question or need, the REMS TA Center is here to help. We are available Monday — Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET to provide informed answers and related resources in response to your individual and unique questions on a wide variety of topics related to school safety, security, and emergency management and preparedness. Contact us via email, telephone, or our [TA Request Form](#).



Take a Virtual Training



Use an EOP Interactive Tool



Join the CoP



Access State Resources



Fill Our Toolbox

If you have any questions or need additional assistance, please contact the REMS TA Center at

 1-855-781-REMS [7367] or  via email at info@remstacenter.org.