



# Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for August 23, 2019

## **New FBI Threat Assessment Leads to Scores of Arrests**

(Newser) – After the El Paso and Dayton massacres earlier this month, the FBI ordered a new threat assessment to be made by agents across the country to head off another mass shooting. That step has resulted in the arrests of more than two dozen people charged with threatening to commit mass violence, [CNN](#) reports.

As examples, the cook [arrested this week](#) in California after a coworker said Rodolfo Montoya planned to open fire at the hotel where he worked is just one of the most recent cases.

And a 16-year-old girl was arrested Wednesday in Orlando after officials said she threatened an attack at her sister's Catholic school, per [CBS](#). In a group text, the arrest report says, the teenager wrote, "Next person to say something is the first person I will shoot on the school shooting that will take place this Friday."

Read full story: <http://newser.com/s279502>

Full CNN Report: <https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/21/us/mass-shooting-threats-tuesday/index.html>

## **White House considers new project seeking links between mental health and violent behavior**

(*The Washington Post*) The White House has been briefed on a proposal to develop a way to identify early signs of changes in people with mental illness that could lead to violent behavior. Supporters see the plan as a way President Trump could move the ball forward on gun control following recent mass shootings as efforts seem to be flagging to impose harsher restrictions such as background checks on gun purchases.

## **National 'Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over' campaign nets 347 DUI arrests in Kentucky in first five days**

(KyForward News) Kentucky State Police reminded motorists Thursday that they are continuing their enforcement efforts during the national "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaign.

Since the effort began on Aug. 16, there have been 347 driving under the influence (DUI) arrests in Kentucky by law enforcement officers across the Commonwealth. KSP spokesperson Sgt. Josh Lawson says the focus of the campaign is saving lives. Lawson added that there have been 53 impaired driving crashes since Aug. 16.

Full story: <https://www.kyforward.com/national-drive-sober-or-get-pulled-over-campaign-nets-347-dui-arrests-in-kentucky-in-first-five-days/>

## **Why the U.S. Disaster Agency Is Not Ready for Catastrophes**

(Scientific American) The Federal Emergency Management Agency has wasted more than \$3 billion and misused thousands of its employees by responding to hundreds of undersized floods, storms and other events that states could have handled on their own, an investigation by E&E News shows.

FEMA has chronically overestimated the damage to U.S. states from small disasters and underestimated the capacity of states to respond to them. Those errors triggered at least 325 unnecessary deployments of money and personnel since 1998. The errors also resulted in homeowners and businesses receiving \$725 million in low-interest disaster loans from the Small Business Administration, E&E News found.

FEMA has deployed staff to small disasters for decades, even as federal auditors warned that it was sending emergency workers and money to states that may not need the help. Federal law says FEMA is supposed to assist with disasters only when they threaten to overwhelm a state's ability to respond.

FEMA's preoccupation with undersized disasters comes as climate change is intensifying hurricanes, floods, thunderstorms and wildfires, and as development is expanding in peril-prone areas. Many of the events that now trigger FEMA aid are becoming routine, raising concerns within the agency that it will be unable to respond to the growing number of large catastrophes if it continues to waste its resources on small ones.

The fallout is tangible: The U.S. agency at the forefront of disaster response is sidetracked by small hazards, threatening its ability to handle the kind of megacalamities that have surged in the past decade.

Read full story: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-the-u-s-disaster-agency-is-not-ready-for-catastrophes/>

## **FEMA Training Announcements**

2019-226 - Training Bulletin - VTTX FY2020

1526 - Training Opportunity - L0110 Basic Academy TtT San Diego CA Dec 2-5 2019 FY20

1527 - Training Opportunity - L0101 Foundations of Emergency Management

1528 - Training Opportunity - L0102 Science of Disaster

1529 - Training Opportunity - L0103 Planning Emergency Operations

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**CDC Clinician Outreach**  
**Outbreak of *Salmonella* Newport Infections**  
**Linked to beef and soft cheese**

CDC is concerned about an increase in human illness from a new strain of multidrug-resistant (MDR) *Salmonella* Newport, that appears to have spread from cattle in the United States and Mexico. A new CDC report highlights an emerging strain of *Salmonella* Newport; that may not respond to antibiotics recommended for treatment of severe infections. During June 2018–March 2019, CDC identified 255 infections and 60 hospitalizations from 32 U.S. states. Infections were linked to beef obtained in the United States and soft cheese obtained in Mexico, suggesting that this strain could be present in cattle in both countries. Antibiotic susceptibility testing showed that the strain had decreased susceptibility to azithromycin and non-susceptibility to ciprofloxacin—two commonly prescribed oral antibiotics. This leaves ceftriaxone, an injectable antibiotic, as the recommended treatment option. Most patients with *Salmonella* infections recover without antibiotics, but those with severe infections need antibiotics. Resistant infections can be harder to treat, and patients may be at increased risk for developing serious complications. Please read the [MMWR](#) for more information.

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**WKU Offering new Emergency Management and Disaster Services Program**

Western KY University is going to be offering both an Undergraduate and a Graduate level Emergency Management Disaster Science (EMDS) Certificate program in the fall. The 100% online program is designed to develop students' emergency management acumen and enhance career opportunities for experienced professionals. Courses are offered in a bi-term format, and students can take two per semester. The certificate is 15 credit hours, and can be completed in less than one academic year.

For additional information contact Dr. David Oliver ([david.oliver@wku.edu](mailto:david.oliver@wku.edu)) or Dr. Joshua Durkee ([joshua.durkee@wku.edu](mailto:joshua.durkee@wku.edu)). Links for more info follow.

- Info on Undergraduate Program: <https://www.wku.edu/online/ug-certs/emds/index.php>
- Info on Graduate Program: <https://www.wku.edu/online/grad-certs/emds/index.php>

**Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines**  
**Extracts from [August 22, 2019](#) & [August 23, 2019](#)**

**[Hospital Ebola spread confirmed in South Kivu, DRC](#)** (*CIDRAP*) The World Health Organization (WHO) said today the third case of Ebola identified in South Kivu province was in a patient who contracted the virus at a health center where other Ebola patients had been treated.

**[HHS to provide \\$23 million to Merck for Ebola vaccine production](#)** (*Reuters*) The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) said on Wednesday it will fund the manufacturing of Merck & Co Inc's investigational Ebola vaccine called V920, in response to the outbreak of the deadly virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

**[Zika was Soaring Across Cuba. Few Outside the Country Knew](#)** (*The New York Times*) A previously unknown outbreak of the Zika virus swept across Cuba in 2017, a year after the global health emergency was declared over, scientists reported on Thursday.

**[An Ingenious Microscope Could Change How Quickly Disease is Detected](#)** (*The Atlantic*) So Prakash and his colleague Hongquan Li built a fancier microscope—a high-speed, malaria-detecting device that they've called Octopi. It can automatically scan entire blood-smeared slides for malaria parasites, using a neural network trained on more than 20,000 existing images. Octopi works off a phone charger. It analyzes slides at speeds that are 120 times faster than traditional microscopy

**[Humans, More than Drought, Are Fueling the Amazon's Flames](#)** (*Wired*) From his office in Greenbelt, Maryland, Doug Morton can see the Amazon burning. He watches images from NASA satellites that circle the tropics four times a day, their cameras pointed at the trees below to produce images from visible light, infrared, and thermal data.

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**Medicaid changes will allow Kentucky's local school districts**  
**to expand behavioral health services**

(KyForward News) Local school districts will soon be able to hire more licensed psychologists, counselors and other behavioral health professionals, thanks to upcoming Medicaid changes that will allow schools to use federal dollars. Kristi Putnam, deputy secretary of the state's Cabinet for Health and Family Services, says schools will be able to offer more supports to help students struggling with depression, anxiety and other mental health issues. Putnam says schools can now comply with Senate Bill 1, also known as Kentucky's School Safety and Resiliency Act, which went into effect on July 1. The law mandates that each school be staffed with

health professionals. The state is still waiting on final approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services before schools can begin working with providers.

Full story: <https://www.kyforward.com/medicaid-changes-will-allow-kentuckys-local-school-districts-to-expand-behavioral-health-services/>

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**CDC: - Numbers climbing!**

**153 cases of severe lung disease in 16 states possibly linked to vaping**

(CNN) The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is now aware of 153 possible cases of severe lung disease in 16 states that could be caused by vaping, the agency said Wednesday in an update to a multi-state investigation.

The cases -- reported from June 28 to August 20, 2019 -- have popped up in California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin. They have primarily affected adolescents and young adults.

This is an increase from Saturday, when CDC [announced](#) it was looking into 94 possible cases in 14 states. At the time, a [CNN survey](#) of state health departments concluded there were more than 120 cases in at least 15 states. There are no known deaths at this time, the agency said. In many cases, patients have gradually had difficulty breathing and chest pain before being hospitalized.

Read more & video report: <https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/21/health/cdc-vaping-lung-disease-update-bn/index.html>

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**Foundation for a Healthy Ky. makes TV, radio spots of youth discussing e-cigarettes availability and dangers**

(Rural Blog & KyForward) The Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky has released four new public service announcements to show the dangers young people subject themselves to by using electronic cigarettes. The spots are part of the foundation's "I Just Didn't Know" campaign and feature Kentucky teens.

The new PSAs include [two 30-second videos](#) for television and a [30-second and 60-second audio](#) PSA for radio. Additionally, the campaign provides PSAs that were released in April. The campaign materials are free to anyone who would like to use them. In one of PSA, Hayley, from Grant County in the rural part of Northern Kentucky, says, "A lot of people don't know that one little pod of this e-cigarette is equal to a whole pack of cigarettes." Research shows that public health campaigns can play a crucial role in reducing tobacco use among teens. Full story: <https://www.kyforward.com/foundation-for-a-healthy-ky-makes-tv-radio-spots-of-youth-discussing-e-cigarettes-available-to-anyone/>

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**CDP Anniston implements new system for available classes**

The Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) in Anniston, Alabama is now using the *InformCast Alert System* to provide response agencies with links to the CDP website for upcoming CDP training and seat availability. These alerts will come to your cell phone if you elect to sign up, these can be stopped any time after signing up. Notifications will go out on a weekly highlighting specific classes or upcoming training opportunities. Response agencies may want to take this opportunity to sign up to receive the alerts. To sign up for these alerts follow the below instructions.

- Text: **#CDPAL**
- Phone: **256-474-8127**

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**VPN Vulnerability**

(Healthcare Cybersecurity News) HC3 has developed a [White Paper on a recent high level VPN vulnerability](#). Virtual Private Networks (VPN) allow remote employees to securely connect to their corporate networks and access their files, applications, and infrastructure. These services are critical components of an organization's IT infrastructure, as they allow remote computers to connect to a corporate network through the generally insecure Internet.

At a recent security conference, a team of researchers disclosed critical vulnerabilities in three widely used enterprise VPN services. Exploiting them would allow attackers to gain significant inside access to enterprise networks.

HC3 believes that malicious actors are actively targeting these vulnerabilities, and therefore it is critically important that members of the Health and Public Health (HPH) sector patch and secure their systems. Fortunately, updates to mitigate these vulnerabilities are already available from each of the VPN vendors. Without patching, organizations who continue to use the vulnerable application versions listed below will remain vulnerable to PII exposure, financial fraud, or ransomware attacks.

### **FBI Ransomware Notification: Sodinokibi**

(Healthcare Cybersecurity News) In June 2019, the FBI [received notification of ransomware variant Sodinokibi](#), also known as “REvil” and “Sodin,” compromising managed service providers (MSPs) by leveraging victim-installed remote monitoring and managing (RMM) software. Actors behind the Sodinokibi ransomware infection likely leveraged compromised network credentials to gain access to the system. Upon gaining access, Sodinokibi actors use PowerShell scripts to drop an executable containing Sodinokibi into the MSP’s network infrastructure, infecting its customers’ systems.

If you have any questions related to these items, please contact HHS CSIRC at [csirc@hhs.gov](mailto:csirc@hhs.gov) or 866-646-7514.

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### **Cyber Espionage Groups Targeting Medical Research Data**

(Healthcare Cybersecurity News) [China's Hackers Are Ransacking Databases for Your Health Data](#) - Multiple Chinese hacking groups with links to the Chinese government have been spotted targeting medical systems and databases belonging to healthcare organizations around the world to collect clinical trial data, information related to research studies, and intellectual property associated with medical devices. According to FireEye researcher Luke McNamara, "In one case, we saw actual targeting of a medical device manufacturer and interest in the schematics and information on those products that they create."

FireEye asserts that China-linked advanced persistent threat (APT) groups APT41, APT22, APT10, APT18 as well as Vietnam-linked APT32 and Russia-linked APT28, which have all been identified attempting to steal medical data in recent years, are likely behind the attacks. FireEye also says that stolen medical information is being traded by hackers online, noting that "THEDARKOVERLORD" cyber crime group sold some 10 million health records in early 2016 and that a Russian-language forum was identified selling access to a 3,000-member health network for \$9,000–\$20,000 USD (~£7,400–£16,500 GBP) in early 2019.

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### **FBI Advocates Against Ransomware Payment Demands**

(FBI This Week) The FBI urges victims of ransomware not to pay the ransom to cyber criminals. Cyber Section Chief Herbert Stapleton says there is no guarantee that when you pay the ransom, you’ll receive the key. He went on to say, "There was an example where a company paid the ransom, and the bad actors provided a ransomware key, but instead of unlocking that company’s data it, actually erased all that company’s data. These are fairly rare instances, but there is a risk there." He adds, "It really just encourages and facilitates further criminal activity. They basically will continue to attack as long as it’s profitable for them. So, continuing to contribute to that profitability just encourages more ransomware attempts."

Link to podcast and transcript: <https://www.fbi.gov/audio-repository/ftw-podcast-ransomware-082219.mp3/view>

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2019 KY Healthcare Coalition Conference  
September 17-19, 2019

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<https://kshe.org/event/hcc2019registration>

Agenda: [https://kshe.org/page/2019hcc\\_agenda](https://kshe.org/page/2019hcc_agenda)

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact [rbartlett@kyha.com](mailto:rbartlett@kyha.com) (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.