Alas, our brief Seattle summer has wrapped up, the leaves on campus are morphing into their vibrant Fall colors, students and Husky football have returned back to campus and our great university has once again come back to life. With our thoughts turning to autumn, UWEM and our emergency management partners are gearing up for what looks like to be a busy time and likely active winter weather season (again)!

As many already know, with only two permanent full-time employees, UWEM must rely on the collective efforts of our campus and external partners and stakeholders to make sure we meet our primary mission of being a “disaster resistant university”. We can only accomplish this via the hard work and support of our friends. We call this assistance a “force-multiplier”. The UW is indeed a complex engine with many moving and connected parts. These individual parts must have the tools to succeed to ensure that we can meet our lofty disaster preparedness mission. As part of our ongoing efforts to recognize our partners’ efforts, we recently initiated a new UWEM Partner of the Quarter recognition program. I am proud to announce that our very-first recipient of this prestigious award is Mr. Spenser Vines, our 2011 UWEM Summer Intern. Spenser has been working tirelessly for us since June in our new EOC on a number of important projects that we have had on our “TO-DO” list for the past 4 years. Spenser has become an invaluable part-time member of our UWEM staff. Good luck in your continuing studies here at the UW!

Another recent trend we have noticed lately here in UWEM is the increasing number of visitors to our brand new EOC facility in the UW Tower. Over the past 3 months, over a dozen VIPs, groups and other dignitaries have visited the EOC. Included in our visitor log has been Jim Mullen, Director of the Washington State Emergency Management Division, Mr. Hillman Mitchell, King County EM Director, and the entire City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management staff. A number of senior UW managers, administrators, safety committees, the Microsoft Business Continuity Team, and other UW employee groups have stopped by for a tour. We welcome everyone to schedule their next staff meeting in the EOC to allow us to showcase this U-wide resource to our campus partners!

Finally, as you may have heard, early predictions from our friends at the National Weather Service/NOAA is that we can expect Mother Nature to do and “encore performance” this winter with the likely return of the La Nina weather pattern. What does this mean for us at the UW and the Pacific Northwest? Break out your snow shovels, ice melters, and heavy winter clothes! In preparation, UWEM is already working with our partners to refine our campus winter preparation plans, crisis communications procedures and community notification protocols.
Every year, usually unnoticed by the campus community, the UW conducts a campus-wide disaster drill to test our various emergency plans, procedures and protocols. The last one occurred just last week on September 22nd at three locations. Entitled “Operation Short-Stop”, the 2011 UW disaster drill took place at the Magnusen Health Sciences Building, South Campus Center and the new EOC, located at the UW Tower. With the exception of the ~30,000 people receiving a text-message that day on their mobile phones or perhaps the handful of students/faculty/staff noticing a dozen police, fire and EMS vehicles near the S-8 parking lot, nearly 100 UW officials completed a 7-hour disaster drill, complete with simulated victims, media reports, rumors and official actions.

Operation Short-Stop tested the UW’s effectiveness in responding to an “active shooter” scenario. While past drills tested our response/recovery to other hazards such as an earthquake, plane crash, pandemic and major utility outage, the 2011 drill was the first coordinated drill involving the possibility of a Virginia Tech/NIU/Columbine-style threat. Planning for the drill started over 5 months ago and involved participation by over five UW Departments as well as the Seattle Fire Department.

Did we make some mistakes during the drill? Yes, of course. Will we learn from our mistakes? Certainly! We can remember back in 2003 when (then) US Homeland Security Advisor Hon. Tom Ridge was called before a Congressional Committee to brief Senators about a recent nationwide disaster drill called “TOPOFF” – one such test occurring in South Seattle involving a simulated “dirty bomb”. One Senator grilled Secretary Ridge as to why Federal/State/local officials made a number of errors when responding to the simulated terrorist attack. To that question, Secretary Ridge smartly responded, “Mr. Senator, I appreciate your concern. However, I have to respectfully disagree with your assessment. We conduct these disaster drills for that exact purpose. We know we are not perfect – hence the reason why we conduct exercises and drills. What we can assure you and the American people is that we will learn from this experience and ensure that our future response will be better”. The same applies to the UW’s annual drills!

As with all our drills, we are in the process of developing an “After Action Report and Corrective Action Plan”. Like all complex organizations, the UW is not perfect – hence the reason for conducting drills and exercises. By regularly practicing our procedures, plans and policies, we hope to get better so that if (and when) the “real thing” does occur, we are better positioned to respond effectively. Thanks to the over 100 UW, City responders, evaluators/controllers and volunteers who participated in Operation Short-Stop.
Photos from **Operation Short-Stop** Exercise provided by Ron Wurzer and Jared Woods
Now that the UW has a new and exciting dedicated Emergency Operations Center, we needed to practice what we preach in regards to mitigation, safety and pre-planning of disasters and emergency events! We recently contacted WorkSafe Technologies, a company that specializes in earthquake mitigation. They spent several days installing seismic fasteners to each work station including phones, desktop computers and CPU’s, copiers, TV’s, cabinets, fire extinguishers, our map plotter and other electronics located within the EOC. We now feel secure that in the event of an earthquake or other disaster, this valuable equipment will be safely secured and usable in a crisis.
How Do We Activate the EOC?

The University’s new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is a big step forward for UW Emergency Management and the University in terms of preparedness and capability for coordinating response and recovery efforts. Most of the time, the EOC is quiet; but remains ready to go at a moment’s notice. So when that moment comes, how does the EOC activate?

Activation occurs when someone in authority, such as the UW President, the Chief of Police or Director of Emergency Management decides that an EOC activation is necessary to collect and coordinate the resources needed to manage an incident that has occurred on the Seattle Campus or in response to a regional incident that impacts the Seattle Campus. The UW EOC may also be activated in support of UW Bothell, UW Tacoma or as a back-up for the City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management.

Once the activation order is given, the EOC responders are called to the EOC by use of an automated notification system, similar to UW ALERT. When not in use, the staff of UW Emergency Management work to keep the EOC in a high state of readiness, since we never know when the next big emergency or disaster will occur.

As a general rule, EOC’s don’t activate only for emergencies and disasters. EOC’s may also be used to support special events such as important visiting dignitaries or large public events such as SeaFair or the Olympics.

Find us on Facebook

Better late than never...UW Emergency Management has finally joined the Social Media world! In the last few years Emergency Management departments and agencies around the country are learning the value of social media and how we communicate with the public. Social Media is changing the field of Emergency Management. We used to plan with the assumptions that there will be no communications in an impacted area. However, this is proving to be a false assumption as Social Media is allowing people a new tool in communicating during a disaster.

Like us from our webpage

www.huskyem.org
Mutation of H5N1 (Bird Flu)

On Monday, August 29, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization increased readiness and surveillance against a possible resurgence of the H5N1 Bird Flu through a mutated strain of the virus that has appeared in Asia. There have been some confirmed cases of human deaths caused by complications from the H5N1 flu virus this year.

Flu and other illness can be spread from country to country as people travel, so the United States and Washington State are not immune to the potential for an outbreak of H5N1.

The important thing to remember is that there are steps that each of us can take to reduce our potential exposure:

- Get an annual flu vaccine.
- Maintain healthy diet, exercise and sleep habits.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before eating.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer to help keep your hands clean.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth as these are common entry points of the flu into your body.
- Stay home when sick.

For more information on flu tips or what the University is doing to help prevent the spread of flu, please visit these sites:

⇒ UW Emergency Management
⇒ UW Medical Center
⇒ Hall Health
⇒ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

September National Preparedness Month

Thursday September 8th 2011 the triad of Public Safety for the University campus gathered again to provide outreach and education to the UW Tower community. The UW Police Department, Environmental Health & Safety (Fire Life Safety Office) and UW Emergency Management were out in force to promote September National Preparedness Month. Two of our preferred vendors, PrepareSmart and WorkSafe Technologies joined us in providing examples of emergency supply products and earthquake mitigation options. Please contact UWEM Plans & Training Manager, Siri McLean, sirim@uw.edu if you are interested in this road show coming to a facility near you.
UW-IT Prepares for Zombie Attack

Over the past few years, Zombies have popped up everywhere. While many people thought they were a passing fad, Zombie sightings have increased to the point where the US Center for Disease Control (CDC) and other government agencies across the country are encouraging people to be prepared for a zombie apocalypse!

Not wanting to be caught off guard, UW-Information Technology (UW-IT) decided to take the CDC’s advice seriously. UW-IT sponsored “Zombie Week” with demonstrations, exhibits, and training to help its staff prepare for a Zombie attack.

Are you interested in preparing your department for a Zombie attack? Here are some questions UW-IT asked, and the resources it found on campus with the help of UW Emergency Management and SafeCampus:

- What if Zombies got into our water supply? (Collecting, Filtering, and Storing Water exhibit)
- What’s in our Zombie survival kit? (Building a Home and Workplace Preparedness Kit training and exhibit)
- Are we or is anyone we know being threatened by a Zombie? (Violence Prevention Training)
- What are we going to do if Zombies disrupt the sewage system? (The Toilet Alternative exhibit)
- How will we (UW-IT) respond to a Zombie attack? (UW-IT Unit Response Center tour)

UW-IT believes if it is better prepared for a zombie attack, it will be better prepared for any imaginable emergency or disaster that comes its way. If you are interested in learning more about UW-IT’s Zombie Week, contact Clarice Hall – ckhall@uw.edu.
BARC LEAN Project

The Business, Academic and Research Continuity (BARC) program is participating in a LEAN project to better determine how promote BARC to the UW System (anything with “UW” in front of it). A key concept of LEAN is to evaluate and attempt to make our existing process more efficient or establish new ones that are more efficient.

A major part of the BARC LEAN project is to secure permanent funding for BARC as a program that benefits every aspect of the University. Past efforts for BARC that have stopped and started and stopped represent a highly inefficient way of protecting the University against disruption and prohibits effective recovery when a disruption does occur.

A fun part about the LEAN process is picking a theme. BARC’s LEAN project theme is “The Wizard of BARC” and uses several iconic characters and samples from the popular story to represent BARC LEAN concepts:

- The yellow brick road is the progress of BARC planning.
- Big problems are represented by the Wicked Witch with small problems represented by a flying monkey.
- The Scarecrow is the knowledge or the “Way” to do BARC planning.
- The Tin Man is the heart or the “Desire” for BARC planning.
- The Cowardly Lion represents the “Will” to do the BARC planning (i.e. courage).

If you’re interested in seeing the Wizard of BARC lean boards, give us a call.
UW Burke Museum: Mitigation Work Completed!

We are proud to announce on behalf of the University, the Burke Museum Shelving Project is complete and now housing very rare and irreplaceable artifacts. This very generous and competitive grant was awarded to the UW by the Washington State Military Department Emergency Management Division and FEMA. The Burke can now rest assured their artifacts are now well secured for the enjoyment of future generations. Prior to receiving this grant, the Burke's expensive and rare articles and objects were open game to being destroyed in the event of a major earthquake. As quoted by Ron Eng and Rebecca Andrews, Museum Curators, Ron stated that "This award has given us an opportunity to remake our collections room. The Geology Division collections are now housed in a space that provides a safe and efficient working environment. It is a vast improvement that would not have been possible to attain with just our normal funding." Rebecca added "The new compactor storage systems the Ethnology Department was able to acquire through FEMA funding allow us to protect and preserve important ethnological collections. We are able to safely store the objects in a way that reduces potential damage from future disasters in our area."

Fire Safety
When it comes to fire – be smart! If the fire is too big for you to handle, immediately get out of the house. Don’t stop to gather anything or to do anything. Once you are outside, stay outside. Intense heat and toxic fumes can kill you.

Shelter in Place
Your house provides a good first-layer barrier against chemical airborne agents. Additional protection is achieved by tightly sealing one room of your home that you have pre-designated and prepared. A safe room is one that easily and quickly can be sealed to protect you from airborne agents, and that has a few supplies to get you through the hours that you will need to stay inside it. All doors and windows of that room will be sealed with plastic sheeting and tape, and dampened towels or cloths will be placed under the doors. You will probably need to stay inside several hours, but not several days. So, choose a room that can accommodate your needs for several hours. A master bedroom with an attached bathroom is ideal to give you access to the toilet and running water.

Home Hazard Hunt
All of Washington State has the potential of being impacted by a major earthquake. Earthquakes strike suddenly and without warning. When they occur, they cause the ground to undulate and shake, perhaps violently. Buildings – and their contents – are vulnerable to this rocking and rolling. Fortunately, experts teach how to secure homes to their foundations, and contents to wall studs.