



THE SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

Advisory Board Meeting – November 5



Florida SART will hold its next full Advisory Board Meeting on November 5 in the large conference room at the Alachua Regional Service Center, 14101 Hwy. 441, Suite 200, Alachua. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. and should be finished by 2:00 p.m.

Advisory Board meetings are an opportunity for the agriculture and affiliated animal responder community to compare notes and ideas, and to meet their counterparts in other agencies – federal, state and local – before a crisis situation requires immediate cooperation. (Should your schedule conflict with the date and time of the Advisory Board meeting, summaries are available on the Florida SART web site at

<http://www.flstart.org/jsp/member/OperationsMeetingMinutes.jsp>.)

Vermont Considers Flood Lessons

“First emergency response following a disaster is just the first step on a long and challenging journey.”

Deb Markowitz, Secretary
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

Tropical storms cause flooding in states as diverse as Florida, Vermont and Colorado. Deb Markowitz, Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, recently spoke about her state’s learning experiences from response to Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011. Irene brought 60 mph winds and up to 11 inches of rain to Vermont, damaging 3,500 homes and businesses, 500 miles of road and 200 bridges. Six people died.



Following Irene, Markowitz says, Vermont worked with local and federal government nonprofits and legions of volunteers to get families and communities back on their feet. Her agency responded to spills of hazardous waste, gasoline and oil; helped communities repair drinking water and sewage treatment systems; and supported efforts to rebuild roads and bridges.

“We responded to calls to address large accumulations of gravel, tree trunks, cars, refrigerators, propane tanks and endless amounts of debris that threatened to cause further damage to bridges, roads and homes,” she says, “or presented a risk of harm to public health and safety.”

Vol. 9, No. 10
October 2013

Contents

November Advisory Board Meeting	1
Vermont Considers Flood Lessons	2
DHS-Funded Training Continues	3
A Responder Self-Test	4
SARC Breaks Up Dog Fighting Ring	4
Under the radar	
Pet Store Regulations Change	5
Radiological Table Top Exercise	6
SARC Small Animal Emergency	6
Sheltering Courses	
SARC “Thank You” Letter	7
FWC and “Operation Wild Web”	8
Lest we forget ...	9
Answers to “Self-Test”	9
About the SART Sentinel	9

Vermont: Lessons Learned

Sleep and eat. A flood emergency response often takes weeks. It is a marathon, not a sprint. Responders can only be helpful after taking care of your own basic needs.



Ask for help. Many folks want to help, including experts who can respond quickly. Decide where you can use extra boots on the ground and ask for assistance.

Communicate. The first casualty of a crisis is information. Act based on facts. Communicate with folks in the field and share information with emergency response directors. Keep the public informed. “You cannot communicate too much.”

Build back with resilience in mind. Two years after Irene, Vermont is still recovering, but Markowitz believes they are seeing an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms. “Even as we rebuild, many communities face additional flooding. It is important to look ahead and rebuild with future resilience to flooding in mind.”

Once the water goes down, she says, everyone has the same instinct: quickly replace everything and restore communities to the way they were before the flood. Sometimes that’s correct. Rebuilding a road or bridge right away may be critical for emergency services and food. But other times, the desire to put everything back just the way it was before is misplaced.

Vermont discovered that much of the damage from Irene mirrored damage from flooding in 1927 and again in the 1970s, because the people rebuilt in the same way and in the same places.

“We are trying not to repeat that mistake,” says Markowitz, by taking into account the more intense weather events expected in the future. “We build to withstand future flooding.”

She notes it is the policy of the state to take advantage of our natural assets. Making the state more flood-resilient by giving our rivers room to move and by protecting natural systems such as floodplains, wetlands and vegetation along river corridors.

Extensive Training Slate is Offered

The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (FL SART) collaborates with several training partners to offer a series of six DHS-certified Agroterrorism Prevention courses in Florida. All courses are open to U.S. citizens and are free of charge through DHS grant funding. Training partners include the Western Institute for Food Safety and Security, University of California Davis, the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium, the University of Florida-Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences and the Regional Domestic Security Task Forces.

AWR 152

Principles of Preparedness for Agroterrorism and Food Systems' Disasters

The course goal is to prepare participants with the skills and knowledge to recognize agroterrorism vulnerabilities. Topics include identifying targets, developing prevention, protection and mitigation strategies, employing the principles of building multi-disciplinary response teams, and identifying the roles of the local, state and federal agencies prior to and during an agricultural or food system disaster. *This training has been approved for 6.5 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.*

* November 6 in Brooksville

8:00 am registration, 8:30 - 5:00 pm training

Hernando County Emergency Operations Center, 18900 Cortez Blvd.

* November 7 in Immokalee

8:00 am registration, 8:30 - 5:00 pm training

IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, 2685 State Road 29 N

AWR 153

Principles of Detection and Diagnosis, Strategies and Technologies

The course goal is to inform members of frontline response teams about the importance of early detection and diagnosis, proper sample collection and the steps involved in an agroterrorism-related outbreak investigation. The course includes strategies to improve and increase detection and diagnosis efficiency as well as the epidemiological and criminal investigation process. This training has been approved for 4.5 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.

* November 21, 2013 in St. Augustine

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 4:00 pm training

St. Johns County Health Dept., 1955 US 1 South, Suite 100

* December 11 in Brooksville

8:30 am registration, 9:00 – 4:00 pm training

Hernando County Emergency Operations Center, 18900 Cortez Blvd.

* December 12 in Immokalee

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 4:00 pm training

IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, 2685 State Rd. 29 N

AWR 155

Principles of Frontline Response to Agroterrorism and Food Systems' Disasters

The goal of this course is to demonstrate how an effective frontline emergency response can reduce or mitigate the effects of an agricultural emergency, an act of agroterrorism or other food systems disaster. This course includes a plan that can be used as an "all hazards" approach against a wide variety of potential problems and occurrences within the agricultural community. This training has been approved for 5.0 CEUs for Certified Environmental Health Professionals.

* November 22, 2013 in Daytona Beach

8:30 am registration, 9:00 - 5:00 pm training

Volusia County EOC, 3825 Tiger Bay Rd.

If you have questions regarding any of these courses, or about registration, contact Art Johnstone at ajohnstone@grantpartnersinc.org or [\(850\) 251-4184](tel:850-251-4184). To register you're your name, agency/company name, e-mail

address and telephone number to ajohnstone@grantpartnersinc.org. Be sure to specify which course(s)/location(s) you want to attend.

A Responder Self-Test



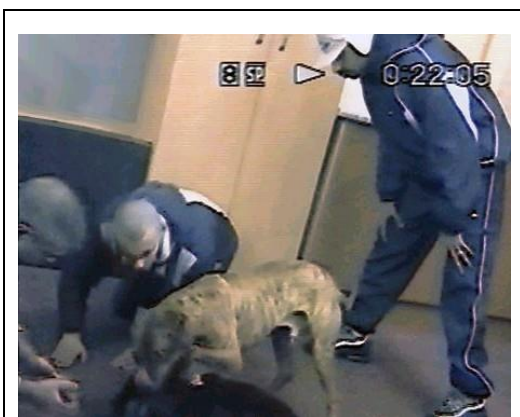
The following self-test is provided to help Florida responders become familiar with some of the terminology that may be encountered during an investigation involving WMD and anti-agriculture agents. For fun (and as a learning experience) see how many terms in the left-hand column you can match with definitions in the right-hand column. Answers are provided at the end of the newsletter.

1. Fomite	A. Presence of virus in the blood
2. Encephalitis	B. Items such as articles of clothing or eating utensils that may harbor a disease and could transmit the disease
3. Viremia	C. Relating to the skin
4. Glanders	D. A disease which can be transmitted between animals and people
5. Distal	E. Marked loss of strength; extreme weakness
6. Ataxia	F. Inability to coordinate muscle activity during voluntary movement
7. Zoonotic	G. Inflammation of the brain
8. Prostration	H. Viral disease transmitted to humans by inhalation of dust contaminated with rodent excreta
9. Hantavirus	I. Situated away from the center of the body, or from the point of origin; esp. applied to extremities of limbs/organs
10. Cutaneous	J. An infection caused by the bacteria Burkholderia malleri

Florida SARC Helps Break-up Dog Fighting Rings

In August, Florida SARC along with the ASPCA and HSUS helped rescue 367 dogs held for fighting in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and Texas. The operation involved 16 animal welfare organizations as well as at least 10 federal and state law enforcement agencies. It was the second-largest dog fighting raid in U.S. history.

ASPCA President & CEO Matthew Bershadker said he had rarely “... encountered suffering of this size and scope. Dogs ranging in age from several days to 12 years were found emaciated and bearing typical scars of dog fighting, and left to suffer in extreme heat with no visible fresh water or food. Some were tethered by chains and cables to cinder blocks and car tires. Remains of dead animals were also discovered where the dogs were housed and allegedly fought.”



1997: Members of the "Bloods" street gang, videotaped on a surveillance camera, dog fighting in a vacant office building.

As part of the raid, which we assisted at the request of the U.S. Attorney's Office and the FBI, federal and local officials also seized firearms, drugs and more than \$500,000 in cash from dog fighting gambling activities. All of these efforts were the result of a three-year investigation initiated by the Auburn, Alabama police. Ten suspects were arrested and indicted on felony dog fighting charges. If convicted, they could each face up to five years in prison.

Dog fighting is a felony in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Bershadker notes, "Earlier this year, the *Animal Fighting Spectator Prohibition Act* was reintroduced in the U.S. Congress, which would [make it a federal offense to attend an organized animal fight and would impose additional penalties for bringing a minor to a fight](#), expanding the implications of participation in this terrible crime."

"The ASPCA is pleased to have Florida SARC as one of its Response Partners assisting in the daily care and sheltering of hundreds of dogs rescued from what is believed to be the second largest dog fighting bust in U.S. history. It takes an army to manage such a large-scale sheltering operation, and we are grateful for Florida SARC's professionalism, eagerness and dedication to help these animals. Thanks to the collaboration of numerous agencies involved in the case, these dogs have been spared a life of suffering."

Tim Rickey, Vice President
ASPCA Field Investigation & Response Team

Under the Radar

Change in regulations: the "retail pet store"

Dr. Kendra Stauffer, USDA APHIS has sent the following note: "USDA has changed the Animal Welfare Act regulations by revising its definition of *retail pet store* in order to keep pace with the modern marketplace and to ensure that animals sold via the Internet or other non-traditional methods receive humane care and treatment."

In an effort to provide all pertinent information in one location, USDA Animal Care has created a special web page. On this page, we will post all related materials and updates. We encourage you to please visit the page and read through the posted materials in order to: 1) gain a better understanding of this regulation change; 2) learn the reasons that prompted the change; and 3) see if you need a USDA license or if you are exempt from licensing. http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/retail_pet_stores.shtml

Radiological Seminar/Tabletop Exercise Moves Forward



A two-day seminar and tabletop exercise this November 5-6 will be held at the Okeechobee County Emergency Operations Center [O. Mitchell Smeykal, Director, 707 NW 6th St. Okeechobee, FL 34972 (863) 763-3212] which is situated within the 50 mile radius or "Ingestion Pathway Zone (IPZ)" of the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant.

Kim Sharkey, a planner with Florida Division of Emergency Management, says FDEM's Radiological Emergency Preparedness Section is providing a two-day seminar and tabletop opportunity this November 5-6. It will be held at the Okeechobee County Emergency Operations Center which is situated – along with Glades, Highlands and Osceola Counties – within the 50 mile radius or "Ingestion Pathway Zone (IPZ)" of the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant www.fpl.com/environment/nuclear/about_st_lucie.shtml. Following a radiological emergency at the plant, there is a chance of significant indirect effects for all IPZ counties: regional food embargoes, an influx of evacuating citizens and generalized public concern even leading to panic.

Day 1 will address ingestion pathway planning and response, radiation and contamination considerations, and agricultural issues.
Day 2 will include a tabletop exercise conducted by Florida State University's Center for Disaster Risk Policy, where a simulated incident will test capabilities and planning.



We invite County EM Directors and other pertinent local responders – Ag Extension Agents, County Health Departments, Transportation, Public Works, Public Information Officers, Local Law Enforcement, Fire Departments, Environmental Protection, and local government – to participate. Each day will begin at 9:00 am and should be concluded by 4:00 pm.

For questions, contact Kim Sharkey Kimberly.sharkey@em.myflorida.com or Roger Rankin Roger.rankin@em.myflorida.com (850) 212-0887.

Florida SARC Presents Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Classes

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition is teaching "Small Animal Emergency Sheltering - Awareness Level" to promote effective response for animals during disasters. Registration is required, but due to a grant from Florida Emergency Management and Homeland Security there is no fee to attend. This course is certified by the Florida Department of Emergency Management, course code FL-003-RESP.

Course Topics include:

Personal Preparedness, Deployment Preparedness, Daily Care and Feeding, Animal Behavior, Assisting in Shelter Set Up, Proper Cage Cleaning and Disinfection, Stress Management, Zoonotic Diseases, Personal Safety, Overview of the Incident Command System and more.

DATE & TIME: Saturday, October 19 – 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

LOCATION: Panhandle Animal Welfare Society, 127 West Hollywood Blvd., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

DATE & TIME: Saturday, November 2 – 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

LOCATION: Palm Beach County Animal Care & Control, 7100 Belvedere Rd., West Palm Beach

DATE & TIME: Saturday, November 9 – 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

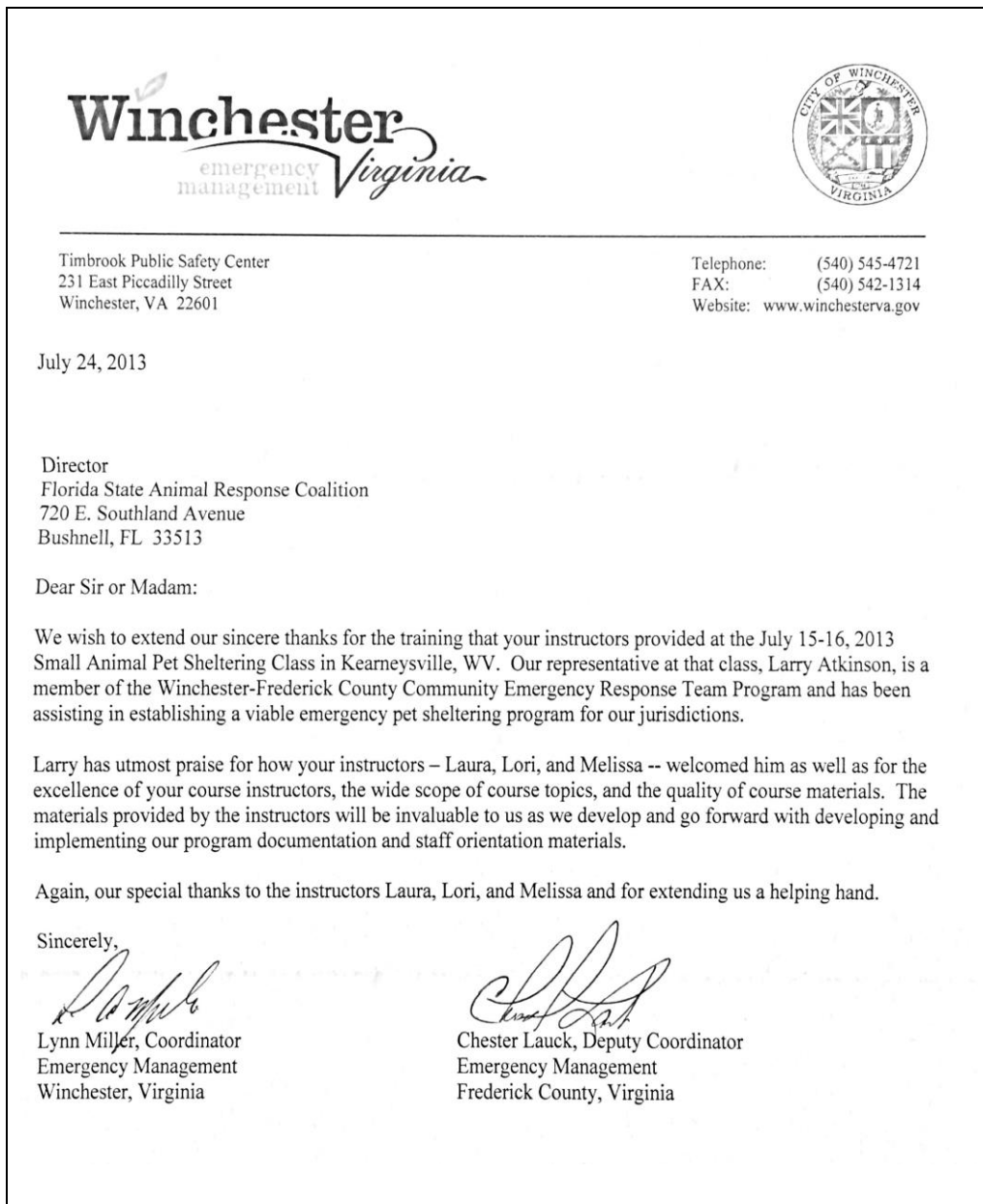
LOCATION: Cat Depot, 2542 17th St., Sarasota, Florida 34234

DATE & TIME: Saturday, November 9 – 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

LOCATION: Franklin County Emergency Management, 28 Airport Road, Apalachicola

For information and registration go to <http://www.flsarc.org/Training.html> or contact Melissa Forberg training@flsarc.org (352) 658-1224, Pam Burns pamburnssarc@gmail.com or Consie Von Gontard training@flsarc.org.

SARC “Thank You” Letter



FWC Participates in "Operation Wild Web"

"Illegal wildlife trade generates an estimated \$19 billion a year worldwide and ranks fourth on the list of the most lucrative global illegal activities behind narcotics, counterfeiting and human trafficking."

From report by the International Fund for Animal Welfare

Thirty-three people in Florida have been arrested for selling protected wildlife illegally online. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, a Florida SART partner, conducted a five-day undercover operation in cooperation with a host of federal and state agencies. Called "Operation Wild Web" the effort included officers from 16 states, three federal agencies and three Asian countries.

More than 150 people face federal and state charges after authorities disrupted online wildlife trafficking operations involving tiger, leopard and jaguar pelts, elephant ivory and live birds. The wildlife being sold illegally included fresh and saltwater fish, lobster, snakes and birds.



"The Internet is not an open marketplace for protected species," said Edward Grace, deputy assistant director for law enforcement for the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Working with counterparts around the U.S., FWC officials targeted illegal wildlife sellers who operate through Craigslist, eBay and other Internet marketplaces and classified ads. Wildlife officers in Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia ran similar operations at the same time.

"As a major platform for the illicit trade in wildlife, the Internet has become a dangerous place for animals," said Jeff Flocken, North American regional director for the International Fund for Animal Welfare, an advocacy group that worked with the federal task force. "Wildlife crimes are not only harmful to endangered species. They also pose serious threats to national and global security."

Lest we forget ...



New York, NY
September 21, 2001

FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue teams search for survivors amongst the wreckage of the World Trade Center.

Photo by Andrea Booher
FEMA News Photo

Answers: Responder Self-Test

1-B, 2-G, 3-A, 4-J, 5-I, 6-F, 7-D, 8-E, 9-H and 10-C.

Note: Answers to responder self-test taken from Appendix D-Glossary of "Criminal Investigation Handbook for Agroterrorism, a joint effort of the FBI Counterterrorism Division; the FDA Office of Criminal Investigations; and the USDA Office of the Inspector General.

About the SART Sentinel

The **SART Sentinel** is an e-mail newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team. Past issues of the **Sentinel** are archived on the Florida SART Web Site www.flsart.org.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in **the SART Sentinel**, please contact the editors.

Editor: Rick Sapp, PhD, Technical Writer, under contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry rsa5@cox.net

Associate Editor: Joe Kight, State ESF-17 Coordinator, Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry Joe.Kight@freshfromflorida.com