



KCER Watch

Safety and Health Topics: Emergency Preparedness Bulletin

November 2016

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Hot Topics

CMS Proposed New Rule Would Update Fire Safety Standards at Dialysis Facilities

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced a proposed rule to update Medicare fire protection guidelines for some dialysis facilities.

The proposed guidelines will impact all dialysis facilities that do not currently provide one or more exits at grade level from the treatment area level. The proposed rule addresses building construction, patient protection, and operational features of the affected dialysis facilities. The proposed changes would provide increased safety for Medicare beneficiaries from fire and smoke. Some of the main requirements laid out in this proposed rule include:

- Doors to hazardous areas must be self-closing or must close automatically.
- A fire watch or building evacuation is required if the sprinkler system is out of service for more than 10 hours.



Learn more: <https://goo.gl/2Abxbx>

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CMS Announces More Funding Dollars to Support Zika Prevention and Treatment

This month, CMS announced that an additional \$66.1 million is being allocated to support Zika virus prevention activities and treatment services for Zika-related health conditions. CMS said that the money will help speed-up the efforts to provide care to people “living in areas with local active Zika transmission.” Puerto Rico will receive the bulk of the funding due to its high rate of Zika cases.



Learn More: <https://goo.gl/uLbzG5>

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State of Emergency Declared in North Carolina Due to Wildfires

As of November 10, 25 counties in North Carolina remained under a state of emergency from wildfires. At one point, fire fighters were battling 20 wildfires simultaneously. Much of western North Carolina, along with most of the Southeast United States, remains in a historic drought, with several cities receiving 10–20 inches of rain below average for the year.



Learn More: <https://goo.gl/i6ITLH>

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Education/Communication

2016 KCER Summit–December 15, 2016

Emergencies can happen with little or no notice. Each partner from the kidney community plays a critical role in the event of a disaster.

The KCER Summit, held annually in conjunction with the 2016 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Quality Conference, brings together stakeholders in the end stage renal disease (ESRD) emergency preparedness community, including CMS, ESRD Networks, providers, large dialysis organization (LDO) corporate leadership, patients, emergency management personnel, hospitals, departments of health (DOHs), utility companies, and transportation companies.



The 2016 Summit will highlight personal stories from stakeholders that have experienced a disaster during 2016. Activities will also include a discussion and related exercise focusing on “imminent threat” and violence in the dialysis setting.

More Information: <https://goo.gl/MjSrV3>

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Winter Is Coming: Make Sure Your Home Heating System Is Safe

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) wants to make sure that Americans are safely prepared for the winter season. According to the USFA, half of all home heating fires occur during December, January, and February, so now is the time to make sure you are prepared to stay warm and safe. The USFA has these suggestions for safely heating your home this winter:

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from all heat sources, including fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, space heaters, and/or candles.
- Never use an oven to heat your home.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.

For more information on how to keep furnaces, space heaters, kerosene heaters, fireplaces, and/or wood stoves safe, visit the [USFA's Heating Fire Safety page](#).

Read More: <https://goo.gl/xl7Bn0>

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Cleaning Mold After a Flood



Mold and mildew can start growing within 24 hours after a flood and can lurk in a home, from the attic to the basement and throughout crawl spaces. The best defense against the health risks associated with mold is to clean, dry or, as a last resort, discard moldy items. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers practical tips for homeowners and renters on how to safely and efficiently remove mold from the home.

Read More: <https://goo.gl/LfwXDO>

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La Niña Has Officially Arrived—How Will It Affect Your Weather?

The weather phenomenon known as La Niña arrived on November 10. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) says La Niña, associated with cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean, causes the Jet Stream to be less active in the southern United States. This usually leads to fewer storm systems and below average precipitation. It also typically causes cooler than normal weather across the northern tier of the country, as well as occasionally wetter periods.



Read More: <https://goo.gl/oHN9Dk>

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Webinar: Celebrating National Native American Heritage Month Through Community Preparedness

In observance of National Native American Heritage Month, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Individual and Community Preparedness Division and the Office of External Affairs, Tribal Affairs will host a webinar on Wednesday, November 30 from 2–3 p.m. ET. The webinar will focus on disaster preparedness and resilience efforts serving tribal communities. Attendees will hear from community leaders who have worked to put preparedness into action by developing successful community-based initiatives. Related program resources will also be made available.

Learn More: <https://goo.gl/bgxvqq>

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You can find this month's KCER Watch and past editions on our website:

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