

## FACT SHEET:

### Major Activities of the N.C. Governor's Terrorism Preparedness Task Force Since 2001

- The General Assembly approved several new laws:
  - House Bill 1468 increased penalties for the use of certain weapons of mass destruction, including a potential death sentence if a weapon kills someone and five to 15 years in prison for hoaxes or false reports.
  - House Bill 1472 established a Biological Agent Registry in the Department of Health and Human Services of all potentially dangerous biological materials possessed and maintained in North Carolina, and the locations of the laboratories and other facilities that use and keep those materials.
  - House Bill 1471 allowed the governor to access the Rainy Day Fund to meet immediate needs of state agencies to improve terrorism preparedness. *(some of these projects are detailed in the paragraphs below)*
  - House Bill 1508 clarifies the authority of the state public health director in case of a suspected public health emergency or bio, chemical, or nuclear terrorist attack. The health director has the authority to force testing or enact quarantines as necessary if a public health threat exists.
  - Senate Bill 692 allows law enforcement and emergency response agencies to conduct risk assessments, identify potential targets, address security needs and other activities with the knowledge that terrorists will not be able to gain access to the information using public record laws.
  
- North Carolina has underway the first comprehensive, statewide anti-terrorism training program for all 35,000-law enforcement officers in the state. The degree of collaboration among the agencies involved is also unprecedented. It includes all three U.S. Attorney's offices, the FBI, SBI, INS, ATF, and the state Departments of Crime Control & Public Safety, Agriculture, Public Health, Justice, and Transportation as well as the Community College System.
- North Carolina established 11 new Urban Search and Rescue Teams with equipment and training for collapsed structure rescues; expanded its Regional Response Teams from six to seven to respond to chemical spills or hazardous materials incidents; and is creating State Medical Assistance Teams across the state to improve medical response capabilities.
- The Task Force developed a Terrorism Vulnerability Self-Assessment Tool and a Terrorism Threat Reduction Plan and distributed them to local law enforcement and emergency management agencies.
- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is developing a Radiological, Chemical and Bio-terrorism Attack Information System to provide statewide automated and secure information dissemination and notification to prepare and respond to terrorism threats and events.
- DHHS upgraded its public health laboratory to be better equipped to safely handle and quickly test possible biological agents.
- DHHS hired a state bioterrorism expert, is providing training for local health departments, and created seven bioterrorism teams to enhance public health surveillance to detect and respond to acts of bioterrorism and to monitor for subsequent diseases and syndromes.
- The North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) established a voluntary program with the fertilizer retailers in the state to monitor the sale of explosive grade ammonium nitrate fertilizers. A pesticide registration and reporting program has also been implemented.
- The NCDA&CS is establishing a new high security biological testing laboratory to assist Public Health in testing potential biological agents that might be targeted against the state's human and animal/livestock population.
- North Carolina Information Technology Services (ITS), with information coordinated by the NC Department of Crime Control & Public Safety Public Affairs Office has deployed a North Carolina Homeland Security web site to provide the citizens of North Carolina a single source of accurate terrorism preparedness and educational information.

For more information on terrorism and family preparedness, citizens should contact their local emergency management office, the American Red Cross, or visit any of the following web sites.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

[www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

Get Ready Now

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

American Red Cross

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

A Guide to Citizen Preparedness

[www.fema.gov/areyouready](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready)

In Spanish

[www.fema.gov/spanish/areyouready\\_spa.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/spanish/areyouready_spa.shtm)

N.C. Crime Control & Public Safety

[www.nccrimecontrol.org](http://www.nccrimecontrol.org)

N.C. Homeland Security

[www.ncgov.com/asp/subpages/safety\\_security.asp](http://www.ncgov.com/asp/subpages/safety_security.asp)