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NEWS



Contacts:

Peter Picarillo, BNET
(888) 353-2638 x1002
ppicarillo@bnetinc.org

Armand Randolph, RIEMA
Cell (401) 641-8269
armand.randolph@ema.ri.gov

RHODE ISLAND LAUNCHES CORPORATE EMERGENCY ACCESS SYSTEM (CEAS) STATEWIDE

Launch Represents BNET's 2nd Statewide CEAS Program and the First Inter-operable Crisis Event Recovery Access Program Between States

FULTON, NY - The Business Network of Emergency Resources ([BNET](http://www.bnetinc.org)) announced today the launch of its second statewide emergency access program. With the implementation of the [Corporate Emergency Access System \(CEAS\)](http://www.ceas.com), Rhode Island joins Massachusetts to become the first two states to share a border and have common crisis event recovery programs that inter-operate with one another. While the CEAS program is active in many cities along the eastern seaboard such as New York, Buffalo, Baltimore and Philadelphia; Rhode Island and Massachusetts represent the first states to share business commuting populations that will have cooperating disaster recovery programs for the private sector.

CEAS is an access control program that allows credentialed, essential employees of businesses and non-profits, entry into areas that are otherwise off limits to the public due to disaster or emergency conditions. These employees maintain core systems and functions, provide critical services and restore critical infrastructure. Access is accomplished through the use of a centrally issued, pre-authorized secure credential, recognized by first responders and emergency management officials. Access is permitted when deemed safe and will not interfere with first responder operations.

"By bringing CEAS to Rhode Island, we hope to help reduce the economic impacts of disasters and get the private sector back on line sooner to support community response and recovery operations," stated RIEMA Director Peter Gaynor. "There is an integral relationship between business continuity, essential public services and the speed and success of disaster recovery."

BNET Executive Director Peter Picarillo said, "It is very exciting for us to have two States cooperating with one another to preserve their joint economic wellbeing following a disaster or regional emergency event. This is a great example of building regional resilience through public-private partnerships. Rhode Islands' recognition of CEAS will greatly enhance the resiliency of the State by ensuring its vital lifelines -- businesses and industries -- can survive a disaster."

Disasters and emergencies can significantly affect the economy and availability of essential commodities and services that are provided by the private sector and non-profits such as power, fuel, food, water, prescription medication, transportation, financial services, health care, and social services. The goal of the CEAS program is to help ensure economic viability and provide continuity of critical commodities and services by allowing select private sector and non-profit employees rapid access to their facilities following a disaster and/or emergency event. Participating businesses and organizations will receive CEAS credentials for employees who need to support critical operations and support disaster recovery efforts. These critical employees can quickly get back to work, assess damages, retrieve assets, stabilize and sustain core IT systems, and ensure their companies' continuity and recovery operations.

CEAS private sector credentialing is a high priority for the recently established Rhode Island Alliance for Business Resilience (www.riabr.org). Fidelity Investments, one of the founding members of the Alliance already uses CEAS for their critical employees in Massachusetts. "The CEAS program has proven beneficial for our operations in Massachusetts, and we are pleased to be involved with the statewide adoption of this program in Rhode Island. Collaboration between public and private sectors is vital to resilience at the state and business level during crises. CEAS will enable Fidelity's flexibility in moving our employees within and across state lines in an effort to keep our critical business processes running during emergencies," said John Gomes, Director, Security Operations, Fidelity Investments.

The CEAS card, which is issued to a limited number of employees of eligible companies and organizations, is intended to be easily recognized and verified by law enforcement during an emergency or disaster. The program provides a simple means of identification - the CEAS Card - to facilitate essential private sector employees' travel through, or into restricted areas if local authorities determine that such travel or access is safe and will not impede public safety response operations.

CEAS is available by annual subscription to eligible businesses and organizations across Rhode Island. To enroll, or learn more about how CEAS can better prepare your organization for the unexpected, visit the [Rhode Island CEAS](#) webpage.

About the Business Network of Emergency Resources, Inc. (BNET)

[BNET](#) is a not-for-profit company dedicated to establishing practical and effective emergency and crisis management solutions through partnerships between the public and private sector. Created by BNET, the [Corporate Emergency Access System \(CEAS\)](#) uses a ‘critical employee access card’ system to mitigate economic loss and maintain critical infrastructure when unforeseen events limit access to the workplace. The goal of CEAS is to accelerate recovery time for both business and government.

About the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA)

The mission of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency is to reduce the loss of life and property for the whole community while ensuring that as a state we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all natural, human-caused, and technological hazards.

For additional information about RIEMA, go to www.riema.ri.gov. Also, follow RIEMA on Twitter at @RhodeIslandEMA; Facebook (@RhodeIslandEMA); and Instagram (rhodeislandema).

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