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# No hurricanes so far, but verdict out on flu

Am I jinxing us by saying we dodged the hurricanes this year or just being optimistic? I'm leaning toward optimistic as we head into the second half of October. However, there is a potential storm on the horizon: an outbreak of H1N1. So far, it's been a fairly normal year, flu-wise, except that H1N1 seems to be the bug voted most likely to make people sick. DSHS is ready for whatever happens. Our Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) stands ready to respond if flu cases begin to climb, threatening to overwhelm health care systems. You can always find the latest information on the flu in Texas at [www.texasflu.org](http://www.texasflu.org). The situation changes rapidly, so bookmark the site and check it often.

Speaking of websites, the debut of our new DSHS site has been pushed back to mid-February. The entire DSHS site is being completely overhauled – more than 36,000 pages – and that is taking a bit more time than at first thought. Here at EMS/trauma systems, we will try to keep as many of the same links as we can so you can find the things on our website that you're used to finding. I am the liaison for the Regulatory Division for this project and I'm working hard to make sure our voices are heard.

If you're coming to the conference – and I hope you are – be aware of some schedule changes. In the end, we think you'll like the new schedule even better. In a nutshell, we're opening the exhibit hall much earlier on Sunday and staying open all day Sunday and all day Monday. At 3:00 on Monday, the exhibit hall closes and exhibitors move out. There will be no exhibit hall on Tuesday or Wednesday, but there will be classes as usual. The new hours actually give attendees the same number of hours of exhibit time and many more hours in which classes do not conflict with the exhibit hall. It will save the conference money by cutting out exhibitor lunches and additional exhibit hall rental on Tuesday.

GETAC meets, as usual, during the conference. Committees meet on Saturday and Sunday at the Omni; GETAC meets Monday evening. For a complete schedule, turn to page 14. And don't forget to print out the handouts for the committees you want to attend. Find all the meeting documents at [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/governor.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/governor.shtm).

Are you smarter than the average medic? Come show off your brain power at the Valsalva Bowl, a fast-paced quiz show featuring teams of three medics competing against each other in a game of EMS knowledge. It's fun to participate and fun to watch. Sunday night we'll have teams from Texas competing for the state crown. On Monday, the Texas team will compete against teams from across the country to find out who has bragging rights to the national title. Sound like fun? Turn to page 19 for more details.

See you in November!



## FROM THIS SIDE



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