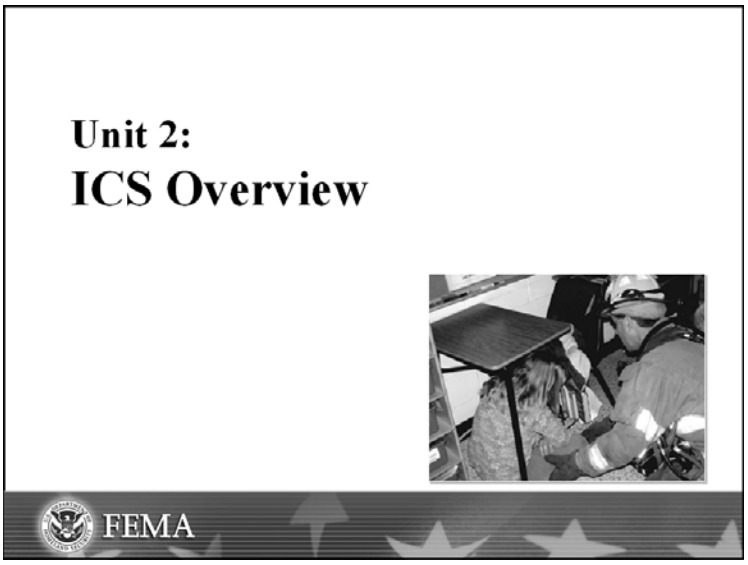
# Unit 2:  ICS Overview

## Topic: Unit Introduction

**Visual 2.1**



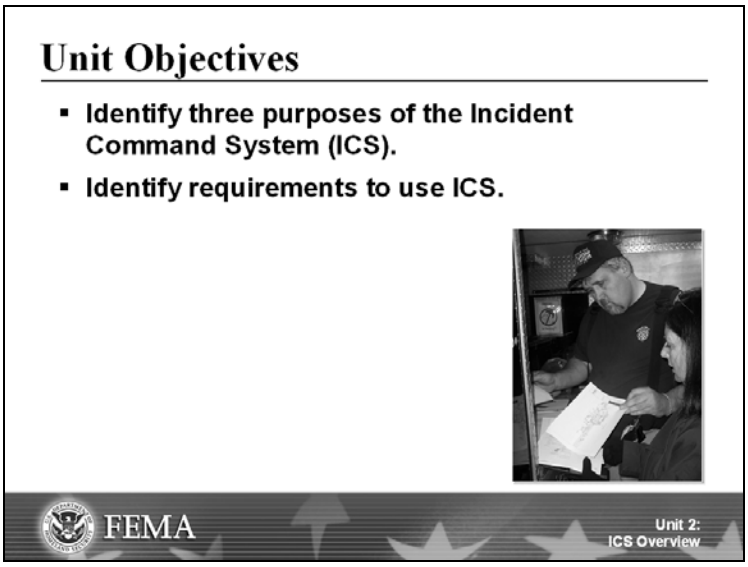

**Visual Description:** Unit Introduction

### Key Points

Unit 2 provides a general overview of the Incident Command System, or ICS.

## Topic: Unit Objectives

**Visual 2.2**




**Visual Description:** Unit Objectives

### Key Points

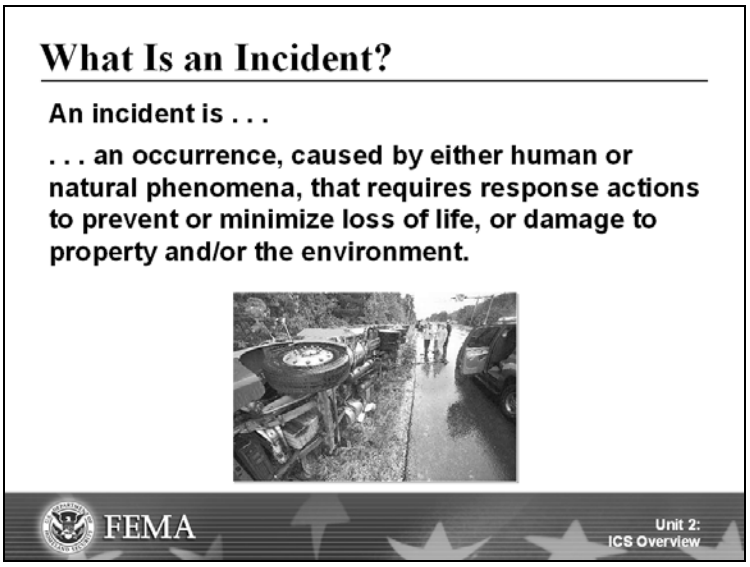
By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Identify three purposes of the Incident Command System (ICS).
  - Using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:
    - The safety of responders and others.
    - The achievement of tactical objectives.
    - The efficient use of resources.

- Identify requirements to use ICS.
  - National Incident Management Systems (NIMS)
  - Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) – 1986
  - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Rule 1910.120
  - State and Local Regulations

## Topic: What Is an Incident?

**Visual 2.3**




**Visual Description:** What Is an Incident?

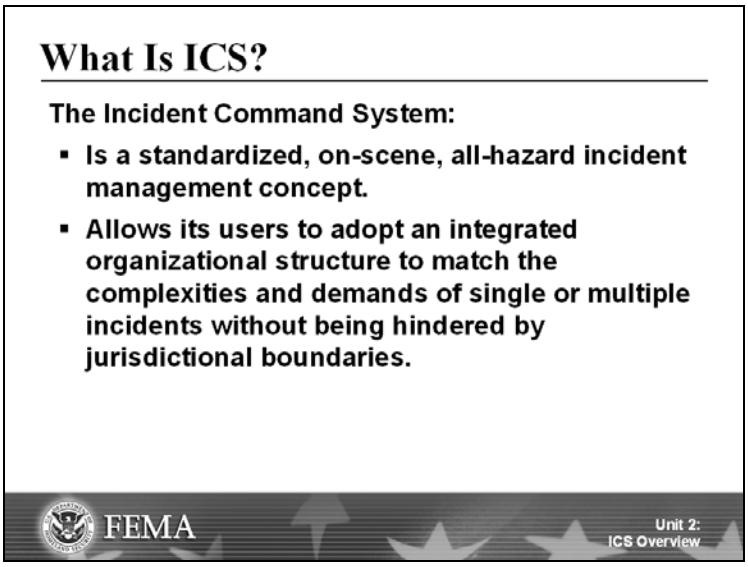
### Key Points

An incident is an occurrence, caused by either human or natural phenomena, that requires response actions to prevent or minimize loss of life, or damage to property and/or the environment.

**What are some examples of incidents that have occurred in schools?**

## Topic: What Is ICS?

**Visual 2.4**




**Visual Description:** What Is ICS?

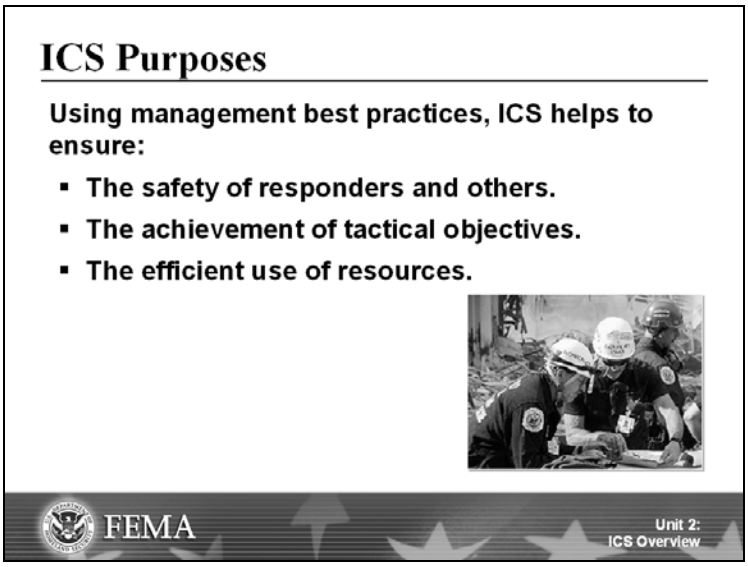
### Key Points

The Incident Command System (ICS):

- Is based on proven incident management practices.
- Defines incident response organizational concepts and structures.
- Consists of procedures for managing personnel, facilities, equipment, and communications.
- Is used throughout the life cycle of an incident (e.g., from threat to parent/student reunification).

## Topic: ICS Purposes

**Visual 2.5**




**Visual Description:** ICS Purposes

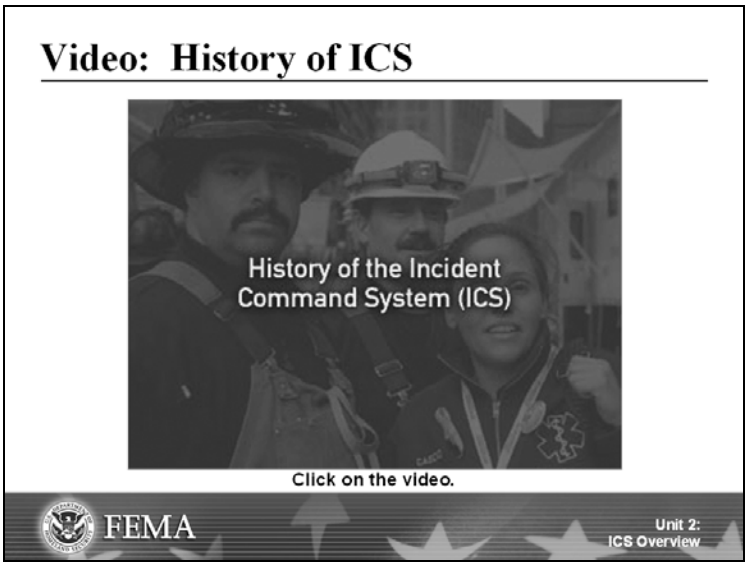
### Key Points

By using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:

- The safety of responders and others.
- The achievement of tactical objectives.
- The efficient use of resources.

**Topic** | **Video: History of ICS**

**Visual 2.6**




**Visual Description:** Video: History of ICS

## Key Points

This video provides a brief history of the development of ICS.

**Video Transcript:**

The Incident Command System (ICS) was developed in the 1970s following a series of catastrophic fires in California's urban interface. Property damage ran into the millions and many people died or were injured. The personnel assigned to determine the causes of this disaster studied the case histories and discovered that response problems could rarely be attributed to lack of resources or failure of tactics.

What were the lessons learned?

Surprisingly, studies found that response problems were far more likely to result from inadequate management than from any other single reason. Weaknesses in incident management were often due to:

- Lack of accountability, including unclear chains of command and supervision.
- Poor communication, due to both inefficient uses of available communications systems and conflicting codes and terminology.
- Lack of an orderly, systematic planning process.
- No common, flexible, predesigned management structure that enables commanders to delegate responsibilities and manage workloads efficiently.
- No predefined methods to integrate interagency requirements into the management structure and planning process effectively.

**Topic** | **Video: History of ICS**

**Video Transcript: (Continued)**

A poorly managed incident response can be devastating to our economy and our health and safety. With so much at stake, we must effectively manage our response efforts. The Incident Command System, or ICS, allows us to do so.

ICS is a proven management system based on successful business practices.

This course introduces you to basic ICS concepts and terminology.

[end of transcript]

The next two pages provide additional information about the history of ICS.

## Topic: History of ICS

### ICS Background

The concept of ICS was developed more than 30 years ago, in the aftermath of a devastating wildfire in California. During 13 days in 1970, 16 lives were lost, 700 structures were destroyed, and over one-half million acres burned. The overall cost and loss associated with these fires totaled $18 million per day. Although all of the responding agencies cooperated to the best of their ability, numerous problems with communication and coordination hampered their effectiveness.

As a result, the Congress mandated that the U.S. Forest Service design a system that would "make a quantum jump in the capabilities of Southern California wildland fire protection agencies to effectively coordinate interagency action and to allocate suppression resources in dynamic, multiple-fire situations."

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection; the Governor's Office of Emergency Services; the Los Angeles, Ventura, and Santa Barbara County Fire Departments; and the Los Angeles City Fire Department joined with the U.S. Forest Service to develop the system. This system became known as FIRESCOPE (FIrefighting RESources of California Organized for Potential Emergencies). In 1973, the first "FIRESCOPE Technical Team" was established to guide the research and development design. Two major components came out of this work, the ICS and the Multiagency Coordination System (MACS).

The FIRESCOPE ICS is primarily a command and control system delineating job responsibilities and organizational structure for the purpose of managing day-to-day operations for all types of emergency incidents. By the mid-seventies, the FIRESCOPE agencies had formally agreed on ICS common terminology and procedures and conducted limited field-testing of ICS. By 1980, parts of ICS had been used successfully on several major wildland and urban fire incidents. It was formally adopted by the Los Angeles Fire Department, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), and endorsed by the State Board of Fire Services.

Also during the 1970s, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) was chartered to coordinate fire management programs of the various participating Federal and State agencies.

By 1980, FIRESCOPE ICS training was under development. Recognizing that in addition to the local users for which it was designed, the FIRESCOPE training could satisfy the needs of other State and Federal agencies, the NWCG conducted an analysis of FIRESCOPE ICS for possible national application.

By 1981, ICS was widely used throughout Southern California by the major fire agencies. In addition, the use of ICS in response to non-fire incidents was increasing. Although FIRESCOPE ICS was originally developed to assist in the response to wildland fires, it was quickly recognized as a system that could help public safety responders provide effective and coordinated incident management for a wide range of situations, including floods, hazardous materials accidents, earthquakes, and aircraft crashes. It was flexible enough to manage catastrophic incidents involving thousands of emergency response and management personnel.

By introducing relatively minor terminology, organizational, and procedural modifications to FIRESCOPE ICS, the NIIMS ICS became adaptable to an all-hazards environment. While tactically each type of incident may be handled somewhat differently, the overall incident management approach still utilizes the major functions of the Incident Command System. The FIRESCOPE board of directors and the NWCG recommended national application of ICS.

In 1982, all FIRESCOPE ICS documentation was revised and adopted as the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS). In the years since FIRESCOPE and the NIIMS were blended, the FIRESCOPE agencies and the NWCG have worked together to update and maintain the Incident Command System Operational System Description (ICS 120-1). This document would later serve as the basis for the National Incident Management System (NIMS) ICS.

## Topic: History of ICS

### ICS Variations

In the early 1970s, the Phoenix Fire Department developed the Fire Ground Command System (FGC). The concepts of FGC were similar to FIRESCOPE ICS but there were differences in terminology and in organizational structure. The FGC system was developed for structural firefighting and was designed for operations of 25 or fewer companies.

There were several efforts to "blend" the various incident command systems. One early effort was in 1987 when the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) undertook the development of NFPA 1561, then called Standard on Fire Department Incident Management System. The NFPA committee quickly recognized that the majority of the incident command systems in existence at the time were similar.

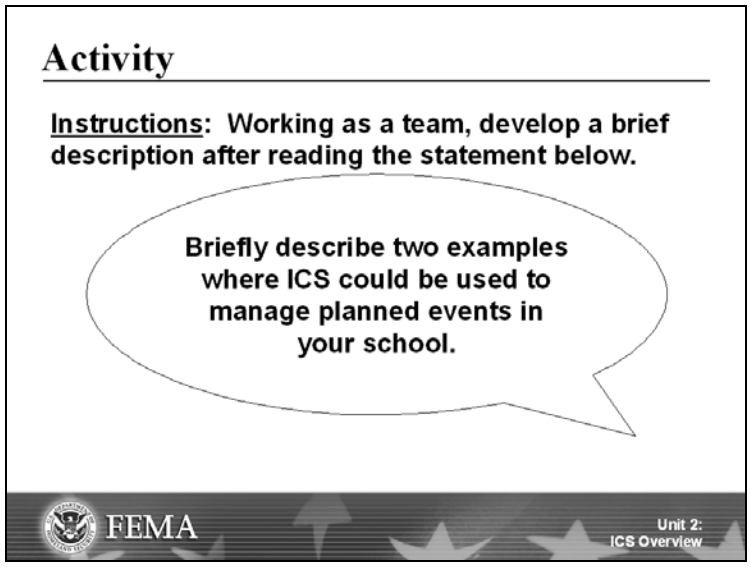
The differences among the systems were mostly due to variations in terminology for similar components. That NFPA standard, later revised to its present title: Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management, provides for organizations to adopt or modify existing systems to suit local requirements or preferences as long as they meet specific performance measurements. Recognizing the continuing challenges occurring in the fire service in applying a common approach to incident command, the National Fire Service Incident Management System (IMS) Consortium was created in 1990. Its purpose was to evaluate an approach to developing a single command system. The consortium consisted of many individual fire service leaders, representatives of most major fire service organizations, and representatives of Federal, State, and local agencies, including FIRESCOPE and the Phoenix Fire Department. One of the significant outcomes of the consortium's work was an agreement on the need to develop operational protocols within ICS, so that fire and rescue personnel would be able to apply the ICS as one common system.

In 1993, the IMS consortium completed its first document: Model Procedures Guide for Structural Firefighting. As a result, FIRESCOPE incorporated the model procedures, thereby enhancing its organizational structure with operational protocols. These changes enabled the Nation's fire and rescue personnel to apply the ICS effectively regardless of what region of the country they were assigned to work. The National Fire Academy (NFA), having already adopted the FIRESCOPE ICS in 1980, incorporated this material into its training curriculum as well.

Source: NIMS Integration Center

**Topic** | **Activity**

**Visual 2.7**




**Visual Description:** Activity: Briefly describe two examples where ICS could be used to manage planned events in your school.

## Key Points

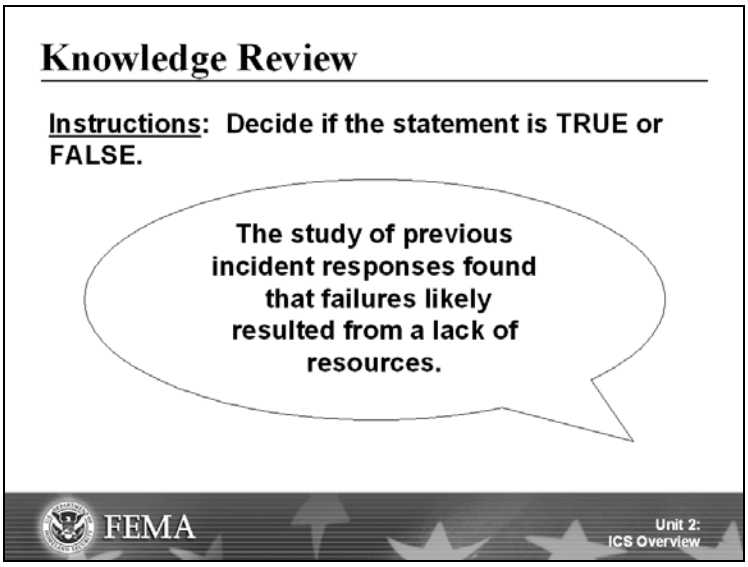
**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to illustrate how ICS can be used to address incident management issues, using planned events as an example.

**Instructions:** Follow the steps below to participate in this activity.

1. You will be assigned to a group. Working as a team, develop a brief description of two examples where ICS could be used to manage planned events in a school.
2. Write the examples on chart paper.
3. Select a spokesperson to present the group's response.
4. Your group will have 5 minutes to complete this activity.

## Topic: Knowledge Review

**Visual 2.8**




**Visual Description:** True or False? The study of previous incident responses found that failures likely resulted from a lack of resources.

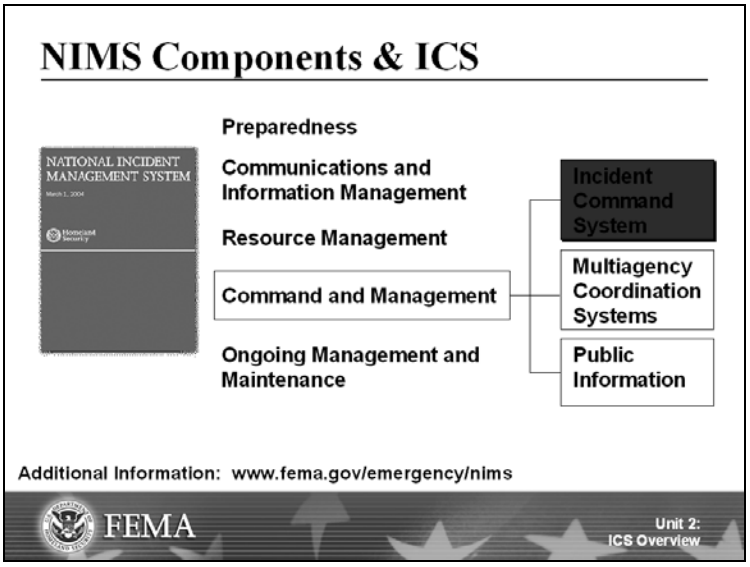
### Key Points

**Decide if the following statement is TRUE or FALSE.**

The study of previous incident responses found that failures likely resulted from a lack of resources.

**Topic** | **National Preparedness and ICS Requirements**

**Visual 2.9**




**Visual Description:** NIMS Components & ICS

## Key Points

**NIMS provides a consistent framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels regardless of the cause, size, or complexity of the incident.** NIMS is not an operational incident management or resource allocation plan. NIMS represents a core set of doctrine, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes that enables effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management.

- **Preparedness:** Effective emergency management and incident response activities begin with a host of preparedness activities conducted on an ongoing basis, in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, procedures and protocols, training and exercises, personnel qualifications and certification, and equipment certification.

- **Communications and Information Management:** Emergency management and incident response activities rely upon communications and information systems that provide a common operating picture to all command and coordination sites. NIMS describes the requirements necessary for a standardized framework for communications and emphasizes the need for a common operating picture. NIMS is based upon the concepts of interoperability, reliability, scalability, portability, and the resiliency and redundancy of communications and information systems.

- **Resource Management:** Resources (such as personnel, equipment, and/or supplies) are needed to support critical incident objectives. The flow of resources must be fluid and adaptable to the requirements of the incident. NIMS defines standardized mechanisms and establishes the resource management process to: identify requirements, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, recover and demobilize, reimburse, and inventory resources.

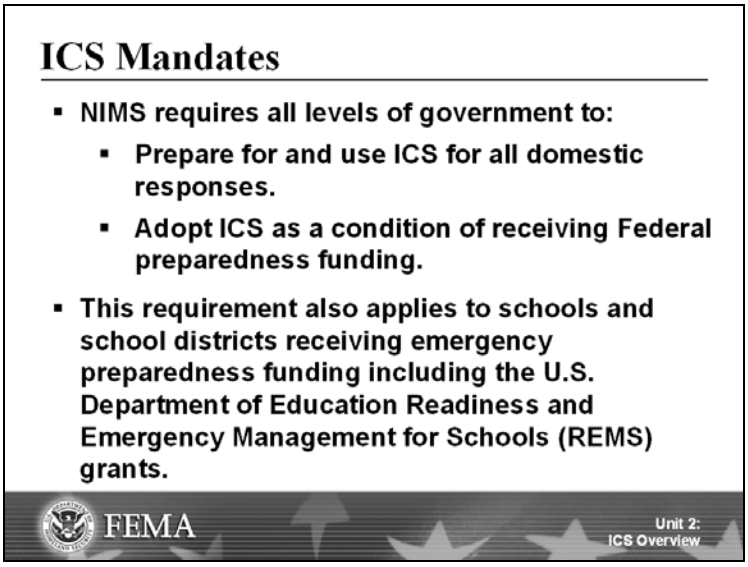
**Topic** | **National Preparedness and ICS Requirements**

- **Command and Management:** The Command and Management component within NIMS is designed to enable effective and efficient incident management and coordination by providing flexible, standardized incident management structures. The structures are based on three key organizational constructs: **the Incident Command System, Multiagency Coordination Systems, and Public Information.**

- **Ongoing Management and Maintenance:** Within the auspices of Ongoing Management and Maintenance, there are two components: the National Integration Center (NIC) and Supporting Technologies.

**Topic** | **National Preparedness and ICS Requirements**

**Visual 2.10**




**Visual Description:** ICS Mandates

## Key Points

NIMS requires all levels of government to:
- Prepare for and use ICS for all domestic responses.
- Adopt ICS as a condition of receiving Federal preparedness funding.

This requirement also applies to schools and school districts receiving emergency preparedness funding including the U.S. Department of Education Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) grants, CFDA #84.184E (formerly known as the Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) grant program).

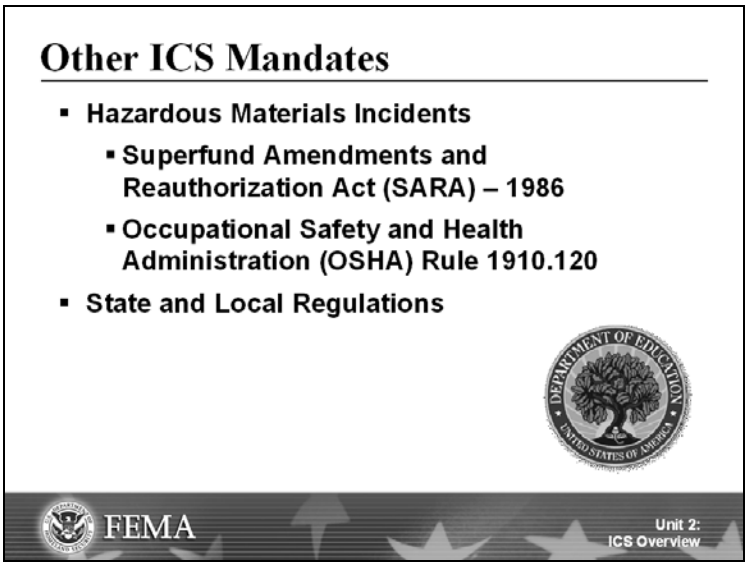
According to the National Integration Center, "institutionalizing the use of ICS" means that government officials, incident managers, and emergency response organizations at all jurisdictional levels must adopt the Incident Command System. Actions to institutionalize the use of ICS take place at two levels:

**Policy Level:** At the policy level, institutionalizing the ICS means government officials (i.e., Governors, mayors, county and city managers, tribal leaders, and others) must:
- Adopt the ICS through executive order, proclamation, or legislation as the jurisdiction's official incident response system; and
- Direct that incident managers and response organizations in their jurisdictions train, exercise, and use the ICS in their response operations.

**Organizational Level:** At the organizational/operational level, evidence that incident managers and emergency response organizations are institutionalizing the ICS would include the following:
- ICS is being integrated into functional and system-wide emergency operations policies, plans, and procedures.
- ICS training is planned or underway for responders, supervisors, and command-level officers.
- Responders at all levels are participating in and/or coordinating ICS-oriented exercises that involve responders from multiple disciplines and jurisdictions.

**Topic** | **National Preparedness and ICS Requirements**

**Visual 2.11**




**Visual Description:** Other ICS Mandates

## Key Points

In addition to the NIMS mandate, the following laws require the use of ICS:

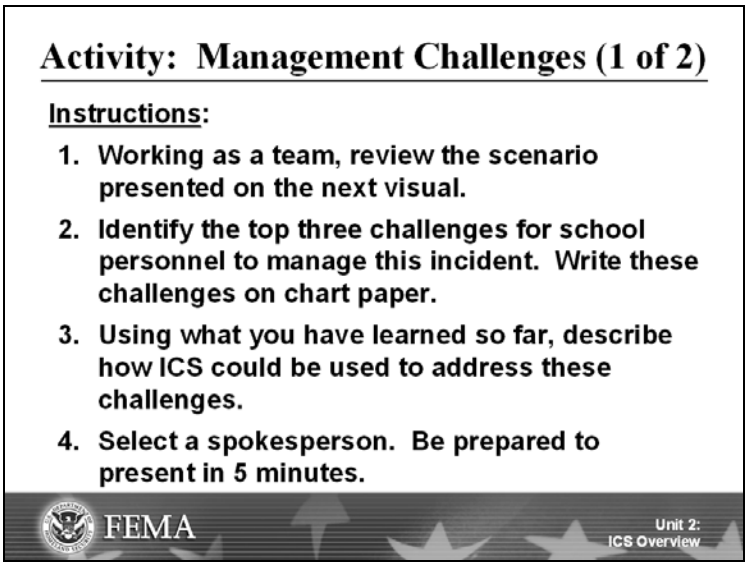
- The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986 established Federal regulations for handling hazardous materials. SARA directed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to establish rules for operations at hazardous materials incidents.

- OSHA rule 1910.120, effective March 6, 1990, requires all organizations that handle hazardous materials to use ICS. The regulation states: "The Incident Command System shall be established by those employers for the incidents that will be under their control and shall interface with other organizations or agencies who may respond to such an incident."

Note that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires States to use ICS at hazardous materials incidents.

**Topic** | **Activity: Management Challenges**

**Visual 2.12**




**Visual Description:** Activity: Management Challenges (1 of 2)

**Key Points**

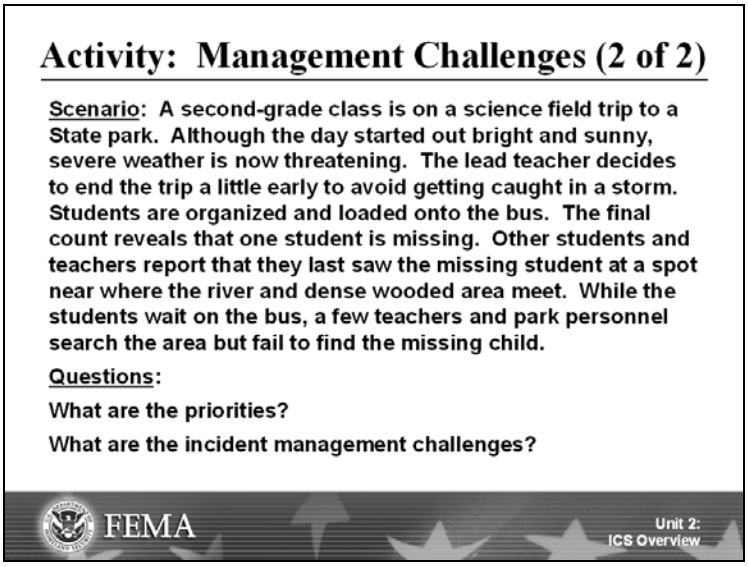
**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to illustrate how ICS can be used to address incident management issues.

**Instructions:** Follow the steps below to participate in this activity:

1. You will be assigned to a group of five or six.
2. Work as a team to review the scenario presented on the next page.
3. Identify the top three challenges for school officials to manage this incident and write the challenges on chart paper. Discuss how ICS could be used to address these challenges.
4. Select a spokesperson for your group.
5. Your group has 5 minutes to complete this activity.

**Topic** | **Activity: Management Challenges**

**Visual 2.13**




**Visual Description:** Activity: Management Challenges (2 of 2)

## Key Points

**Scenario:**

A second-grade class is on a science field trip to a State park. Although the day started out bright and sunny, severe weather is now threatening. The lead teacher decides to end the trip a little early to avoid getting caught in a storm. Students are organized and loaded onto the bus. The final count reveals that one student is missing. Other students and teachers report that they last saw the missing student at a spot near where the river and dense wooded area meet. While the students wait on the bus, a few teachers and park personnel search the area but fail to find the missing child.

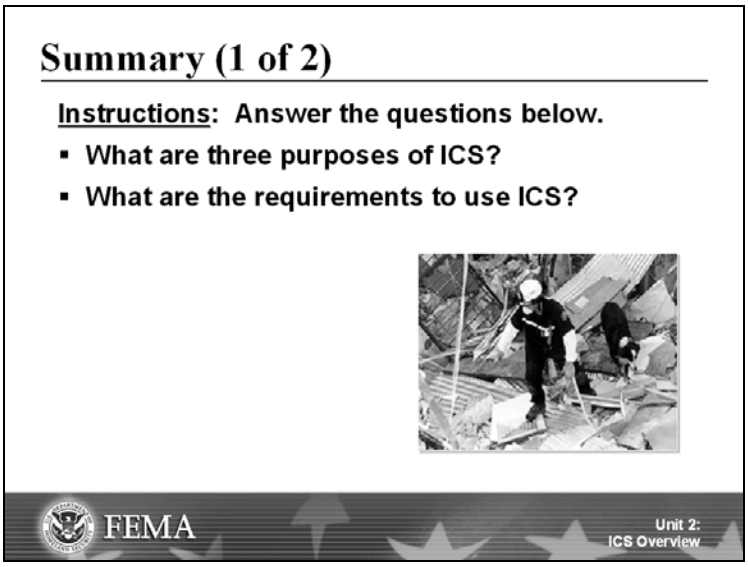
**Discussion Questions:**

**What are the priorities?**

**What are the incident management challenges? (Think about how ICS may address these challenges!)**

## Topic: Summary (1 of 2)

**Visual 2.14**




**Visual Description:** Summary (1 of 2)

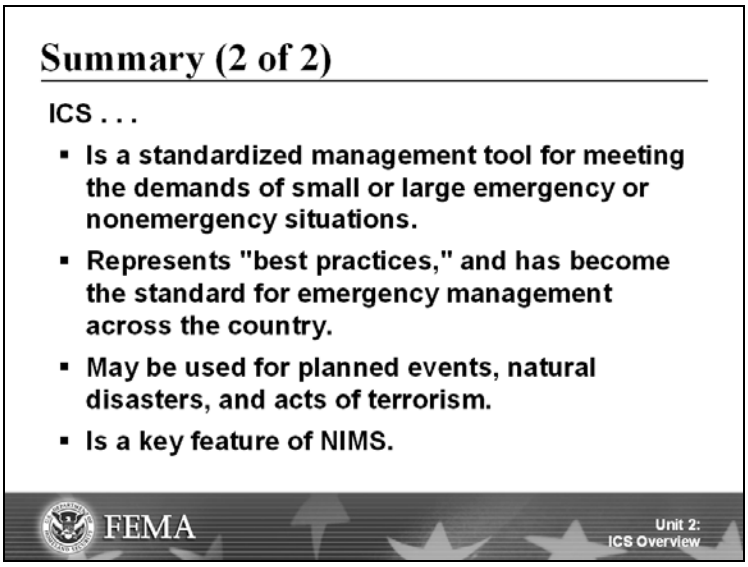
### Key Points

You should now be able to:

- Identify three purposes of ICS.
- Identify requirements to use the Incident Command System (ICS).

## Topic: Summary (2 of 2)

**Visual 2.15**




**Visual Description:** Summary (2 of 2)

### Key Points

It is important to remember that ICS:

- Is a standardized management tool for meeting the demands of small or large emergency or nonemergency situations.
- Represents "best practices," and has become the standard for emergency management across the country.
- May be used for planned events, natural disasters, and acts of terrorism.
- Is a key feature of NIMS.

The next unit will cover the basic features of ICS.

**Your Notes:**