



# NWRTC

Northwest Regional  
Technology Center  
@PNNL



Pacific Northwest  
NATIONAL LABORATORY

## AROUND THE REGION IN HOMELAND SECURITY

The Northwest Regional Technology Center (NWRTC) is a virtual resource center, operated by Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), to support regional preparedness, resilience, response, and recovery. The center enables homeland security solutions for emergency responder communities and federal, state, and local stakeholders in the Northwest.

### HAPPY NEW YEAR AND WELCOME TO 2024!

On behalf of the NWRTC, thank you for your continued support to our center and the partnerships and opportunities we build. With your help, 2023 was a year of connecting science and technology to bolster preparedness, resilience, response, and recovery.



Our center leveraged its nationwide networks for [exciting new projects](#) in the first responder and emergency management space. In partnership with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate, our team hit the road, virtually and in person, to connect with first responders and emergency managers and identify top capability needs to guide future technology investments and help us re-envision the future of emergency management (EM) and emergency operations centers. Our staff have also been [conducting technology assessments](#) and providing subject matter expertise to [publications](#) that provide the emergency response community with information on critical equipment to inform procurement decisions. This work is ongoing—please reach out if you are interested in learning more.

This year we are ushering in a new leader. With the retirement of friend and colleague Rich Ozanich, [Rachel Bartholomew](#) has joined our team as Deputy Director. She brings decades of experience building relationships and connecting with the first responder community to capture and translate their technical requirements into research and solutions. We wish Rich the best in retirement and look forward to what Rachel will bring to our NWRTC team!

Thank you all for another year of outreach, engagement, and opportunity. Our center's power is in our partnerships, and we look forward to staying connected with you to build smarter and safer solutions in the future.

*Ann Lesperance*  
NWRTC Director, PNNL

### OPPORTUNITIES

Events current at time of publication. Have a virtual resource or event to share? Email us!

- January 9-12 – [Consumer Electronics Show](#)
- February 26-28 – [Association of Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Professionals Annual Conference](#)
- March 17-21 – [National Emergency Management Association Mid-Year Forum](#)
- April 2-4 – [Partners in Emergency Preparedness](#)
- July 21-25 – [33<sup>rd</sup> Pacific NorthWest Economic Region Annual Summit](#)
- July 22-25 – [National Homeland Security Conference 2024](#)

### CONTACT

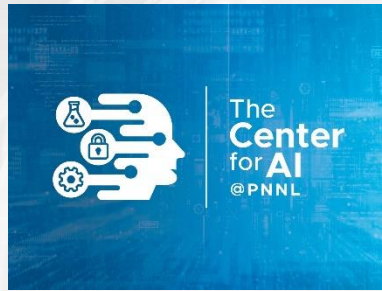
Want to know more? Visit us at [pnnl.gov/projects/nwrtc](http://pnnl.gov/projects/nwrtc). Contact the NWRTC with questions and comments at [nwrtc@pnnl.gov](mailto:nwrtc@pnnl.gov).



## CENTER FOCUSES ON AI FOR SCIENCE, SECURITY, RESILIENCE

PNNL has created the [Center for AI @PNNL](#) to coordinate the pioneering research of hundreds of scientists working on projects focused on science, security, and energy resilience. A

priority of the Center for AI @PNNL is developing ways to keep AI secure and trustworthy, in support of President Biden's recent executive order calling for the development of safe, secure, and trustworthy AI.



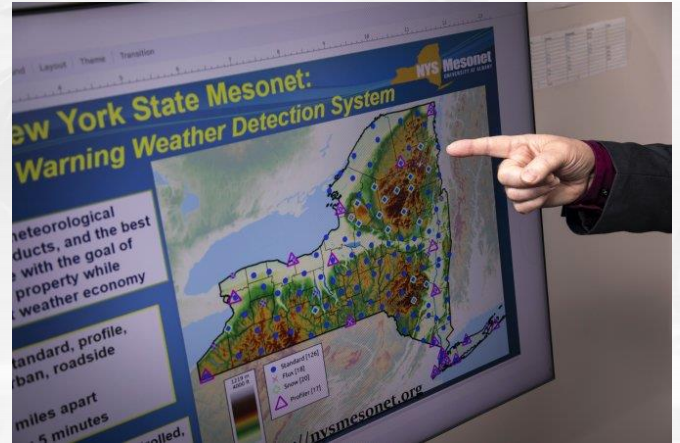
[A focus of AI at PNNL](#) is on challenges related to science, including in the first responder and EM space. For example, one team is using AI to develop ways to predict which hurricanes are most likely to strengthen rapidly and unexpectedly. On behalf of DHS S&T, PNNL researchers are also [assessing EM research at academic institutions, U.S. national laboratories, and other research institutes](#), with a focus on AI applications and impacts. In late 2023, Ryan Eddy, PNNL director of homeland security programs, also joined DHS S&T and other EM practitioners at the GovAI Summit 2023 to explore how AI will transform emergency operations. Read more about the panel session [here](#).

## RESEARCHING WEATHER EXTREMES

A \$3 million grant from DHS will support researchers at the University at Albany in improving EM and response around increasingly frequent and severe weather events to save lives and property.

Exploitation of Mesonets for Emergency Preparedness and Response in Weather Extremes (EMPOWER) will focus on leveraging real-time data from the [New York](#)

[State Mesonet](#), a statewide weather network operated by the University at Albany, and other advanced weather observations, to create a suite of new support tools that are designed for emergency managers, first responders, and other key public and private stakeholders. [Read more](#).



EMPOWER will leverage real-time data from a statewide weather network. (Photo by Patrick Dodson)

## PANEL EXPLORES TECH, EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

At the [International Association of Emergency Managers conference](#), a panel of emergency managers explored threats and opportunities affecting



emergency operations centers of the future. The breakout session, titled "Taking it to the Next Level: Leveraging New Technology Advancements to Enhance EOC Operations," featured moderator Dan Cotter, executive director for DHS S&T's Office of Science and Engineering, and panelists Chris Godley, director of EM at Stanford University; Heather Kelly, emergency manager for the City of Kirkland Fire Department; and Julie Kachgal, director of global crisis management for The Walt Disney Company. Read more about the session [here](#).

For more information, contact Director Ann Lesperance ([ann.lesperance@pnnl.gov](mailto:ann.lesperance@pnnl.gov)) | (206) 528-3223) or Deputy Director Rachel Bartholomew ([rachel.bartholomew@pnnl.gov](mailto:rachel.bartholomew@pnnl.gov)) | (509) 371-6906) or visit [pnnl.gov/projects/nwrtc](http://pnnl.gov/projects/nwrtc).

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