Investigating Breaking News

*TIPSHEET*

* *Round up the troops near the beginning of breaking news—take deep breath*
* *Think creatively*
* *Get others in newsroom to buy in—strategize*
* *What ELSE do I want to know about this breaking news?*
* *What would help viewers/readers understand this event more?*
* *What DON’T we know after the obvious “nuts and bolts”?*
* *What will help our organization’s coverage ‘stand out’ from our competition?*
* *What data might be available?*
* *How easily is it accessed?*
* *Is it in a form I can understand and analyze?*
* *How fast can I understand and analyze it?*
* *What value could it provide to our coverage?*
* *Where do I go?*
* *Find relationships, put event into context.*
* *Keep a special database folder to turn to when breaking news hits; Use databases often*
* *Know how to turn data into interesting copy*
* *Make my pitch.*

**WEBSITES TO HAVE HANDY**

Use Banjo app to find first person accounts of breaking news <http://ban.jo/>

**Aviation Accidents:**

* NTSB Database: <http://www.ntsb.gov/ntsb/query.asp>
* FAA: <http://www.faa.gov/> (track tail numbers)
* Airport-Data.com <http://www.airport-data.com/> (search everything from tail numbers, to airports, to serial numbers, etc)
* PlaneCrashinfo.com: <http://www.planecrashinfo.com/>
* AirDisaster.com: <http://www.airdisaster.com/>
* AirSafe.com: <http://www.airsafe.com/events/usrecord.htm>
* NASA ASRS (Aviation Safety Reporting System) <http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov/>
* FlightExplorer.com: <http://www.flightexplorer.com/> <http://travel.flightexplorer.com/> (actual real time flight tracker)
* FlightAware: <http://flightaware.com/> (real time flight tracker)
* Air Traffic Controllers Radio Traffic: <http://www.liveatc.net/>
* Airliners.net <http://www.airliners.net/aircraft-data/> (see any type of aircraft and its specs in the world)
* Airplane photos: <http://www.photovault.com/Link/Technology/Aviation/FlightCommercial/AircraftTypes.html>
* National Wildlife Strike database: <http://wildlife.pr.erau.edu/public/index1.html>

**Automobile/Trucks:**

* FARS-Fatality Analysis Reporting System: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/ncsa/fars.html>
* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>
* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Office of Defects Investigation: <http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/> (main page)
* <http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/defect/defectsearch.cfm> (searchable page)
* Safety and Fitness Electronic Records System (SAFER): <http://www.safersys.org/> (truck accident statistics)
* SAFER Truck Company Snapshot <http://www.safersys.org/CompanySnapshot.aspx>
* Car Accident Statistics: <http://www.car-accidents.com/pages/stats.html>
* Federal Highway Administration database: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/index.cfm>
* Federal Highway Administration database: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/index.cfm>
* Gas Price Watch: <http://www.gaspricewatch.com/new/default_V3.asp>
* National Transportation Safety Board: (trains, planes and automobiles): <http://www.ntsb.gov/>
* Ward’s Automotive Data: <http://wardsauto.com/>
* Consumer Complaints: <http://www.consumeraffairs.com/automotive/>
* Federal Railroad Administration <http://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0001>
* Federal Railroad Administration Accident Data <http://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0037>
* FRA Office of Safety Analysis <http://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/officeofsafety/default.aspx>
* Emergency Response Guidebook (placards no’s=chemicals) <http://environmentalchemistry.com/yogi/hazmat/erg/>

**Federal Environmental Workplace Safety Sites:**

* CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/>
* CDC/NIOSH Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npg/>
* EPA (TRI) Toxic Release Inventory Program <http://www2.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program>
* EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) <http://echo.epa.gov/?redirect=echo>
* US Department of Labor <http://www.dol.gov/>
* Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) <https://www.osha.gov/>
* OSHA (data & statistics) <http://www.osha.gov/oshstats/index.html>
* OSHA Establishment Search <https://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/establishment.html>

**Other Useful Web Sites:**

* Consumer Product Safety Commission <http://www.cpsc.gov/businfo/cpsa.html>
* OSHA <https://www.osha.gov/index.html>
* EPA Toxic Release Inventory <http://www2.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program>
* EPA Superfund Sites <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/>
* GeoTracker <http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>
* RollerCoaster database <http://www.rcdb.com/>
* SaferParks <http://www.saferparks.org/>

**Political Campaign Data:**

* ProPublica <http://www.propublica.org/>
* Center for Responsive Politics <http://www.opensecrets.org/action/data.php>
* Congressional Quarterly Political Money Line http://www.politicalmoneyline.com/

**US Court System:**

* PACER <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/psco/cgi-bin/links.pl>
* FindLaw (Constitutional and US Supreme Court Issues) <http://supreme.lp.findlaw.com/supreme_court/resources.html>
* Cornell US Supreme Court Decisions <http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/>

**Crime/Inmates:**

* FBI Uniform Crime Reports (UCR): <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm> (the big picture statistics not individual crime reports)
* US Bureau of Prisons <http://www.bop.gov/>
* State of Florida <http://www.dc.state.fl.us/>
* State of California <http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/>
* CA Inmate Locator <http://inmatelocator.cdcr.ca.gov/>

(most states have a searchable database on inmates)

* US Bureau of Justice Statistics <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/>

**QUICK LOOKUPS:**

* Search Systems <http://www.searchsystems.net/> (look up records in any state)
* University of Virginia <http://indorgs.virginia.edu/portico/>
* FedStats <http://www.fedstats.gov/> (Federal Government Databases)
* US Census Bureau <http://www.census.gov/>
* Google Maps <https://www.google.com/maps/preview>
* Google Public Data Explorer <https://www.google.com/publicdata/directory>

**Business Records and Non-Profits:**

* US Securities and Exchange Commission <http://www.sec.gov/>
* EDGAR [https://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml#.U5eSrvldVXE](https://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml)
* GuideStar <http://www.guidestar.org/> (non-profits, look up 990’s)
* Charity Navigator <http://www.charitynavigator.org/>
* National Better Business Bureau <http://www.bbb.org/us/charity/>

**Weather**

* National Hurricane Center <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>
* Weather Underground <http://www.wunderground.com/>
* Storm Pulse <http://www.stormpulse.com/>
* Earthquakes USGS <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/>
* USGS Historical <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/search/>
* Recent Earthquakes <http://earthquakestoday.info/>
* Local Emergency Operations Plans <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/158/Emergency-Services>

**Other Search Tools:**

* Local Property Appraiser-Miami <http://www.miamidade.gov/pa/>
* Santa Clara County <https://www.sccassessor.org/>
* Local Tax Collector-Miami <http://www.miamidade.gov/taxcollector/>
* Santa Clara County <http://www.sccgov.org/sites/tax/Pages/Santa-Clara-Tax-Collector's-Office.aspx>
* Local Clerk of Courts-Miami <http://www.miami-dadeclerk.com/dadecoc/>
* Santa Clara County <http://www.sccgov.org/sites/rec/Pages/Office-of-the-Clerk-Recorder.aspx>
* Local or State Water Resources <http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>
* Emergency Response Guidebook <http://phmsa.dot.gov/pv_obj_cache/pv_obj_id_7410989F4294AE44A2EBF6A80ADB640BCA8E4200/filename/ERG2012.pdf>