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Emergency Preparedness and Response Office

What are our priorities?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Emergency Preparedness and Response Office (EPRO) prepares for and responds to chemical, biological, radiological, and natural events. The program integrates occupational safety and health into responses to protect response and recovery workers with the help of partners from industry, labor, trade associations, professional organizations, academia, and other federal agencies.

What do we do?

- Manage policy, science, and program activities associated with worker safety and health during emergency responses and for emergency preparedness activities.
- Support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) emergency response efforts:
  - Contribute to the development of response plans,
  - Staff the Worker Safety and Health Team within the CDC's Emergency Operations Center, and
  - Participate in emergency preparedness and response training activities and exercises.
- Support the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) during a disaster to protect worker safety and health under the National Response Framework.
- Participate in response planning at the local, state, national, and international levels to ensure the timely identification of health hazards associated with emergency responses and implementation of adequate protection measures.
- Use the Disaster Science Responder Research (DSRR) Program to identify research needs to protect response and recovery workers while identifying solutions to rapidly supporting research during emergencies.

What have we accomplished?

- Published a NIOSH topic page with recommendations for emergency responders on how to prevent occupational exposures to fentanyl.
- Jointly published interim guidance for protecting workers from occupational exposures to Zika virus with OSHA and coordinated 39 deployments to support the Zika response.
- Funded 3 research studies and identified research gaps during ongoing responses as part of the DSRR Program.
- Provided training to 18 African nations to build capacity for integrating occupational safety and health into emergency responses at a World Health Organization workshop.
- Participated on the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health's Emergency Preparedness and Response Subcommittee to examine issues such as facility and equipment preparedness, vehicle preparedness and operation, pre-incident planning, incident standard operating procedures, and post-incident analysis.
- Collaborated with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences' Worker Training Program on the development of the Ebola biosafety and infectious disease response training program.
- Collaborated with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the development of the first comprehensive federal guidance to decrease the time to return a subway system to service following a biological incident.

What's next?

- Launch ERHMS Info Manager™ software and conduct Emergency Responder Health Monitoring and Surveillance™ in person trainings.
- Publish a manuscript addressing research needs on the use of insecticides in airplanes for mosquito-borne diseases.
- Complete an exposure assessment pilot study of animal caretakers potentially exposed to an outbreak of avian influenza in cats.
- Develop infrastructure to quickly start research during responses, including a rapid research protocol; forming a disaster science research institutional review board; developing capacity for rapid and robust ethical review; and developing processes for rapid determination, administration, and review.
- Develop a NIOSH topic page on radiation to provide key messages, resources, and guidance.

At-A-Glance

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Office integrates occupational safety and health into emergency responses and during planning to protect response and recovery workers. This snapshot shows recent accomplishments and upcoming work.

Zika Virus Factsheets

Timeline of Select EPRO Responses

2016	• Zika • Flint Water Contamination • Radiation Exposure at a Scrap Metal Facility
2015	• Ebola • High Pathogenic Avian Influenza • Investigation of *Burkholderia pseudomallei*
2014	• Ebola • Nontransplant Anatomical Donation Center Investigation • CDC Laboratory Anthrax Response
2013	• Paulsboro Train Derailment and Chemical Release • Ricin Letters • Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus
2012	• Hurricane Sandy • Polio • U.S. Presidential Nominating Conventions

To learn more, visit https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/epr/

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