Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response (EHTER) Awareness Level

Introduction and Overview

What is Environmental Health?

The protection of individuals against environmental factors that may adversely impact human health or the ecological balances essential to long-term human health and environmental quality, whether in the natural or man-made environment.

Source: National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)

Environmental Health Program Areas

- Vectors
- Wells
- Tattoo/Body Piercing
- Hospitals
- Schools
- Housing
- Lodging
- Day Care Centers
- Solid Waste
- Pools/Spas
- Food/Drink
- Wastewater
- Embargo
- Potable Water
- Milk/Dairy
- Shellfish
- Radiation
- Radon
- Septage
- Air Quality
- Asbestos Remediation
- Hazardous Waste
- Rest Homes
- Confinement Facilities
- Shelters
- EH Laboratories
- Cruise Ship/Port Sanitation
- Lead Abatement
- Summer Camps
- Migrant Housing
- Nursing Homes
- EH Administration
- Epidemiology
- Clandestine Meth Labs
- Animal/Pest Control
- Public Bathing Facilities
- Mass Gatherings
- Meat Markets
- Erosion Control
- Surface Waters
- Environmental Crime
- Pollution
- Risk Assessment
- Noise Control
- Accident Prevention
- Public Utilities
- Landfill Management
- Agricultural Operations
- Meat Markets
- EH Promotion/Education
- Climate Change
- Built Environment
- and more being added all the time!

Adapted from Salvato, Joseph A. Environmental Engineering and Sanitation, Third Ed., 1982

Lack of Environmental Health Preparedness Training

- Lack of defined roles in emergency response
- Multiple skills needed
- Understanding the broader scope of EH response
- No national training program

Lack of Environmental Health Preparedness Training

- 2004 Michigan EH Training Needs Assessment
- 2005 Centers for PH Preparedness Report
- 2005 Kansas Local Health Dept. Workforce Needs Assessment
- 2006 Ohio PH Preparedness Training Needs Survey
- 2007 North Carolina PH Workforce Assessment
- NEHA Training Needs Assessments
- Numerous peer-reviewed journal articles
- USPHS Commission Corps Environmental Health Officers
EHTER Development

- Focus on key areas of EH
  - Common tasks
  - Various skill sets
  - 360° scope
  - All-hazards

Purpose and Objectives

- Increase knowledge of
  - Roles & responsibilities of EH professionals
  - Adverse impacts caused by disasters
  - Protective actions
  - Roles, responsibilities & capacities of response partners
  - Key initiatives taking place in other jurisdictions

Target Audience

- EH Specialists/Sanitarians and Environmental Scientists
  - Federal, state, local, tribal
- Other PH decision-makers and practitioners
- Applicable to multiple agencies, departments, and organizations

Recommended Pre-course Education & Training

- ICS 100.a – Introduction to the Incident Command System
- ICS 200.a – Incident Command System for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS 700.a – National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction
- IS 800.b – National Response Framework (NRF), An Introduction
- IS 808 – Emergency Support Function (ESF) #8 – Public Health and Medical Services
EHTER Content

- 10 modules:
  - Disaster Management
  - Responder Safety & Health
  - Potable Water
  - Food Safety
  - Wastewater
  - Shelters
  - Vector & Pests
  - Building Assessment
  - Radiation
- Group activities and exercises
- Demonstration components
- Re-entry and re-occupancy exercise
- Evaluation component
  - CDC March 2010 course – average increase 27%

EHTER Encompasses All Phases of a Disaster

Benefits

- Enhances understanding of how EH fits within emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation
- For both EH and non-EH professionals
- Introduces a broad spectrum of EH issues
- Creates an understanding of EH systems and how they interconnect
- Provides foundation for basic knowledge/skills
- Combined audience – various jurisdictions and partners
- Facilitates partnerships

EHTER is NOT...

- An intermediate or advanced level training
- Designed to produce subject-matter-experts
- A substitute for planning, training, educational, or exercise activities and requirements
- A replacement for existing emergency operations plans, procedures, guidelines, resources, assets, and incident management systems

Responders Trained

- Thousands trained from all 50 states, U.S. territories, DC, Canada, Caribbean, and other countries

The Challenges

- Finding common issues that apply to all geographic locations
- Lack of cross training in EH specialties
- Fragmented EH services
- Time
- Funding
CDC & FEMA Partnership
- Memorandum of Agreement between CDC/NCEH and DHS/FEMA Center for Domestic Preparedness in March 2009

Looking to the Future
- Revision into DHS-approved format
- International EHTER courses
  - CEF-5 (June 2010)
  - Others pending
- EHTER Train-the-Trainer course
- Online modules on NEHA Web site
- Additional EHTER courses/modules
  - Awareness (Chemical, Biological)
  - Operational (Various Assessments)
  - Planning/Management
- Develop a comprehensive training program

Some things to think about as we get started…
- Information, guidance & resources in manual
  - Adapting to your jurisdiction for EH responders
- EH emergency response teams
  - Tools, resources, guidance, etc.
  - Equipment
  - Integration into existing emergency response structure

Questions?