

# **HEALTH & SAFETY (H&S) AWARENESS FOR RSC RESPONDERS**



**United States  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 6**

# OVERVIEW

- H&S Deployment Requirements
- Potential Hazards
- HASP Requirements
- PPE
- Key Points to Remember





# H&S DEPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

- All RSC members must submit **ALL H&S training certifications** to the R6 H&S Office
  - If assigned to a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA), H&S training and programmatic requirements must be met
  - If not assigned to JHA, H&S training and pre-screening exam must be met
- SHEMP Manager must ensure personnel meet requirements prior to deployment. If they do not have training certification, personnel will NOT be cleared to deploy in support of any emergency incident



# INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM STRUCTURE



# H&S REQUIREMENTS FOR DEPLOYMENT

- Pre-deployment Process
  - Name submitted to REOC
  - Once REOC confirms your deployment, your name will be submitted to the R6 H&S Office for approval
    - H&S Office reviews H&S training compliance
    - H&S Office reviewed programmatic requirements
      - If on OMSP – must be current
      - If not on OMSP – your name will be forwarded to the FOH Nurse to schedule a pre-screening exam
  - Once all requirements are met, the H&S Office will approve your deployment
- You will then receive notification from the REOC on your actual deployment status.
- You CANNOT deploy until you receive approval from the H&S Office





# HAZARDS

## *NATURAL DISASTERS*

- Aftershocks
- Structural Integrity
- Utilities (damage to gas, electric, phone, etc.)
- Fire and Smoldering Debris
- Flash Floods
- Release of hazardous materials
- Other



# HAZARDS

## CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) EXPOSURE



### CO may be present with:

- Any activity using gasoline, diesel, or propane-powered machinery
- Work near operating equipment
- Work near hot work (cutting, welding), especially in confined spaces

### To control CO exposures:

- Wear CO monitoring equipment
- Do not use gas/diesel powered equipment indoors or in enclosed areas
- Use forced air ventilation (e.g., blower)

**Symptoms:** Headache, dizziness, drowsiness, or nausea progressing to vomiting and loss of consciousness. Prolonged or high exposure can lead to coma or death. If you experience any of these symptoms where CO may be present, **LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY.**

# HEAT EXHAUSTION OR HEAT STROKE?

## HEAT EXHAUSTION SYMPTOMS

1. Faint or dizzy
2. Excessive sweating
3. Cool, pale, clammy skin
4. Nausea, vomiting
5. Rapid, weak pulse
6. Muscle cramps

## HOW TO TREAT IT

1. Move to cooler location
2. Drink water
3. Take a cool shower or use cold compresses



## HEAT STROKE SYMPTOMS

1. Throbbing headache
2. No sweating
3. Body temp above 103°  
Red, hot, dry skin
4. Nausea, vomiting
5. Rapid, strong pulse
6. May lose consciousness

## HOW TO TREAT IT

1. Get emergency help
2. Keep cool until treated

# HAZARDS

## *TRAUMATIC STRESS*

- Workers responding to an INS may experience traumatic stress.
- Reactions to traumatic events will vary, ranging from relatively mild to severe.
- It is very common for people to experience anxiety, terror, shock, and upset, as well as emotional numbness and personal or social disconnection.



**Pay attention to co-workers and how they are being affected by traumatic stress**

# HAZARDS

## *BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS*

Treat all blood and other potentially infectious material as if they are, in fact, infectious, regardless of the perceived status of the source individual.



*“treat it as if it is”*

### If Exposed:

- Cleanse all exposed skin with soap and water for 15 minutes
- Rinse mucous membranes and eyes with water for 15 minutes
- Record location and time of incident; Report to supervisor & H&S rep
- Seek evaluation at health facility within 2 hours of exposure
- Complete Incident Report to document with the Regional H&S Office

# HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN REQUIREMENTS

OSHA requires HASPs to protect workers involved in national response operations. The HASP serves as a guide for employers and workers to follow during their daily operations.

**Review your HASP before you start work!**



# HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN REQUIREMENTS

## HASPs cover the following:

- Introduction
- Key Personnel
- Hazard Assessment
- Training
- PPE
- Temperature Extremes
- Medical Surveillance
- Exposure Monitoring and Air Sampling
- Site Control
- Decontamination
- Emergency Response/ Contingency Plan
- Emergency Action Plan
- Confined Space Entry
- Spill Containment



# PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- Eyes
- Face
- Head
- Extremities
- Protective clothing
- Respiratory devices
- Protective shields and barriers
- Shall be provided, used, and maintained wherever it is necessary for protection against environmental, chemical, radiological or mechanical hazards.



# ANIMALS, INSECTS AND PLANTS

## Protect yourself from mosquitoes:

- Use screens on dwellings.
- Wear long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts.
- Use insect repellents that contains DEET or Picaridin.



## Beware of wild or stray animals:

- Avoid wild or stray animals; call local authorities to handle animals.
- Look out for rodents in structures (especially confined spaces).

# DAILY SAFETY MESSAGE

**“Safety Message”**

**Hurricane Katrina - Region 6**

**Date: August 31, 2005**

**Operational Period: 0800 hrs to 0800 hrs**

**Major Hazards and Risks:**

**Driving Hazards**

**Hazardous Materials**

**Fire/Explosions**

**Electrical Hazards**

**Carbon Monoxide**

**Heavy Equipment**

**Boat/Air Operations**

**Noise**

**Stress/Fatigue**

**Hygiene/Contaminated Water**

**Heat Stress**

**Confined Spaces**

**Structural Instability (buildings/Roads)**

**Biological Hazards**

**Snakes, gators, bugs, dogs**

**Narrative:**

**Get your Tetanus Booster - within 5 years if working in flood conditions**

**Mosquitoes - Wear insect repellent! Mosquitoes can carry a variety of diseases.**

**Carbon Monoxide poisoning - a "silent killer". Colorless, odorless, tasteless deadly gas produced**

# KEY POINTS FOR FIELD WORK

1. **Take Responsibility; Don't do something you think is unsafe.**
2. **Accountability** - Make sure someone knows where you are at all times (check in/out, buddy system)
3. **Hygiene** - Contaminated Water - Bacteria, viruses, debris, or chemicals may be in the food and water. Before eating or drinking, wash hands with soap and boiled or treated water
4. **Heat-related problems**, including heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, and fainting. Drink plenty of fluids, wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing, avoid caffeine, and **DO NOT WAIT TO GET THIRSTY.**
5. **Fatigue** - Follow Work/Rest Guidelines, especially when driving. **Know your limitations.**
6. **Awareness/HAZCOM** - the first step to safety is awareness. Pay attention to your surroundings and watch out for your buddy.
7. **Contamination Avoidance** - Avoid unnecessary contamination of personnel, equipment, and materials. Do not unnecessarily sit, kneel, or otherwise come in contact with potentially contaminated surfaces.

**QUESTIONS??**

