



South Central Public Health Partnership

TRAINING PROFESSIONALS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC

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Disaster Responder Health and Safety

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Course Description

The Disaster Responder Health and Safety course will address concerns for the health and safety of first responders involved in the response to natural disasters including hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods and will include the identification of specific hazards associated with these type events.

A number of topics will be covered including heat stress; injuries from working around debris and on unstable surfaces; dust; confined spaces; chemicals and contaminated flood and standing waters; electrical hazards; infectious diseases; food-borne, water-borne, insect-borne and animal-borne diseases of concern; animal and insect hazards; and traumatic stress injuries.

The Disaster Responder Health and Safety course addresses public health and first responder health and safety issues when responding to man-made or natural disaster events. This past spring's violent tornado outbreak left a wave of destruction and created numerous physical hazards and public health concerns throughout the Southeast region, including downed power lines, housing debris, tainted water, exposure to temperature extremes, exposure to hazardous materials, and psychosocial concerns. This course will discuss best practices and lessons learned taken from public health responses to these types of events.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze the risks to health & safety and their consequences to which first responders are exposed during disaster response
- Employ best practices in health and safety injury prevention & mitigation to sustain workforce strength and reduce morbidity and mortality during crisis intervention
- Identify perils and population vulnerabilities involving sanitation, hygiene and stress which threaten responders as well as the populations at risk and at large and mitigate consequences to the greatest extent possible through injury avoidance and prompt, effective intervention
- Plan for the use of effective techniques of hazard control during disaster response and train & equip responding agencies and personnel in their implementation

Preparedness & Response Core Competencies **Public Health Preparedness & Response Core Competency Model*

- 4.2: Employ protective behaviors according to changing conditions, personal limitations, and threats.
- 4.3: Report unresolved threats to physical and mental health through the chain of command.

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