Worker Safety & Health – Disaster Response

Why coordinated worker safety and health is important:

- Worker safety and health is a critical consideration during emergency responses, but is sometimes overlooked or seen as a low priority
- Protecting response and recovery workers is essential to successful response and recovery operations
  - The health and well-being of response and recovery workers can ensure that the victims themselves are cared for properly
  - Multiple-worker fatalities or injuries could disrupt the entire response effort
  - The need for a rapid response to an incident increases the risk that personnel may be deployed with inadequate information about the safety and health hazards
- Local, State, and/or Federal assets can rapidly become overwhelmed – Example: The EF4 Tornado that impacted Newcastle, OK (pop. 7,847) at approximately 1556 EDT, and moved through Moore, OK (pop. 56,315), quickly depleted local agencies ability to respond.

National Response Framework

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) lead
- Stafford Act
- State request and Presidential Declaration
- Natural Disasters and Terrorist Attacks
- Tax payer funded (DRF)

National Laws, Plans & Policy

- **OSH Act 1970**
- **National Response Framework (NRF)**
  - Response Operations
  - FEMA Mission Assignments
  - NRF Worker Safety and Health (WSH) Support Annex
- **National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF)**
  - Recovery Operations (may overlap with Response Operations)
- **National Contingency Plan (40 CFR 300)**
  - USCG/EPA Pollution Removal Funding Authorizations (PRFA)
  - National Response System (Oil & hazardous substance releases)

National Response System

- **National Response Team (NRT)**
  - Nationwide responsibilities for interagency planning, policy, and coordination for oil & hazardous substance pollution incidents
  - Representatives from 15 federal agencies, including DOL/OSHA
- **13 Regional Emergency Response Teams (RERTs)**
  - One for each of the 10 EPA federal regions
  - One for Alaska, one for Caribbean, one for Oceania
  - Develops regional policies for and ensures an effective, coordinated response among all levels of government and the private sector

Coordinating Agency: DOL/OSHA
Cooperating Agencies: DOD, DOE, DHHS, DHS, EPA

Worker Safety and Health Support (WSH) Support Annex capabilities include:

- Providing technical worker safety and health expertise to response partners
- Communicating worker safety/health information to workers and stakeholders
- Identifying, assessing, and controlling worker safety and health hazards
- Developing and implementing site-specific Health and Safety Plans
- Conducting worker exposure monitoring, sampling, and analysis
- Implementing a coordinated Personal Protective Equipment program for workers
- Coordinating incident-specific worker safety and health training
- Collecting and managing worker exposure and injury/illness data
- Providing medical surveillance/monitoring of response workers
- For more information, go to http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/index.html
OSHA Region VI Emergency Response Team (RERT)
- Approximately forty-nine members, broken down into three (3) teams (Red/White/Blue) with the responsibility of staffing the roles as designated within the Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP)

Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP)
- Provides a framework for response to ALL catastrophic incidents
- Features a scaleable & flexible Plan to accommodate large and limited scale incidents
- Operates using a Support Cell Concept
- The Support Cell is directed by a Deputy Incident Commander (DIC)
- The Joint Field Officer (JFO) Liaison is located at the Joint Field Office (JFO)

Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) Scope
- Covers OSHA response to any natural or man-made disasters in following states:
  - Arkansas
  - Louisiana
  - New Mexico
  - Oklahoma
  - Texas

REMP Activation
- At the discretion of Regional Administrator or as directed by National Office
- Indicators may include:
  - National Response Framework (NRF) activation
  - National Emergency Management Plan (NEMP) activation
  - Requests from federal, state or local authorities *Example of “federal” agency activation - Regional Response Team 6 (EPA/USCG) request for Worker Safety and Health support

OSHA’s Emergency Preparedness and Response Website
- OSHA’s website: www.osha.gov
  - Natural Disasters/Severe Wx
  - Hurricanes/Tornadoes
  - Resources and Guides Section:
    - eTools
    - Safety and Health Topics
    - Guidance Documents
    - Fact Sheets
    - National Response Framework
OSHA’s Tornado Preparedness and Response Website

Checklists Web Page:
- Select “Checklists” Tab
- Select “Tornado Safety Checklist”
- Note that the Page also contains a “Resources Tab”

Checklist Tab - Red Cross Ready Checklist:
- Be Prepared – Have a Plan!
- Know Communities Warning Signs!
- Practice – Periodic Tornado Drills!
- Know Danger Signs!

Types of Disasters
- Man-Made
  - Oil / Chemical Spills
  - Radiation Releases
  - Terrorist Attacks
- Natural
  - Hurricanes
  - Tornadoes
  - Earthquakes
  - Wildfires
  - Floods
  - Mudslides

OSHA Region VI Responses
- Texas City
- Oklahoma
- Logan County, OK
- Arkansas

Moore, Oklahoma Tornado Response
OSHA Activity
Moore, Oklahoma
Tornado Response

- May 22nd - Area Director (AD) meets with FEMA to talk about contract lease space – 2 mobile Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) are onsite
- Assistant Area Director (AAD), Compliance Assistance Specialist (CAS) & CSHO’s attend shift change brief at Moore Incident Command Center to speak with Incident Commanders and Liaison Officers. CAS and CSHO’s (Strike Teams) begin compliance assistance as cleanup activities and utility work begin
- 6 Contractors & Noted Hazards: Outriggers (no cribbing); Fall Protection in Aerial Lift; Roofing Crews (no fall protection); Ground Guides (not being used for heavy equipment)

OSHA Activity
Moore, Oklahoma
Tornado Response

- May 22nd Strike Teams note major debris blocking access to roads
- May 22nd - Shawnee/Bethel Acres Team: 9 Contractors conducting power line & telecom as well as tree trimming work (right-of-way work)
- Spoke with site workers - Distributed OSHA Quick Cards (QC) & Fact Sheets (FS).
- Hazards Noted: Fall Protection; Lock Out/Tag Out; lack of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) usage.
- Carney Area Team: 11 Employees conducting power line, tree trimmers (power pole & line reconstruction)
- May 23rd – Incident Command allows homeowners and their accompanied contractors into begin clean-up activities.

OSHA Activity
Moore, Oklahoma
Tornado Response

- May 23rd Strike Teams note some roads are being cleared. 3rd Phase Operations begin.
- May 24th – Contact made with primary clean-up contractor. Conducted outreach and distributed QC & FS
- Strike Teams / CSHO’s attended the Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (MAC) meeting which included the following participants: American Red Cross; Salvation Army; Wage and Hour; OK Department of Health; City of Moore Emergency Management; National Weather Center; OGE (Electrical Utility); OK DOT; Oklahoma Mental Health Department; Communications (ATT) Disaster Team

OSHA Activity
Moore, Oklahoma
Tornado Response

- May 24th
- OSHA staff met with State OSHA Consultation and Public Employee OSH Division (PEOSH) and explained OSHA’s activity in the areas
- FEMA contacted the OSHA office to advise that a location for the Joint Field Office (JFO) had been identified – will stand up in week.
- Moore Area Team: Made contact with 6 contractors – Demolition / Cleanup & Utilities Contractors, approximately 60 employees. Hazards noted: Fall protection during the operation of dump truck; Fall Protection during roofing operations; Unguarded Saws; Extension Ladders; Head Protection; Glove & Eye Protection.

OSHA Activity
Moore, Oklahoma
Tornado Response

- May 24th
- Oklahoma City Strike Team conducted interventions with Power Transmission; Tree Trimming; Telephone; Road Maintenance and Demolition Contractors. Approximately 13 employees removed from hazards: Aerial Lift Safety (Fall Protection / Out-Rigger Placement; Lack of PPE Usage; Work Zone Safety)
- May 26th
- AD attended the All Hands IC Meeting – Briefed the group on hazards discovered by OSHA during the operation.
- OSHA and National Guard partnered together to ensure the distribution of donated PPE.
April 27th - A tornado rated as an EF4 caused severe damage, 400 to 500 homes destroyed, which included a new $14 million intermediate school that was set to open in the fall. Approximately 16 fatalities (12 in Faulkner; 3 in Pulaski; and 1 in White Counties).

April 29th
- CAS visits the Command Centers in both Mayflower and Vilonia.
- City of Mayflower was closed to through traffic, but CAS was allowed through to distribute QC & FS to Vilonia Emergency Response Command Center.

AD contacts Director of Office of Emergency Management in Mayflower and the Vilonia Fire Chief to offer assistance and to explain OSHA's intervention response and to schedule a time for a tour of damaged areas.

April 30th
- Strike Team/CSHO's/CAS are tasked to begin intervention activities on April 30th.
- AD drafts press release to Office of Public Affairs as a means to notify affected persons of the various hazards related to tornado clean-up.
- Governor declares major disaster declaration for Faulkner County. Verbal request for assistance from Federal authorities.
- Volunteers are located at Command Center, begin processing donations & supplies.

May 1st
- AD and CAS travel to Mayflower City Hall Command Center, met with Manager of Office of Emergency Management, departed to tour the damaged areas, and distributed QC and FS. Photographs of damaged areas submitted to Public Affairs.
- In total, over 400 QC / 200 FS distributed enroute.
- Strike Team scheduled to begin intervention activities in Mayflower area on May 2nd.
- May 2nd
- Strike team working in Mayflower area. Strike Team met with Fire Chief, received All Access Pass for one month to conduct interventions. Affected employees - 141. Total Interventions 8, approximately 160 QC and FS distributed.

May 13th
- American Red Cross has scaled-down their presence in the area. Home owners and volunteer workers continue to work through debris.

Traffic in Vilonia has resumed at normal pace.
- Traffic in Vilonia has resumed at normal pace, although debris still located on each side of streets.
- Disaster Relief Command Center has relocated from the Mayflower City Hall and is now located in Conway, AR.

May 2nd
- Strike Teams consolidating Situation Reports to forward to Emergency Response Coordinator at the Region VI OSHA Office.

AD advises that the interventions are expected to continue through the demolition/debris clean-up process (estimating approximately 2 or 3 months).

American Red Cross has scaled-down their presence in the area. Home owners and volunteer workers continue to work through debris.
- Traffic in Vilonia has resumed at normal pace, although debris still located on each side of streets.
- Disaster Relief Command Center has relocated from the Mayflower City Hall and is now located in Conway, AR.

May 13th
- CAS visited Command Centers in Vilonia and nearby Saltillo community. QC / FS distributed in the Saltillo area, where home owners and volunteer workers continue to work through debris and debris removal continues.

Strike Team has been active throughout the affected areas, with total 350 QC and 75 FS distributed.

October 14th 2014
- A tornado rated as an EF2 caused damage to residences and businesses which exceeded approximately $6.3 million, including the West Monroe High School.
- A main gas line ruptured in the 1100 block of Oliver Road, which posed a substantial hazard to residents.
- Numerous major roads were closed due to trees or power lines in the roadway – including Louisiana 546, Louisiana 594, and Louisiana 159.
OSHA Activity
West Monroe, Louisiana
Tornado Response

- October 15th
  - CAS conducts safety & health intervention with contractor. CAS performs site safety briefs
  - Debris Removal: 19 workers on site in Monroe-West Monroe areas. CAS provided QC and FS covering the following: Chain Saw Safety; Working Safely with Electricity; Tree Trimming; West Nile Virus; Work Zone Safety; and Safety During Disaster Recovery Efforts
  - Electrical Service Contractor: 35 workers, crew of 8, from Chattanooga, TN area. CAS provided QC and FS covering the following: Chain Saw Safety; Working Safely with Electricity; Tree Trimming; West Nile Virus; Work Zone Safety; and Safety During Disaster Recovery Efforts

OSHA Activity
West Monroe, Louisiana
Tornado Response

- October 16th
  - Electrical Support Service Contractor with approximately 30 workers, (11 crews) that are removing debris from power lines for line crews. CAS provided QC and FS conducted safety briefing at request of employer
  - CAS met with Department of Public Works, City of Monroe - Has approximately 150 employees working throughout the city to address power outages and other needs. CAS provided QC and FS. Onsite supervisor requested CAS to conduct a safety and health talk to city workers, and requested continued assistance in the next coming weeks
  - October 16th
    - CAS spoke with City of Monroe Police Officer, Incident Command & Communication Center Manager, located in Forsythe Park area. He is managing work flow activities in the affected areas

OSHA Activity
West Monroe, Louisiana
Tornado Response

- October 16th
  - CAS conducted additional outreach with Salvation Army, providing safety & health briefs for volunteers, additionally provided QC & FS
  - Numerous roadway intersections (approximately 11) are blocked due to debris and damaged vehicles
  - CAS conducted outreach at the State Farm Temporary Claims Center. CAS provided QC & FS
  - CAS conducted outreach at University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) – Electrical power service contractors, 2 crews – 12 Linemen – involved in power pole replacement, transformer and power distribution lines. Reviewed the crews Job Safety Analysis (JSA) with Foreman

Products

- OSHA Fact Sheet - Demolition and Cleanup
- OSHA Fact Sheet - Working Safely Around Disassembled Electric Power Equipment
- OSHA Fact Sheet - Work Zone Traffic Safety
- OSHA Fact Sheet - Fall Protection
- OSHA Fact Sheet - Chain Saw Safety
- OSHA Fact Sheet - Preventing Amaury Workers
- OSHA Quick Card - Hazard Communication - Standard Pictogram

New Products
### Common Safety and Health Hazards in Disasters

- Falls (roofs, ladders, scaffolds, slip/trips/falls)
- Traffic (vehicles, yellow-gear, aerial lifts)
- Power tools (chainsaws, chippers, generators)
- Electrical (wires, power tools)
- Material handling (cranes, rigging)
- Environmental (drowning, insects, animals)
- Other (confined spaces, trenching)

### Common Safety and Health Hazards in Disasters

- Heat and Cold Stress
- Asbestos
- Lead and Other Heavy Metals
- Oil and HAZMAT (all types of chemicals)
- Radioactive Contaminants
- Biological Contaminants (bacteria, viruses, fungi)
- Environmental (infection/disease from insects, animals, mold, etc.)

OSHA's Site for Emergency Preparedness & Response
https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness

Questions??