

Protecting Worker Safety and Health Under the National Response Framework

During a disaster, protecting response and recovery workers is essential for assuring a successful response and recovery. When large-scale disasters overwhelm State and local assets, the National Response Framework (NRF) Worker Safety and Health Support Annex can provide the technical assistance needed to help protect Federal, State, tribal, and local organizations' response and recovery workers. Depending upon the scope, complexity, and hazards associated with the incident, these services can include:

- Identifying and assessing worker health and safety hazards present at the incident site and in the environment.
- Assessing the resources needed to protect workers and identifying the sources available to meet these needs.
- Providing technical expertise in industrial hygiene, occupational safety and health, structural collapse engineering, safety engineering, radiation safety, biological and chemical agent response, and occupational medicine.
- Managing the creation and implementation of a site-specific health and safety plan (HASP).
- Monitoring and managing worker safety and health hazards through on-site identification, evaluation, analysis, and mitigation, including personal exposure monitoring.
- Providing assistance with developing, implementing, and monitoring the personal protective equipment (PPE) program, including the selection, use, and decontamination of PPE.
- Coordinating the collection and management of exposure and accident/injury data to identify trends and facilitate data sharing.
- Coordinating and providing incident-specific response and recovery worker training.
- Assisting with the development and distribution of educational materials on preventing and mitigating hazards.

For more complete information:

Coordinating Responder Health and Safety

In the event of a major disaster, only the health and well-being of response and recovery workers can ensure that the victims themselves are cared for properly. When State, tribal, and local assets are overwhelmed and assistance is needed to protect employees during an emergency, FEMA can activate OSHA to coordinate employee safety and health. OSHA coordinates the resources and technical assistance provided under the NRF Worker Safety and Health Support Annex (see other side). Assistance can be requested through FEMA at a Joint Field Office and at FEMA's National and Regional Response Coordination Centers. When activated, OSHA will work within the incident command system to provide technical assistance to the site safety officer.

DOL/OSHA coordinates the activities of the Federal agencies that provide the core architecture for employee safety and health technical support during an all-hazards event or when otherwise directed.

Cooperating Agencies:

- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Homeland Security
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Other Responding Organizations

For further information on responder health and safety, please consult the NRF Worker Safety and Health Support Annex or for a list of resources available to response workers, please visit <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/index.html>.

For more complete information: