Disaster Response: OSHA’s Role and Resources

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Protecting Avian Influenza Responders
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1. Overview of OSHA’s Role in Disasters
2. OSHA’s Role in the National Response Plan
3. AI Worker Protection Basics
4. OSHA’s Resources
PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- World Trade Center Response (9/11/2001)
- Anthrax Attacks (10/2001)
- MN Bridge Collapse (07/2007)
OSHA’s Technical Assistance Role in Disasters

- Characterizing Worker Exposures and Assessing Risk
Coordinating and Providing Necessary Training
- Awareness & PPE training at WTC
- Worked with NIEHS to develop courses for hurricane recovery workers
  - Hurricanes 2004/5 Staging Areas Briefings – Utility Workers
- Fact Sheets, Quick Cards, e-tool for Hurricane Recovery

Developed Hurricane Health and Safety Plan (HASP)

Mold
• Collecting and Managing Worker Exposure Data
  – Developed electronic database to capture/report data;
  – Sample results on OSHA website
  – Provided to Employees

• Implementing a PPE Program
  – 131,000 Respirators Distributed at WTC - fit test conducted on-site
  – Provided PPE to Responders as needed
There needs to be a systematic and unified all hazards approach to the management of responder health and safety.
Anthrax - Brentwood
NOLA - St. Bernard Parish
Murphy Oil Spill
Debris Collection/Reduction
• Takes an “All Hazards” approach
• Is built upon the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
  – Incident Command Structure (ICS)
• Definition of Responder Expanded
OSHA’s Current Role

NRP BASE PLAN
- ESF #1 - Transportation
- ESF #2 - Communications
- ESF #3 - Public Works and Engineering
- ESF #4 - Firefighting
- ESF #5 - Emergency Management
- ESF #6 - Mass Care, Housing and Human Services
- ESF #7 - Resource Support
- ESF #8 - Public Health & Medical Services
- ESF #9 - Urban Search and Rescue
- ESF #10 - Hazardous Materials
- ESF #11 - Agriculture and Natural Resources
- ESF #12 - Energy
- ESF #13 - Public Safety and Security
- ESF #14 - Long Term Community Recovery and Mitigation
- ESF #15 - External Affairs

Support Annexes
- Financial Management
- Volunteer and Donations Management
- International Coordination
- Public Affairs
- Tribal Relations

Emergency Support Function Annexes
- Logistics
- Science and Technology
- Private Sector Coordination

Incident Annexes
- Food and Agriculture
- Cyber Response
- Terrorism Response
- Biological Response
- Nuclear/Radiological Response
- Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
- Catastrophic Incident Response

Appendices
- NRP Changes and Updates
- Acronyms and Abbreviations
- Terms and Definitions

Volunteer and Donations Management
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Worker Safety and Health

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Worker Safety and Health
• Written to cover all emergency responder and recovery workers and all hazards
• Based on lessons learned from WTC
• Actual assistance for any specific incident will depend on the:
  – needs of the incident
Key Annex Concepts

• It addresses key activities that need to be coordinated to support the response.
  – Single Management System for the complex and overwhelming incidents
  – Multiple Jurisdictions

• The Annex does **not cover public** health and safety
Utilize existing organizations e.g., National Response Team (NRT) and the NRT’s Worker Safety and Health Sub Committee

NRP Annex Worker Safety and Health Support Coordination Committee

Work directly with Annex Cooperative Agencies like EPA, USACE, DOE, HHS (ATSDR, NIEHS and NIOSH), and DHS – FEMA and the USCG,
Support Annex Actions

- Support Actions *may* include:
  - Providing technical assistance at the JFO
  - 24/7 safety intervention and industrial hygiene worker monitoring
  - Coordinating and providing incident specific training
  - Developing and implementing a *site-specific* HASP
  - Managing a PPE program for responders
  - Collecting and managing worker exposure data
  - Working with labor unions, contractors regarding worker safety and health issues
Worker Protection Issues for Avian Influenza

• Employer Risk Assessment
  – Required by OSHA
  – Variety of responders w/different exposures (workers culling herds vs. health care providers)
  – Potential for hazards other than AI (e.g., culling, euthanizing and decon methods)
  – Site conditions and resource limitations
Worker Protection Issues for Avian Influenza

- Safe Work Practices and Personal Protective Equipment
  - Based on Risk Assessment
  - Combination of PPE, basic hygiene, and infection control practices - all three....
  - Decontamination/Disinfection
    - PPE, facility, equipment, other “contaminated” areas
  - Coordinated with CDC
    - Human Influenza Vaccination
    - Medical Monitoring/Anti-viral meds
Worker Protection Issues for Avian Influenza

- Worker Training & Education
  - Pre Incident
    - reinforce use of basic work practices and PPE
    - awareness of disease signs/symptoms in flock/staff/patients
  - During Incident
    - communicate incident-specific risks & requirements
    - reiterate use of basic work practices and train on assigned PPE
    - Antiviral medicine and vaccination
  - Post Incident
    - medical considerations
Avian Flu

Avian influenza (AI) viruses infect wild birds and poultry (e.g., chickens). They are divided into two groups based upon the severity of the disease they produce in poultry: low pathogenicity AI (LPAI) viruses and highly pathogenic AI (HPAI) viruses. LPAI viruses occur naturally in wild birds but can spread to poultry where they generally cause minor illness. However, HPAI viruses are highly contagious and cause high mortality in poultry. While LPAI viruses pose little threat to human health, certain HPAI viruses have caused serious illness and even death. Of particular concern to public health are the HPAI H5N1 viruses that are spreading rapidly in parts of the world. HPAI H5N1 viruses have caused deaths of millions of birds and of over 140 people worldwide. These deaths have thus far been restricted to Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. As of October 2006, the HPAI H5N1 virus has not been found in the United States.

Although HPAI H5N1 viruses have the potential to develop into pandemic viruses if they acquire the ability to pass readily from human-to-human, thus far, there has been only very limited transmission between humans. This document provides interim guidance for protecting employees who may be exposed if there is an outbreak of HPAI H5N1 in the United States. For the most up-to-date information on the occurrence of HPAI H5N1 outbreaks throughout the world, as well as other HPAI virus outbreaks that may also pose a hazard to human health, consult the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) website at www.avianflu.gov.

Symptoms of Avian Influenza (AI) in Humans

Range from fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches, to diarrhea, eye infections, pneumonia and severe respiratory diseases, and other severe and life-threatening complications.

The symptoms of avian influenza may depend on which virus caused the infection but often are similar to those associated with human seasonal influenza.

Individuals with these symptoms may be experiencing an illness other than influenza. Therefore, laboratory tests can be used to confirm avian influenza infection in humans.

How People Become Infected

So far, most cases of avian influenza infection in humans have resulted from direct contact with infected poultry (e.g., domesticated chickens, ducks, and turkeys) or contact with surfaces soiled with discharges from their mouths, beaks, or with feces. Other possible means of infection include consuming raw or undercooked poultry or poultry products and ingesting contaminated poultry particles (e.g., this could occur during butchering).

Eating properly handled and cooked poultry and eggs is safe. Cooking poultry to an internal temperature of 165°F and eggs until they are firm throughout kills the AI virus.

Employees at Potential Risk of Exposure

- Poultry employees involved in vaccination activities (for example, depopulating poultry).
- Animal handlers (other than poultry employees);
- Laboratory employees;
- Health care workers treating patients with known or suspected avian influenza viruses;
- Food handlers;
- Airport personnel with close exposure to passengers suspected of being avian influenza-infected; and
- Travelers on temporary work assignments abroad in areas affected by HPAI H5N1 outbreaks.
Avian Flu “Quick Card”

- General Precautions
- Poultry Employees
- Animal Handlers
- Food Handlers
- Laboratory Employees
- Healthcare Workers

Released: October, 2006
Guidance Document

Released: October, 2006

Available at:
www.pandemicflu.gov
www.osha.gov
QUESTIONS?