NIEHS
National Institute of
Environmental Health Sciences

Learning from Disasters: Katrina Response Training

Birmingham, AL
March 8, 2006

WORKER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM

NIEHS Update

- WETP Program Background
- 9/11 Training Response
- NRP WSH Annex
- Katrina Training Response Activities

NIEHS Superfund Worker Training Program

- Created in 1986 by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), Section 126(g).

- Assistance program for training and education of workers engaged in activities related to hazardous waste generation, removal, containment or emergency response and hazardous materials transportation and emergency response.

- Has trained over 1 million workers in high risk occupations such as toxic waste cleanup and chemical emergency response.

Safely Cleaning Up Contaminated Communities

WORKER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM

NIEHS 9/11 Worker Response

Immediate and sustained supplemental funding to support World Trade Center training response efforts:

- On-site training
- Provision and fit-testing of respirators
- Worker exposure monitoring
- Responder training course
- Consultation on the site safety plan

"Potentially the most dangerous workplace in America."
John Henshaw, OSHA
NIEHS and its awardees developed an official training course at Ground Zero for 4,000 workers

LEARNING FROM DISASTERS:
WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION PREPAREDNESS THROUGH WORKER TRAINING

- **Report of an Expert Workshop**
- **Sponsored by:**
- Worker Education and Training Program,
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- **Held:**
- April 25-26, 2002 • Nashville, TN

NIEHS WSH Training Annex

- Provides training assistance through FEMA-OSHA during national disasters
  - Instructional staff
  - Curriculum development experts
  - Subject matter experts
  - Training facility
- Provides technical assistance
  - Respirator fit testing
  - Distribution of PPE

Katrina Responder Orientation

- **Produced September 1st by NIEHS Clearinghouse and posted on the web.**
- **Has become the most widely used safety and health awareness program in the Katrina disaster zone.**
- **Promoted as available for any organization to adapt.**
- **Originally in English, but translated into Spanish and Vietnamese.**
- **Updated almost daily for first several weeks (currently version 12).**

OSHA-NIEHS Katrina MOU

The following activities will be undertaken through this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

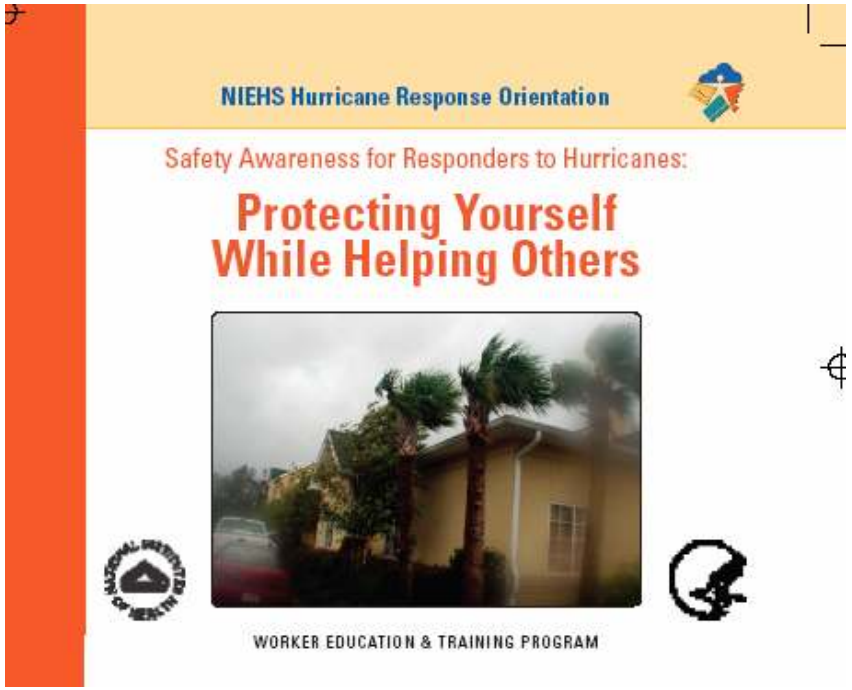
- **Will collaborate to develop and deliver training and education programs for reducing and eliminating hazards for disaster site workers and skilled support personnel in response to Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida.**
- **NIEHS WETP will provide the OSHA Office of Training and Education (OTE) with high quality educational and training course materials and resources for training trainers and disaster site workers and continue supporting OSHA in implementing the Worker Safety Annex to the National Response Plan.**
- **NIEHS and its Worker Training Awardees and OSHA and its OSHA Education Centers will develop course materials to train trainers and deliver training to target populations in the Katrina response zone including those who may serve as skilled support personnel and disaster site responders.**
- **NIEHS WETP will develop a process to share and distribute relevant training and education materials through its web site and training distribution network.**
- **Selected NIEHS Training Awardees and OSHA Education Centers will develop situation-specific course materials and curricula and deliver training within the Katrina response zone.**

Katrina Response Training

NIEHS training activation through the Worker Safety & Health Annex of the National Response Plan

NIEHS Katrina Responder Booklet

- **Designed to accompany Power Point**
- **Available within days of PowerPoint creation, downloadable via the website.**
- **Available in a print layout version with crop and registration marks for printers.**
- **Brochure can be printed in color or black and white to save costs.**
- **Available in English, Vietnamese and Spanish.**
- **Can be ordered from NIEHS directly from the WETP website.**



Katrina Orientation Booklets

English

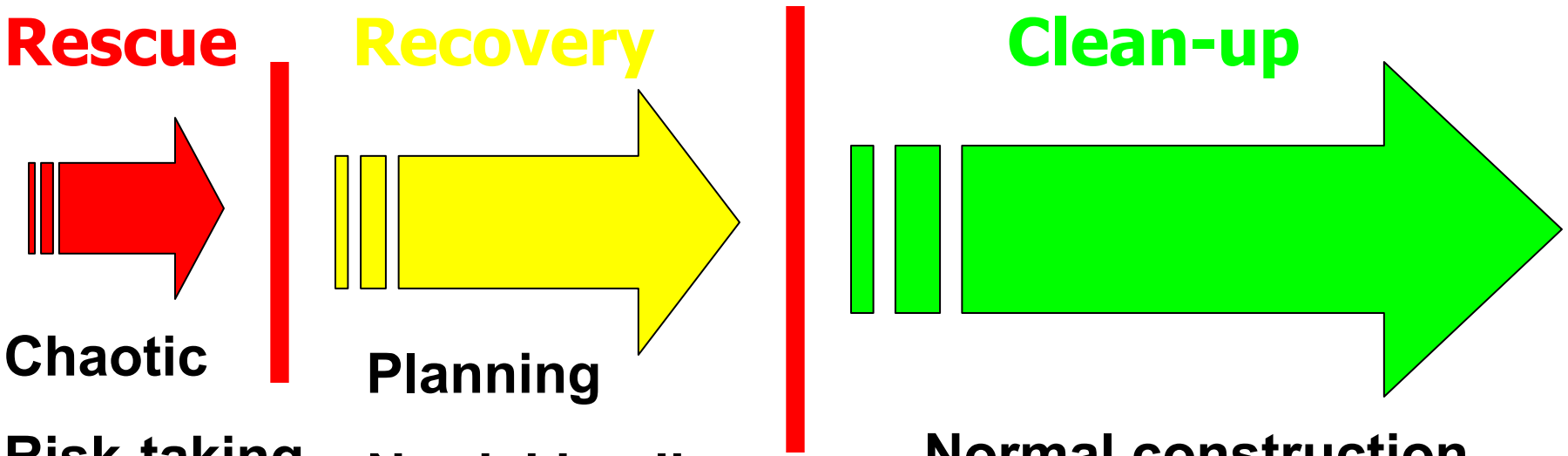
Spanish

Vietnamese

Downloadable from http://www.wetp.org

Extending rescue extends risk for response workers

Phases of Response: Impact on Safety



Katrina Training Concerns

- Addressing safety and health hazards in the NIEHS Katrina Site Orientation.
- Adapting and Streamlining NIEHS training programs to train non-federally funded workers for the cleanup and re-building in the Gulf Coast.
- Revisiting the OSHA Disaster Site Worker Course.
- Fleshing out a WETP training deployment plan for the Gulf.

Preparedness Training

Context for Disaster Response

- Plan for a chain of events scenario.
- Can not predict with high degree of confidence: When, where, how, and duration. So…

Must plan for flexibility.

- Need immediate access to protocol for response and mechanism of coordination.

Disaster Planning Flexibility

- Plan for check-points assessment, along the way after disaster.
- Plan alternate approaches (more than one way to get the job done).
- Plan national networking along with use of local response.
- Need both generalists and access to specialists.
- Plan for Stress and Chaos!

NIEHS Katrina Training Team in Baton Rouge, LA Feb. 2006

To be prepared against surprise is to be trained;

To be prepared for surprise is to be educated.