

**POST-CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS  
WORKSHOP SESSION SUMMARY  
NIEHS NATIONAL TRAINERS' EXCHANGE  
MARCH 2012**

**1. Session Title and Presenter's Contact Information:**

"USW Specialized Emergency Response Trainers (SERTs) Program"

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**2. Workshop Summary**

The objective of this 45 minute presentation/exercise is to use a real-life scenario with the class acting as a group of responders being briefed before the response team/class enters an area which has been hit by a 7.7 magnitude earthquake.

This presentation/exercise is modeled after the New Madrid Earthquake Exercises held in 2011. The area used for this exercise is the Paducah KY area. Graphic descriptions and pictures are used to bring more realism to the exercise. The team/class is briefed on the hazards they may encounter as they hazard map the area, identify immediate life threatening hazards, and report on bodies or any survivors discovered.

One trainer acting as a USW Specialized Emergency Response Trainer (SERT) uses information from the NIEHS Safety and Health Awareness for Responders to Earthquakes to deliver a quick awareness training to the response team/class.

The class has the opportunity to ask questions to make sure they are comfortable with their assignment. The other trainer then gives a presentation as to how USW SERTs are chosen and trained. The class then works together to answer these questions:

1. Do you have SERTs (or something similar) in your organization?

2. What would be your suggestions or creative ideas as to how we might energize our SERTs program moving forward?

### **3. Methods**

This exercise allows for the class to gain the knowledge of a situation and then be placed into the situation to respond as a response team. It also allows a facilitated group discussion that draws upon the expertise of the participants, allowing them to demonstrate their knowledge of responding to disasters. The instructor must be knowledgeable about the general subject, versed in the specifics the New Madrid Earthquake Exercise and experienced in leading a group discussion.

A scribe can be chosen to record responses and ideas about how these types of disaster responses have been done in the past. Ideas can also be captured as to how organizations can train responders in this area. The facilitator may choose to provide each person with the NIEHS Response Tool for Earthquakes or hand them out at the end of the class. Maximum class size should be 20-25 to allow most participants to ask questions.

### **4. Main Points**

#### Key Points and Responses

In setting the stage for the class to act as responders following an earthquake the facilitators should present enough information through slides, explanations and the quick awareness training to have the class/responders to get these key points:

- After the disaster/earthquake is also a very dangerous time.
- The danger posed to responders is often without warning and responders are often the victims.
- Many ways you addressed hazards in the past no longer work because many resources are no longer available.
- Hazards created by the earthquake are often times waiting to be exposed.
- Always assist the injured if it is safe to do so---don't be an injured or dead hero.
- Several organizations have methods of training responders to emergencies.
- The work of the CERTs (Community Emergency Response Trainers) can and has been coordinated with the work of SERTs (Specialized Emergency Response Trainers)

### **5. References**

***NIEHS WETP National Trainers' Exchange: Training Today for a Safer Tomorrow***

March 28-29, 2012, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Adapted from EMAC Tabletop Exercise and from information at [www.kyem.ky.gov/nle2011](http://www.kyem.ky.gov/nle2011), and from local trainer knowledge.

“Protecting Yourself While Responding to Earthquakes”  
NIEHS Worker Education and Training Program  
December 2008

**6. Workshop Handouts/ Resources**

“Protecting Yourself While Responding to Earthquakes”  
NIEHS Worker Education and Training Program  
December 2008