

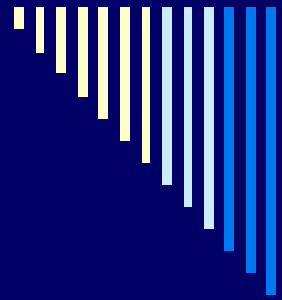
Implications of the Impacts of Natural Disasters on Public Health Systems

Countering Terrorism: Lessons Learned from Natural
and Technological Disasters
Thursday, February 28, 2002
National Academy of Sciences Building
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UCLA Center for Public Health and Disasters



What is a Disaster?

- ✍ Noji: . . . a serious and [possibly] sudden event on such a scale that the stricken community needs extraordinary efforts to cope with it, often with outside help or international aid.
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What is Public Health?

Public Health is that branch of the health field that is responsible for protecting not individual health, but the health of the entire population. The Role of Public Health is to assure the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives, through community-wide prevention and protection programs.



What Does Public Health Do?

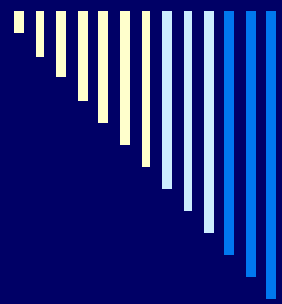
The fundamental obligation of agencies responsible for public health is to:

- ✍ Prevent epidemics and the spread of disease
 - ✍ Protect against environmental hazards
 - ✍ Prevent injuries
 - ✍ Promote and encourage healthy behaviors and mental health
 - ✍ Respond to disasters and assist communities in recovery
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Why Public Health is Involved In Disasters.....

- ✍ **Abrupt increase in illness, injury, or death**
 - ✍ **Destruction of the health care infrastructure**
 - ✍ **Displacement of populations**
 - ✍ **Psychological stressors**
 - ✍ **Potential for changes in the environment**
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What does Public Health Do in a Natural Disaster?

- ✍ Assessment teams evaluate health impacts in community
- ✍ Environmental health assesses water safety and sanitation
- ✍ Public Health Nurses coordinate with Shelter Operations
- ✍ Infectious Disease/Epidemiology tracks infectious diseases
- ✍ Injury prevention program tracks injuries and fatalities
- ✍ Health Officer coordinates information for the public and health care providers



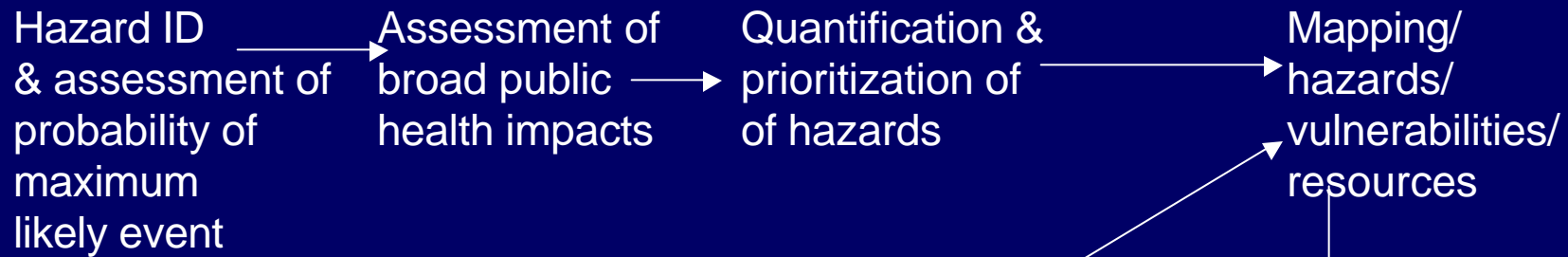
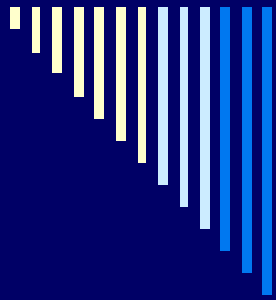
Public Health's Role in Terrorism Event

- ✍ Environmental Health assesses sanitation and safety of food and water
 - ✍ Epidemiology/Surveillance tracks infectious diseases
 - ✍ Injury prevention program tracks injuries and fatalities
 - ✍ Public Health Laboratories identify agents (either in house or through referral to State or CDC)
 - ✍ Health Officer coordinates information for the public and medical providers
 - ✍ Public Health Nurses coordinate with Shelter Operations
 - ✍ Assessment teams assess the impact
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Lessons Learned: Hazard Assessment

- ✍ Assess Hazard Likelihood
 - ✍ Assess Potential Impact of Hazard
 - ✍ Identify Vulnerabilities and Resources
 - ✍ Prioritize Hazards
 - ✍ Develop Mitigation, Preparedness, and Response Options
 - ✍ Implement Plans
 - ✍ Evaluate
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New Hazards





Environmental health assesses water safety and sanitation



Dr. Enrique Paz-Argandona (EIS Officer) collects water samples from a private well after flooding in the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, Washoe County, Nevada, January 1997. CDC website photo

The Problem: Coordination with Agencies

