

# NIEHS Safety Training for Recovery Workers

The **National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)** is part of the FEMA federal recovery mission.

If you are involved in employing Hurricane Sandy clean-up and recovery workers, you may access health and safety technical and training resources from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences through its National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health. Call **(202) 331-7733** or email [wetpclear@niehs.nih.gov](mailto:wetpclear@niehs.nih.gov) to request training.

## What are the needs?

Protection of clean-up and recovery workers is both an ethical and legal requirement. The federal Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) has already reported fifteen fatalities related to Sandy work. Experience from previous disasters has proven the importance of protective programs and training.

In New York and New Jersey private sector employers must comply with requirements of OSHA and public sector employers are covered by the Public Employee Safety & Health Act (PESH), enforced by the NYS Department of Labor and the Public Employees Occupational Safety & Health Program (PEOSH), enforced by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Essential requirements include development of a health and safety plan (HASP), hazard assessment, and training. OSHA, PESH, and PEOSH standards require a specific assessment for personal protective equipment (PPE) and respiratory protection. Once the hazards are determined, workers must be trained on how to avoid them and how to obtain, use, maintain, store and replace PPE.

It is essential that workers are trained to avoid exposure to toxins and hazardous materials such as asbestos, lead, raw sewage, fuel and flammable substances, and mold if they are present at the site. If workers are tasked with clean-up of hazardous materials, there are much more extensive training requirements because exposure to these materials can cause permanent impairment or death.

## What resources are available?

NIEHS has the capacity to provide a basic four-hour safety and health awareness training program for clean-up and recovery workers. A booklet, presentations, and trainers are available to deliver that program in English or in Spanish.

In New York State, labor law requires the provision of the OSHA 10-hour construction course to laborers, workers, and mechanics in any publicly funded construction project of at least \$250,000.

Upon request, representatives of NIEHS will meet with organizations to help identify needs and plan training. Below is a list of training that may be provided through NIEHS and its Clearinghouse:

1. Hurricane Sandy Site Specific Hazard Awareness
2. Mold Hazard Awareness and mitigation techniques
3. Respirator Protection Training
4. Workzone Safety
5. Asbestos and lead awareness
6. Defensive driving
7. HAZWOPER Operations and Refresher
8. OSHA 10 Construction
9. First Aid/CPR/AED
10. Violence in the Workplace

Many of the Hurricane Sandy training materials and additional information about the Clearinghouse is available at the website: <http://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm?id=2472>

The basic booklet order form: [https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/booklet\\_hurricane/index.cfm](https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/booklet_hurricane/index.cfm)



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*The National Clearinghouse for Worker Safety and Health Training supports the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences' Worker Education and Training Program (WETP). WETP has trained more than 2 million emergency responders and hazardous waste workers since 1987 to do their jobs safely. WETP is a part of the Department of Health and Human Services, which is a cooperating agency under the Worker Safety and Health Support Annex of the National Response Plan. An agency mission assignment under the Health and Human Services Recovery Support Function has authorized WETP to provide significant federal resources for health and safety technical support and training as part of the national response to Hurricane Sandy.*