

Preparedness in the Southwest Course

Module 16: Environmental Health Aspects of Disasters Module

Emergencies and disasters can occur anywhere in the world, affecting human health, people's lives and the infrastructure built to support them. Environmental health problems arising from emergencies and disasters are connected to their effects on the physical, biological and social environment that pose a threat to human health, well-being and survival: shelter, water, sanitation, disease vectors, pollution, etc. This module will provide an overview of these issues and describe the public health responsibilities during and after emergencies and disasters.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define environmental health.
2. Describe the public health role in responding to the environmental challenges associated with incidents.
3. Identify possible health and environmental risks associated with disasters.
4. Describe how water quality can impact the public health.
5. List services that can be compromised due to a disaster.
6. Understand the process involved in determining the appropriate vector control measures for a given situation.
7. Understand the importance of conducting a communicable disease risk assessment both prior to an incident and throughout the response and recovery phases

Core competencies addressed:

Competency 1: Describe the public health role in emergency response in a range of emergencies that might arise.

Competency 6: Describe communication role(s) in emergency response:

- within the agency using established communication systems
- with the media
- with the general public
- personal (with family, neighbors)

Target Capabilities:

Environmental Health and Vector Control