

FAD PReP/NAHEMS Tactical Topics:

Health & Safety

Information is based on the **Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan (FAD PReP)/National Animal Health Emergency Management System (NAHEMS) Guidelines: Health and Safety (2011)** to be used in training for or during an animal health emergency. References to the Guidelines sections are provided in parenthesis for more detail.

Introduction/Overview: Protecting the health and safety of response personnel is everyone's responsibility. This document provides guidance on health and safety issues responders may encounter. Use caution at all times.

TO REPORT UNSAFE WORKING CONDITIONS: Contact your immediate supervisor. Follow chain of command.

Responsibilities for Health and Safety within the ICS (2.2)

- Incident Commander (IC): Holds ultimate responsibility for responder health and safety.
- Safety Officer (SO): Establishes safe work practices, PPE requirements, safety training, develops Health and Safety Plan, communicates health and safety information to responders, and issues immediate stop-work order to halt activities that pose immediate threat to life and health.
- Supervisor: Ensures compliance with safety procedures, conducts training, and reports unsafe working conditions to the Safety Officer.
- Responder: Follows safety procedures, reports unsafe working conditions and injuries to supervisor, is aware of job-specific hazards, deploys as physically and mentally able for duty, and is aware of any physical limitations.

Communicating Health and Safety Information at Incident (5)

- Orientation upon arrival at incident site, orientation packet, initial briefing, and daily safety briefings
- Incident-specific training, Health and Safety Plan (HASP), and Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)
- Contingency plans for emergencies addressed in Health and Safety Plan

Job-Related Injuries

Incident Reporting (9.1)

- Immediately report all accidents, illnesses, suspected or actual exposure to hazards.
- Complete all written forms within required time limit.

Accident and Injury Reports (9.2)

- CALL 911 FOR SERIOUS ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES. Seek medical assistance, if needed.
- Supervisors will initiate an investigation and make recommendations for remediation.
- Federal personnel and NAHERC members are eligible for federal workers' compensation coverage.
 - Consult a workers' compensation specialist to confirm filing deadlines.

Health and Safety While Deployed

Work Settings and Shifts (4.1)

- Extended work hours or unusual shifts may cause physical, mental, or emotional stress and increased risk for errors and accidents.

Biological Hazards (4.4)

- Follow safety procedures to avoid exposure to zoonotic diseases.

Physical Hazards (4.3.1)

- Specific hazards are outlined in the Incident HASP and JHA. Seek medical attention if needed.
 - Animals: Remain alert, use proper restraint and handling techniques, and avoid stray animals.
 - Slips, Trips and Falls: Watch for unsafe footing and objects on the ground. **PPE may impair mobility.**
 - Sharps: **AVOID RECAPPING NEEDLES.** Dispose of sharps in approved containers.

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- Musculoskeletal Injuries: Use proper lifting techniques, ask for help, or use mechanical devices to avoid back injuries. Avoid awkward work postures. Increased exertion level or repetitive motions may lead to injuries. Use care, take breaks, and ask for assistance.
- Bites and Stings: Use repellants with DEET or Picardin; long sleeves and long pants; tuck pant legs into boots.

Environmental Hazards (4.3.2)

- Noise: Wear hearing protection if potential exposure to excessive or prolonged noise.
 - RULE OF THUMB: If you cannot carry on a conversation in a normal speaking voice at a distance of 3 feet (arm's length), the noise level may be hazardous.
- Heat: High temperatures, humidity, poor air circulation, exertion, direct sun or heat may cause severe or life-threatening heat-related illnesses.
 - Monitor yourself and co-workers.
 - Stay well hydrated, take breaks, find shade, cool off and wear sunscreen.
- Cold: Low temperatures, wind, and wet conditions may lead to hypothermia or frostbite.
 - Dress in layers; cover head, hands, face and ears.
 - Stay dry and avoid over-exertion.
 - Seek medical attention if necessary.
- Electrical Shock: Inspect work areas for downed lines, damaged electrical cords, assume downed lines are energized, use caution in wet areas.
- Chemical: Avoid exposure to chemicals/gasses, such as from farming chemicals and manure pits.

Psychological Hazards (4.3.3)

- Emergency response may be stressful.
- Recognize signs of stress in yourself and team members.
- Take steps to reduce stress, and care for yourself.
- Communicate with loved ones, responders, and support programs.
- USDA EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE HOTLINE: 800-222-0364
www.foh4you.com

Use of PPE (8.2)

- Follow all incident-specific PPE protocols for responder protection.
- Report any change in conditions which may prompt a different PPE selection.
- Be aware of limitations for PPE and of safe levels of exposure to hazardous materials.
- Follow donning/doffing and decontamination procedures.
- Avoid fatigue and heat-related illnesses due to the use of PPE.
- Monitor yourself and others for signs of fatigue or heat-related illness.

Driving and Vehicle Use (8.3)

- Use vehicles only for government business and basic personal needs (to/from hotels, meals, groceries, etc.)
- Obey all traffic laws:
 - Have your driver's license in your possession when operating a vehicle.
 - Obey speed limits, use seatbelts at all times, and do not drink and drive.
 - Do not use cell phones while vehicle is in motion and avoid other distractions/impairments.
- If involved in a motor vehicle accident:
 - Follow protocols for seeking treatment of injuries.
 - Contact State Highway Patrol for any accident occurring on any road.
 - Follow protocol for reporting accidents to the Agency.

