

Wisconsin Department of Health Services



## Public Health Emergency Preparedness Orientation

Brian Kaczmarek  
Training and Exercise Coordinator  
WI DHS: Public Health Preparedness  
10-17-13

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## Respond to incidents that pose an immediate or potential threat to the public's health, safety, and welfare.

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## DPH Responds To...

- Incidents where people are killed, infected, injured, exposed, or seek medical treatment
- Evacuation or shelter in-place are considered or have occurred
- Credible terrorist threats
- Requests for public health assistance from local, state and federal agencies
- Incidents with uncertainty about actions needed to protect public health

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## Take care of #1!!!

- Research shows that the majority of responders to emergencies WANT to report for duty, but don't because they don't feel that their families/loved ones will be taken care of.
- They don't have a personal/family emergency plan.

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## Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed



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## Potential Public Health Threats

- Communicable disease outbreaks
- Nuclear events or radiological releases
- Toxic/hazardous substance releases
- Terrorism – Nuclear, Biological & Chemical



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## Potential Health Threats

- Natural disasters and severe weather- tornadoes, flooding, extreme heat or cold
- Utility interruptions
- Product tampering or recalls



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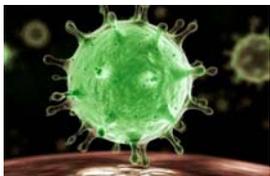
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## Communicable Disease

- Investigation of Disease Outbreaks
- Disease Surveillance & Response
- Animal (zoonosis)
- Bioterrorism Issues



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## Sheboygan TB Outbreak



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## H1N1 Vaccines in Wisconsin

- Shipped 1.93 million doses H1N1 vaccine
- Registered 1,100 providers to administer vaccine
- Administered 1.26 million doses



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## Notable Recent Communicable Disease Outbreaks

- Cudahy *Legionella* (2010)
- H1N1 pandemic (2009 & 2010)
- *Salmonella* – peanut butter (2007)
- *E. coli* – spinach (2006)
- Monkeypox – first cases in N. America (2003)

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## Nuclear/Radiological

- Nuclear Power Plant - Alerts
- Radiological Sources/Fixed Sites
- Radiological Transportation Mishaps
- Consultation/On-site Response



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### Toxic Substance Releases

- Assess chemical exposure risk
  - Who's at risk of exposure?
  - Pathway and toxicological information
  - Actions to prevent exposure
- Consult on evacuation actions
  - How extensive? Special populations?
- Environmental sampling
- Review and interpret environmental data

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### Toxic Substance Releases

- Re-entry - "when can I go home?"
  - Can I open my restaurant? Motel? Grocery?
  - Is environmental sampling needed?
  - Work closely with the Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene
- Health Information
  - Crisis/Risk communication
  - Sympathetic Casualties
- Special precautions?
- Follow-up health studies?
- Disease or exposure registry?
- Clean-up, remediation

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### DPH works with...

- City & County Health Departments (88)
- Tribal Health (11)
- Hospitals (137)
- First Responders
  - Local Emergency Management
  - HazMat Level A Teams
  - Law Enforcement

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## DPH works with...

- State Agencies
  - Dept of Military Affairs (DMA)
    - Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM)
    - Wisconsin National Guard (WING)
  - Dept of Natural Resources (DNR)
  - Agriculture (DATCP)
  - Dept of Justice (DOJ)
  - State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH)
- Federal Agencies - EPA, CDC, FEMA, FBI, NWS
- Other: Wisconsin Poison Center

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## Nationally Weak in Incident Management

Response to 1970 California wildfires

- Lack of accountability
- Poor communication
- No process for orderly planning
- Overloaded managers
- Inefficiently integrates needs of multiple, responding agencies

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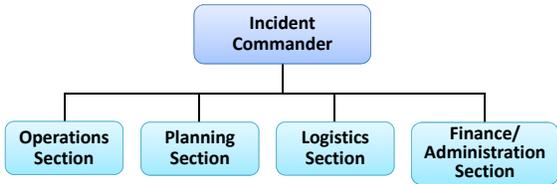
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## Incident Command System (ICS/NIMS)



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graph TD; IC[Incident Commander] --- OS[Operations Section]; IC --- PS[Planning Section]; IC --- LS[Logistics Section]; IC --- FAS[Finance/Administration Section];
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National Incident Management System (NIMS)

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## ICS/NIMS Courses

- NIMS 700
- NIMS 800
- ICS 100
- ICS 200
- ICS 300
- ICS 400

Search for 'FEMA Independent Study'

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## DPH Staffing of State EOC

- EOC Activation Event Levels (I, II, III, & IV)
- Consideration for Determining Event Levels
  - Tornado Warnings
  - Winter Storm/Blizzard Warning
  - Flooding (predicted or threat)
  - Large Evacuation/Shelters opening
  - Events disrupting community activities and affect public safety
  - Closure of Interstate Highways
  - Potential impact on critical facilities
  - Resource request or need for multiple state agencies

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## Authority of Public Health Departments

- Local Health Officers are the primary public health authority
- State Health Officer has statewide authority
  - but must collaborate with local public health departments
- Department of Health Services supports and provides direct assistance to Local Public Health Departments

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### Local health departments and health officers...

- *“shall assure the enforcement of state public health statutes and public health rules”*
- *“upon the appearance of any communicable disease in his or her territory, shall immediately investigate all the circumstances”*
- *“shall promptly take all measures necessary to prevent, suppress and control communicable diseases...”*

Source - Wisconsin State Statutes Chapters 250 - 254

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### Local health departments and health officers...

- *“may forbid public gatherings when deemed necessary to control outbreaks or epidemics”*
- *“may require isolation of a patient or of an individual under s. 252.041 (1) (b), quarantine of contacts, concurrent and terminal disinfection”*

Source - Wisconsin State Statutes Chapters 250 - 254

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### Local health departments and health officers...

- *“in cities under general charter...may enter into and examine any place at any time to ascertain health conditions”*
- *“shall order the abatement or removal of human health hazards on private premises”*

Source - Wisconsin State Statutes Chapters 250 - 254

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### What is a Human Health Hazard?

- “...a substance, activity or condition that is known to have the potential to cause acute or chronic illness, to endanger life, to generate or spread infectious diseases, or otherwise injuriously to affect the health of the public.”
- Sound vague?

Source - Wisconsin State Statutes Chapters 250 - 254

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### Case Studies



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### Events

- 2000 Interstate Transport Accident (Nuclear)
- East High School (GB) Mercury Release (\$250,000 to remediate)
- Pierce Co. Mercury Case
- Clandestine Meth Labs
- Columbus Chemical Fire (1,500 chemicals onsite)
- West Shore Pipeline Gas Spill

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## How should suspicious powders be dealt with?

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## Low Credibility

A package that

- is unopened, and
- does not have a substance leaking from it, and
- is not accompanied by explicit or implicit threat.



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## Moderate to High Credibility

- suspicious package, and
- a substance is present, and
- accompanied by an explicit or implicit threat, or the recipient has been targeted in the past.



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## Suspicious powders

- No guideline can cover every situation.
- Contact law enforcement and local public health to assess the credibility of each threat on a case-by-case basis.

Wisconsin Division of Public Health March 2, 2011

**UNKNOWN SUBSTANCE/PACKAGE/LETTER**  
DO NOT sniff, touch, or move package/letter. DO NOT change environment, including lights.

Law enforcement will perform a threat risk assessment (see reverse for assessment guidelines).

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## Reaching DPH

- 24-hour Emergency Access
- Communicable Disease Outbreaks
- Natural Disasters
- Radiological/Nuclear Incidents
- Chemical Incidents/Spills Evacuations or Emergency Sheltering
- Crisis Counseling/Emergency Human Services
- Exercises & Drills

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## 24 Hour Emergency Hotline

**(608) 258-0099**

The Department of Health Services can provide advice or assistances for emergencies which involve public health and human services concerns

The operator will contact technical staff for:

- ▶ CHEMICAL INCIDENTS OR SPILLS
- ▶ COMMUNICABLE DISEASE OUTBREAKS
- ▶ NATURAL DISASTERS
- ▶ RADIOLOGICAL/NUCLEAR INCIDENTS

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### The 15 Public Health Preparedness Capabilities

1. Community Preparedness
2. Community Recovery
3. Emergency Operations Coordination
4. Emergency Public Information & Warning
5. Fatality Management
6. Information Sharing
7. Mass Care
8. Medical Countermeasure Dispensing

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### The 15 Public Health Preparedness Capabilities

9. Medical Materiel Management & Distribution
10. Medical Surge
11. Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions
12. Public Health Laboratory Testing
13. Public Health Surveillance & Epidemiological Investigation
14. Responder Safety & Health
15. Volunteer Management

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- DPH takes emergency preparedness and response very seriously.
- Lives and public safety are often at stake.
- DPH is well prepared to respond to public health emergencies.

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*For more information...*  
**Brian Kaczmariski**  
[Brian.kaczmariski@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Brian.kaczmariski@wisconsin.gov)  
[DHSResponse@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSResponse@wisconsin.gov)

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