The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 exposed rescue and recovery workers to unprecedented levels of risk for job-related injury, illness, and death. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), responded swiftly to address workers' needs in the aftermath of the attacks.

NIOSH quickly sent to Ground Zero dozens of staff who applied their technical expertise to help meet immediate worker protection needs. Also, by helping workers and supervisors build their own safety and health capacity, NIOSH was able to enhance safety at the sprawling site. In the aftermath, NIOSH is working with its partners to address concerns about potential long-term effects on workers' health and to help protect workers in the event of future emergencies. A summary of NIOSH's assistance follows.

**Fact Sheet for Workers in Secondary Response and Other Supporting Roles: Frequently Asked Questions About Exposure to Dusts and Gases**

www.cdc.gov/niosh/erfaqs.html
Eye Safety: Emergency Response and Disaster Recovery
www.cdc.gov/niosh/eyesafe.html

Traumatic Incident Stress: Information for Emergency Response Workers
www.cdc.gov/niosh/unp-trinstrs.html

- Provided electronic access on the NIOSH Web page to critically needed health and safety information, which is an ongoing resource for workers, supervisors, and others in the event of future emergencies.

NIOSH Is Following Up on Long-Term Needs:
- Conducting health hazard evaluations to assess potential health effects from workers' exposure to dust in buildings near the recovery site.
- Providing technical assistance to the New York City Department of Health regarding the development of a voluntary registry of individuals who worked at, lived near, or responded to the World Trade Center attack.
- Working with local partners to develop a medical screening and monitoring program for workers involved in rescue and recovery operations at Ground Zero.

NIOSH Is Helping Strengthen Preparedness:
- Issued new interim rules in December 2001 for approving self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) for use by fire fighters and other first responders at scenes of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.
- Convened a national workshop in December 2001 to gather information and recommendations on the performance, availability, and appropriateness of personal protective equipment. A report from the workshop is available at www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl.
- Developing recommendations for management processes and worker training to prevent injury and illness to first responders and recovery workers at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Assessing research to develop and evaluate technologies for better protecting emergency responders and other workers in terrorist attacks.
- Developing guidelines for emergency responders on the selection, use, and maintenance of respirators and other personal protective equipment in disaster situations.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 highlighted the importance of worker safety and health as an essential component of public health. NIOSH's efforts with partners from industry, labor, government, and public health will help integrate occupational safety and health into ongoing planning for emergency preparedness and homeland security at the local, state, and national levels.

For additional information, contact NIOSH at
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(1-800-356-4674)
Fax: 513-533-8573
or visit the NIOSH Web site at www.cdc.gov/niosh

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