

# CDC PHR Fact Sheet

## CDC Grants Will Help Improve Hurricane Response and Recovery



It's a familiar sight – cars floating in murky water, debris littered in fields and houses half collapsed from the tremendous force of water and wind. These were the images after Hurricane Sandy racked the northeast coast in the fall of 2012 – the second costliest hurricane in U.S. history. A year later, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), along with the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, are providing money to find effective ways to help health systems and communities hit hardest by the storm recover.

Funded under the Hurricane Sandy Recovery and Rebuilding Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2013, this two-year research grant program represents the first time HHS has been able to fund research needed by local communities to determine the best ways to prepare for and recover from natural disasters

like hurricanes. CDC awarded \$7.1 million to 13 grantees who will focus on four priority areas: mold mitigation and related health issues; characterization of death and disease after the hurricane; health hazard exposure, recognition, and mitigation among response workers and volunteers; and evaluation of public health systems response.

The results of this research will enhance the recovery process and contribute to the resiliency of this region and its communities to withstand future public health threats. Information from these studies is expected to provide insight on how to adapt and sustain our public health and health care systems during an event like this. In addition, the results can immediately be applied to communities recovering from similar events.

### Grant Recipients

Grantee	Location	Project Title & Description
Columbia University	New York	<i>Fungal Exposure in NYC Homes Damaged by Hurricane Sandy and Respiratory Outcomes</i> – to study fungal exposure in New York City homes and subsequent respiratory issues among children in homes damaged due to Hurricane Sandy.
Health Research Inc. & the New York State Department of Health	New York	<i>Assessing Health Effects and Risk Factors after Hurricane Sandy</i> – to study whether people with certain neighborhood characteristics or social/physical vulnerability, or those who have been relocated for long periods of time are more vulnerable to mental health problems or other adverse health outcomes after Hurricane Sandy.
New Jersey State Department of Health & New Jersey Medical School	New Jersey	<i>Impacts on Health and Mental Health post Superstorm Sandy</i> – to characterize the morbidity, mortality, and hospitalization trends by cause and risk factors in the year after Hurricane Sandy in New Jersey state.
Feinstein Institute for Medical Research and Nassau County (NY) Department of Human Services	New York	<i>Development of a Vulnerability Profile of the Psychological Sequelae of Hurricane Victims</i> – to understand the psychological impact of Hurricane Sandy, as well as investigate the impact of various displacement strategies on the mental health of residents.



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Public Health Solutions and the New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene	New York	<i>Impact of Hurricane Sandy on Morbidity and Mortality in NYC</i> – to study the impact of the hurricane on morbidity and mortality in health care facilities and nursing homes, evaluate community and individual risk factors for injury-related morbidity and mortality, and determine the short- and long-term effects of Hurricane Sandy on the mental health of New York City residents.
Health Research, Inc. and the New York State Department of Health	New York	<i>NYSDOH Hurricane Sandy Recovery: Priority Research Area C: Evaluation of the Public Health System Response</i> – to evaluate the New York State Department of Health public health system in its preparation, response, and recovery from Hurricane Sandy, and to research modifications needed to improve future response and recovery
Columbia University, NY Morningside, Westchester County (NY) Department of Health and Nassau County Department of Human Services	New York	<i>Evaluation of Public Health Systems Response to Hurricane Sandy in the NYC Area</i> – to evaluate the Nassau and Westchester County Health Departments' response to Hurricane Sandy, and determine how public health workers can improve their disaster response and recovery efforts.
Johns Hopkins University and Cecil County (MD) Health Department	Maryland	<i>Examining and Enhancing Public Health Workers' Sense of Efficacy Toward Hurricane Sandy</i> – to study challenges local public health agency workers faced during Hurricane Sandy and assess workers' perspectives toward the recovery challenges.
Queens College	New York	<i>Reducing Occupational Hazards of Sandy-Related Work of Immigrant Day Laborers</i> – to identify potential barriers and facilitators for protecting Latino construction day laborers conducting Sandy-related recovery construction work and to develop, evaluate, and disseminate worker education and training materials.
Columbia University	New York	<i>Impact of Health Department Worker Safety Training on Health Impacts after Sandy</i> – to evaluate the impact of New York City health department-conducted worker safety training of lay persons and volunteers on the incidence of illness and injury due to exposure to environmental hazards after Hurricane Sandy.
New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services	New Jersey	<i>Evaluating the Needs, Knowledge and Health Impacts of Three Worker Populations During and After Superstorm Sandy</i> – to assess work-related health effects associated with Hurricane Sandy and determine similarities/differences between "routine" and "emergency-related" work tasks, exposures, and health outcomes for three worker populations.
University of Connecticut School of Medicine	Connecticut	<i>Recovery from Catastrophic Weather: Mold Exposure and Health-Related Training</i> – to develop, evaluate, and disseminate mold exposure- and health-related training materials for emergency response personnel and health care providers.
Rand Corporation	New York	<i>Assessing and Managing Health Risks from Fugitive Chemicals after Hurricane Sandy</i> – to assess exposure to and build a model of potential health risks to recovery workers exposed to fugitive chemicals in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Findings will guide decision-making for mitigation, treatment, and health communication strategies.

For additional information, contact the OPHPR Extramural Research Program at [ophpr\\_extramuralres@cdc.gov](mailto:ophpr_extramuralres@cdc.gov).