



DISASTERS HAPPEN!

Tabletop Exercise



Exercise Goal



Participants will

- **Demonstrate an understanding of the environmental health roles, issues, and priorities following a disaster.**



Exercise Objectives

Focus on the role of your organization(s) in response to potential consequences of a wildland fire

Understand the interdisciplinary and interagency coordination at the regional, State, and local level

Exercise Objectives



Identify resources required for response and recovery

Identify sources of information that will assist your jurisdiction in a disaster

Exercise Ground Rules



- **Don't fight the scenario!**
- **No right or wrong answers.**
- **Choose spokesperson and scribe.**



SCENARIO



It is 2pm on Saturday afternoon and the Fresno County area is experiencing its 14th day of a heat wave. Winds are high, and the humidity in the area has been very low. The area has been issued a red flag warning. Around 4pm, residents start making 911 calls because they see clouds of thick dark smoke in the hills. A brushfire has started and is moving quickly towards the residential homes nearby.



Impacts to Residents



By 4pm (1600) firefighters are on scene but the fire is only 15% contained. An evacuation order has been announced for the local residents and the surrounding areas. Hundreds of families are displaced and in need of shelter. By 10pm (2200), the fire has swept over the residential hillside and burned 154 residences and 43 commercial buildings.



SITUATION STATUS



- ➔ • **Casualties:**
Multiple people with injuries or complaints of smoke inhalation.
- ➔ • **Behavioral/Mental health:**
100+ distressed persons
- ➔ • **Infrastructure/Transportation:**
Some power lines and light structures have fallen.
Traffic gridlocked and the main road is inaccessible.



Situation Status



Air quality is poor and there is debris everywhere. Winds and high heat are expected to continue in the next few days. Most residents have lost everything, are distressed and hungry. Residents are setting up tents at the County Fairgrounds. “Do-gooders” are bringing homemade food for displaced residents. No emergency declaration has been proclaimed...



HOURS SINCE START OF FIRE: 8

EXERCISE



Initial Response

**FIRST 24 HOURS SINCE START
OF FIRE**

DISCUSSION

- 1) What are the EH issues at this time?
- 2) What are the EH priorities?
- 3) What actions are needed?

HOURS SINCE START OF FIRE: 24

Situation Status – Day 5



- 10 shelters have been set up to accommodate 1,242 residents.
- Residents are not allowed back into town.
- Some businesses are still closed.



DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE: 5

Situation Status



- **Several structures in the area are on fire, including residential homes and commercial properties.**
 - **Dozens of structures uninhabitable from smoke and water damage.**
- **Local fire and health resources are depleted.**
- **State-wide resources have been activated to aid in the recovery effort.**

Reports of multiple counties dealing with wildfires, due to unusually high temperatures across the state.

DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE: 5

DISCUSSION

- 1) What are the EH issues at this time?
- 2) What are the EH priorities?
- 3) What actions are needed?
 - a) Do you have a debris management plan or mutual aid agreements?
 - b) Where can you find these plans and agreements?

DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE: 5

EXERCISE



Recovery

FIRST 2 WEEKS SINCE
START OF FIRE

DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE:14

SITUATION STATUS



- The wildfire has been 60% contained.
- EH begins conducting health and safety assessments.



DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE:14

SITUATION STATUS



- There are several burned septic and water tanks. There are walking hazards due to downed light structures.
- Gas and water leaks present.
- Utilities:
 - No safe drinking water
 - No power
 - Sewer/septic systems compromised



DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE: 14

DISCUSSION

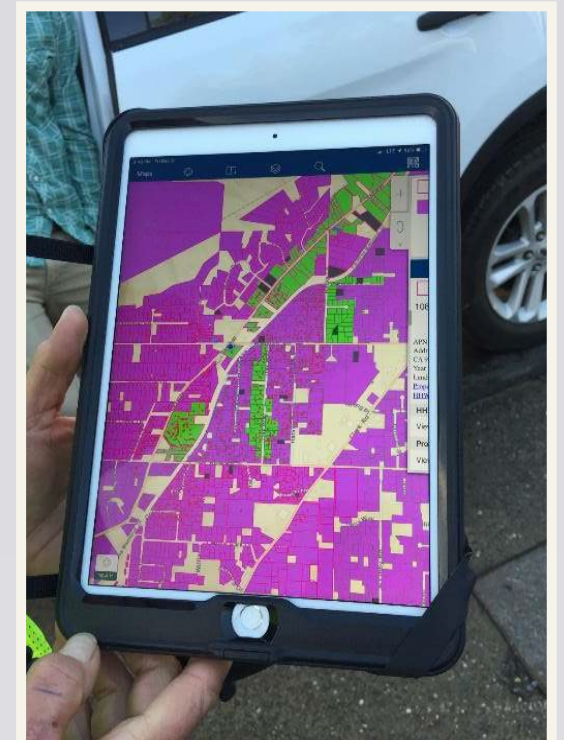
- 1) What are the EH issues at this time?
- 2) What are the EH priorities?
- 3) What actions are needed?
 - a) Notifications and coordination
 - b) Damage Assessments
 - c) Resource requests

DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE:14

SITUATION STATUS



- Phase 1 Debris Removal Operations (Household Hazardous Waste Removal) is in progress.
- State Declaration has been made.



DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE: 30

DEBRIS REMOVAL - PHASE 1

Household Hazardous Waste Removal

Examples of Household Hazardous Waste/Bulk Asbestos to be removed during Phase 1 Debris Removal:

- Paint
- Cleaners
- Solvents
- Oils
- Batteries
- Herbicides
- Pesticides
- Propane Cylinders
- Fluorescent Light Ballasts
- Compressed Gas Cylinders
- Fire Extinguishers
- Aerosol Cans
- Suspect Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) that can be removed in less than an hour (example: Transite Siding, Floor Tile, etc.)

Why is Household Hazardous Waste removed?

Following a fire, household hazardous waste products require special handling and disposal, especially if their containers are compromised. Household hazardous waste may pose a threat to human health, animals and the environment. Household hazardous waste removal will clear the way for proper removal of ash and debris, allowing the rebuilding process to begin.

Phase 1 debris removal is being conducted at no cost to property owners.



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

DISCUSSION

- 1) What are the EH issues at this time?
- 2) What are the EH priorities?
- 3) What actions are needed?
 - a) Notifications and coordination
 - b) Damage Assessments
 - c) Resource requests

DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE: 30

SITUATION STATUS



Household hazardous waste collection is complete and residents are allowed to return to their residences temporarily to assess damage.

The heat wave has ended but now heavy rain is in the forecast for the next few days.



DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE:60

Situation Status



Phase II Debris Removal Program has been approved for California.

Phase II Debris Removal is in progress. Due to limited staff, local responders/staff are starting to feel burnout and fatigue from 12-hour back-to-back shifts.



DAYS SINCE FIRE: 120+ (~ 4-6 months)

DISCUSSION

- 1) What are the EH issues at this time?
- 2) What are the EH priorities?
- 3) What actions are needed?
 - a) Notifications and coordination
 - b) Damage Assessments
 - c) Resource requests

DAYS SINCE START OF FIRE: 120-170

EXERCISE



Mobile Home Park

SITUATION STATUS



A fire has broken out at one of the residences at a mobile home park in Kern County and is spreading quickly. Propane cylinders are located nearby and are causing multiple explosions. Weather conditions are dry and it is extremely windy. Due to hazards, a request for evacuation and public safety power shutoff (PSPS) issued. Within 8 hours, the fire is 30% contained. No reported injuries to firefighters or civilians.

By Day 4

No reported injuries to firefighters or civilians.

No casualties.

42 total structures burned (30 mobile homes)



EXERCISE



Source: LA Times

What are the steps you would take if this was a much smaller incident and there is no state declaration? **Compare/contrast.**

2022 DISASTER SYMPOSIUM PARTICIPANTS



PREPARED