Prepare for, Respond to, and Recover from Public Health Emergencies

Public health issues are inherent in community disasters. Iowa’s local public health system must be prepared to respond to public health threats, disasters, and emergencies and be ready to help communities recover. The critical activities in these standards involve preparedness and planning with community partners to respond to public health emergencies including environmental-related emergencies.

The Prepare for, Respond to, and Recover from Public Health Emergencies standards were designed to:

- Improve the ability of public health agencies to respond to disasters by making sure they are prepared through staff education and proper planning.
- Improve the state’s readiness to respond by making sure the public health emergency response plan is annually reviewed and shared with local, regional, and state partners.
- Recognize public health as a valuable local response partner that can provide input and help to emergency management and recovery efforts.
- Make sure exercises are conducted that assure staff members understand their roles in a disaster.

What are the benefits and outcomes for Iowans?

- Iowans will be served by local public health agencies that will be ready to respond in local, regional, state, and national emergencies and in recovery efforts.
- Physical and emotional illness and death from public health emergencies will be reduced.

How will the local public health system change?

- Local public health agencies will need to continue a minimum amount of readiness activities annually as part of their mission.
- The standards seek to formalize a process to integrate emergency preparedness into daily operations for the local public health agency.
- Local efforts will be supported by the state’s coordination of emergency response and the provision of adequate infrastructure to provide technical assistance, consultation, and referral to resources for successful emergency response efforts.

For more information about the Prepare for, Respond to, and Recover from Public Health Emergencies standards, contact committee co-chairs:

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