

Segment 2

Stressors Affecting Disaster Responders



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News Photo

Segment 2 Objective:

Describe the causes of stress in first responders during a disaster response.

Effects of Heat

- Heatstroke
- Heat exhaustion
- Heat syncope



Photo by Jacelyn Augustine of FEMA News Photo

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Effects of Cold



EPA

Prevent Dehydration

- Keep drinking enough fluids, both in cold and hot climates.
- Avoid caffeinated and alcoholic beverages.
- Proper electrolyte balance is important.

Sleep

- After 17 hours without sleep, you have the reaction time of someone with a blood alcohol level of 0.05%.
- After 24 hours without sleep, you have the reaction times of someone with a blood alcohol level of 0.1%.

Lessons Learned

- Bypass of pre-existing triage in transport of casualties
- Massive in-pouring of unnecessary relief supplies
- Communication snarls
- Overwhelming numbers of volunteers and amateur responders
- Inter-agency and intra-agency coordination difficulties

Working with the Injured and Dying

Being unable to help may be the worst stress of all.



Grieving Families of Victims

- Grief is a very powerful emotion.
- All responders need to be trained in death notification.
- Culture affects how grief is expressed.