



# Developing Field Response Teams for a State Public Health Agency

**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND  
HEALTHIER COMMUNITY



# Our purpose drives our work

We save lives and protect all people in Washington from the health threats of emergencies and disasters.

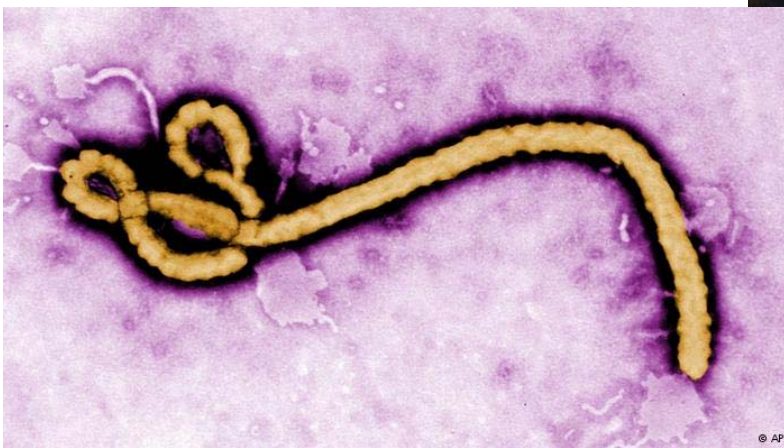
# Key Considerations

- 35 Local Health Jurisdictions
- Over half with less than 15 staff
- Home rule state
- Secretary of Health can support local health officers, or lead if necessary
- Capabilities must reflect reality

# Defining the Need



Source: KOMO News



Source: KIRO TV

# Setting the Stage: The How



# The Teams

- **Type 3 Incident Management Team (IMT)**
- Epidemiology Task Force
- Environmental Public Health Task Force
- Receipt, Stage, and Store (RSS) Task Force
- Public Health and Medical System Assessment Task Force
- Construction Review Services (CRS) Strike Team
- Volunteer Pharmacy Response Teams
- COOP Team in each Division

*Additional teams under development*

# Public Health Incident Management Team

Type 3 - Full complement of Command and General Staff

- Situation Unit Leader
- Resource Unit Leader
- Documentation Unit Leader
- Communications Unit Leader, and
- Division / Group Supervisors

*Around 12 staff maximum*

# Public Health Incident Management Team

## Capability:

- Lead the State ESF 8 response
- Support policy decision making by the Secretary of Health
- Support and coordination to agencies and partners responding under health and medical missions
- Facilitate mutual aid among local health jurisdictions, tribes, and healthcare facilities
- Assist local health jurisdictions, tribes, and healthcare facilities in their response



# Public Health Incident Management Team

Since March 2014:

Led 5 incidents and one full scale exercise

Deployed in one real incident and three exercises



# Epidemiology Task Force

- Identifies, monitors, and investigates disease outbreaks
- Team Composition
  - 1 Division/Group Supervisor
  - 1 Epidemiology Information Technology Specialist
  - At least 3 Epidemiology Interviewers
  - At least 1 Public Health Data Entry Staff
- Deployed in two incidents and one full-scale exercise.

# Environmental Public Health Task Force

- Identifies and reduces environmental threats to human health from water, food, waste, and air (indoor and outdoor)
- Team Composition
  - 1 Division/Group Supervisor
  - 5 Environmental Health Generalists
  - 2 Public Health Information Officers
  - Technology Staff
- Deployed to one incident and exercised at CDP in Anniston, AL



# Receipt, Stage, and Store (RSS) Task Force

- Team Composition:
  - 1 Division/Group Supervisor
  - 1 Operations Team Leader
  - 1 Logistics Team Leader
  - 1 Finance and Administrative Team Leader
  - 1 Tactical Communications Leader
  - 30+ support roles
  
- Activated many times (H1N1, wildfires, mudslide, exercises)



# Construction Review Services Strike Team

- Trained and experienced in assessing post-disaster conditions of licensed healthcare facilities
- Team Composition:
  - 2 trained Washington Safety Assessment Facility Evaluation (Wasafe) building evaluators
  - 1 Structural Engineers Association of Washington (SEAW) licensed structural engineer

# Public Health and Medical Assessment Task Force

- Immediate and ongoing assessment of public health and medical system in a disaster-affected community
- Team Composition:
  - 1 Division/Group Supervisor
  - 1 Medical System Technical Specialist
  - 1 Environmental Public Health Specialist
  - 1 Public Health Disaster Epidemiologist
  - 1 Healthcare Architect/Engineer
  - 1 Data Entry Specialist
  - Others identified as necessary

# Training the Teams



# Training the Teams

- Required Courses
  - All response personnel have the same basic requirements:
    - IS 100
    - IS 200
    - IS 700
    - IS 800





# Training the Teams

## IMT

- ICS 300 and 400 (32 hours)
- Position Specific Training (24 – 40 hours)
- Leadership Training
  - L-380 Point of the Spear (40 hours)
  - L-381 Incident Leadership (40 hours)
- O-305 Type 3 Incident Management Training (40 hours)
- Public Health Infrastructure Training (8 hours)
- Quarterly drills

# Equipping the teams

- Team Deployment Kit
  - Computers
  - First Aid Kit
  - Portable Radios
  - Sat phone
  - Office Supplies
  - Credit card



# Summary

- Policy-level vision and support
- Ongoing threats combined with limited statewide capacity
- Harness skills and interests of coworkers
- Ongoing training and exercises to maintain readiness

# Questions?

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