

Wimberley EMS 6/3/2015 - Safety Message/Expanded Safety Message, Safety Plan, Site SafetyPlan:

Working in Wimberley, TX

Due to sewage treatment plant spillover, multiple airborne and waterborne illnesses could be present, to include Ecoli. If severe inclement weather is in the area, the strike teams will be notified.

Drowning

Floodwater poses drowning risks for everyone, regardless of their ability to swim. Swiftly moving shallow water can be deadly, and even shallow standing water can be dangerous.

Vehicles do not provide adequate protection from floodwaters. They can be swept away or may stall in moving water. Do not drive into water at any time; you do not know how deep it is and/or if the road below has been washed out. The Centers for Disease Control report that over half of all flood-related drowning's occur when a vehicle is driven into hazardous floodwater.

Trench (Immersion) Foot

Trench foot, also known as immersion foot, occurs when the feet are wet for long periods of time. It can be quite painful, but it can be prevented and treated.

Symptoms include anger, fatigue, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, nightmares, depression, inability to concentrate, hyperactivity, increased alcohol or drug use, tingling and/or itching sensation, pain, swelling, numbness-cold and blotchy skin, prickly or heavy feet, foot may be red, dry and painful after it becomes warm, blisters may form, followed by skin and tissue dying and falling off. Untreated trench foot can involve toes, heel, or the entire foot.

How is trench foot prevented and treated?

When possible, air-dry and elevate your feet, and exchange wet shoes and socks for dry ones to help prevent the development of trench foot. Take the following steps: thoroughly clean and dry feet, put on clean, dry socks daily, treat the affected part by applying warm packs/soak in warm water for 5 minutes, when sleeping or resting, do not wear socks.

Obtain medical assistance as soon as possible. If you have a foot wound, your foot may be more prone to infection. Check your feet at least once a day for infections or worsening of symptoms.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when the body loses more heat than it can produce, resulting in a dangerously low body temperature. Hypothermia most often occurs because of exposure to cold weather or immersion in a cold body of water.

Symptoms: constant shivering, slurred speech, lack of coordination, confusion, fatigue, and/or apathy

A temperature of 95 F or less is a life-threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1.

The person suffering from these symptoms should be moved to a warm, dry area; wet clothing should be removed and warm and dry clothing and blankets should be used to re-warm the individual.

Wound Care and Tetanus Vaccinations

The risk for injury after a disaster is high, especially during the cleanup of debris. Proper care of wounds is important to avoid infection and other complications. Tetanus, a disease caused by bacteria that affects the body's nerves and muscles, is also a concern for persons with both open and closed wounds. Wounds in contact with soil and sand can become infected. Puncture wounds can carry bits of clothing and dirt into wounds and result in infection. Crush injuries are more likely to become infected than wounds from cuts.

Seek medical attention as soon as possible if: There is a foreign object embedded in the wound, the wound is at special risk of infection (such as a dog bite or a puncture by a dirty object), and/or a previous wound shows signs of becoming infected (e.g. increased pain, heat, swelling, redness, draining, or fever).

Performing Home Abatement Work and Damage Assessments

When performing any type of relief efforts proper PPE must be worn at all times. This is to include hard hats, eye protection, N-95 respirator or better, gloves, steel toed boots, and long pants. Before entering homes perform a "walk around" to determine whether the structure appears to be safe (unless otherwise marked by SAR teams). If at any time you feel an environment to be unsafe, immediately inform your team leader and remove yourself from that area. Continually watch for tripping hazards, over-head hazards, puncture hazards, and/or anything else to cause bodily harm. Ensure that all power has been cut off to the home before beginning relief efforts i.e. muck-out, demo, etc. Your team leader will perform a site-specific safety briefing before any/all operations.