## Short Course

# Environmental Health and Disaster Management (27 and 28 June 2013)

*Facilitated by:*

*Dr Peter Davey, President, International Federation of Environmental Health*
*Ben Ryan, Director, Disaster Risk Reduction, International Federation of Environmental Health*

### Short Course Objectives

- Demonstrate how environmental health infrastructure and practices are linked to healthy cities, communities and healthy people.
- Provide an overview of key environmental health urban and regional infrastructure and how this can be affected by natural disasters and climate change.
- Understand what should be considered to mitigate the environmental health risks after a disaster.
- Provide guidance on responding, assessing and addressing the environmental health impacts of a disaster using a population-based focus.

### Background

There has been a steady increase in the quantity and frequency of disasters in the past few decades[1]. During the last quarter century, more than 3.4 million lives have been lost due to disasters, with billions more affected, and tens of billions of dollars spent on repairing damage and reconstructing lives[2]. Between 1980 and 2005, 90 per cent of the natural disasters, 72.5 per cent of casualties and 75 per cent of economic losses were caused by weather, climate and water related hazards such as droughts, floods, windstorms, tropical cyclones, storm surges, extreme temperatures, landslides and wild fires, or by health epidemics and insect infestations[3].

Good environmental health disaster management has a significant role in addressing the impact of disasters on environmental health infrastructure and consequently the public. This includes protecting and mitigating risks to systems required for general health and wellbeing, such as water supply, food safety, sewerage, waste management and stormwater[4].

As the world's population and density continues to increase, the risk disasters pose to environmental infrastructure and conditions will continue to rise. Furthermore, increased urbanisation and industrialisation place a greater proportion of the world community at risk with the majority of the population migrating to urban disaster-prone areas that are often without an adequate level of environmental health protective infrastructure[5].

This short course will aim to identify the critical role you may have in mitigating environmental health risks during a response to a disaster. This includes the need to conduct assessments to identify and address key risks such as those relating to drinking water, shelters, overcrowding, food safety, wastewater, disease-causing vectors, solid waste and hazardous materials. Many of these risks are within the existing roles of many environmental and health professionals, however, a disaster response has unique challenges and a specific skill set is required from a range of professions and all levels of government.

The content of the short course will be guided by a partnership between the Malaysian Association of Environmental Health, Public Health College Kuching, International Federation of Environmental Health, Griffith University and the successful Environmental Health Training in Emergency Response (EHTER) Course run by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention across the USA.

[1] De Smet, H., Lagadec, P. and Leysen, J. (2012), Disasters Out of the Box: A New Ballgame?. Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-5973.2012.00666.
[2] Hogan D, Burstein J (2007). Basic Perspectives on Disaster. Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, Philadelphia.
[3] World Meteorological Organization. WMO Disaster Risk Reduction Programme. Accessed 23 February 2012; Available from: http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/drr/
[4] Commonwealth of Australia (2008). Report of the 6th National Conference - Sustaining Environmental Health in Indigenous Communities.
[5] World Health Organization. Statistical Information System Page. Accessed 30 May 2011. Available at http://www.who.int/whosis

**In partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USA**

## PROVISIONAL AGENGA

Location: Public Health College, Jalan Diplomatik, off Jalan Petrajava, Lorong Diplomatik 3, 93050 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

### Thursday 27 June 2013 – Disasters and their impact on environmental health

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|---|---|
| 08.30-09.00 | **Welcome and Introductions**<br>*Dr Peter Davey, President, International Federation of Environmental Health* |
| 09.00-09.30 | **Theme: Planning**<br>Community based planning and disaster management<br>*Dr Peter Davey, President, International Federation of Environmental Health* |
| 09.30-10.30 | **Theme: Environmental health considerations**<br>Environmental health aspects of disasters<br>*Mr Ben Ryan, Director, Disaster Risk Reduction, International Federation of Environmental Health* |
| 10.30-11.00 | *Break* |
| 11.00-12.15 | **Theme: Disaster management Arrangements**<br>Disaster Management Arrangements and environmental health<br>*Local presenter* |
| *12.15-13.00* | *Lunch* |
| 13.00-14.00 | Food safety |
| 14.00-14.45 | Waste water |
| *14.45-15.00* | *Break* |
| 15.00-16.15 | Waste management |

### Friday 28 June 2013 – Environmental health issues in disasters

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|---|---|
| 9.00-9.45 | Drinking water |
| 9.45-10.30 | Shelters |
| *10.30-10.45* | *Break* |
| 10.45-11.30 | Vectors and pests |
| 11.30-12.30 | Disaster response strategies and exercise |
| *12.15-13.00* | *Award ceremony, lunch and close* |

**Target Audience**
Environmental health specialists, professionals and students who plan to broaden their understanding of the role environmental health has during the preparedness and response phases of disaster management. Participants can be from the local, provisional, state, federal, international and private sectors.

**Course Cost**
AUD$150 – Full Registration
AUD$100 – Members of the Malaysian Environmental Health Association
Public Health College Kuching staff and students – complimentary (fee is being subsidised by the college)
*Includes course materials, lunch and certificate of completion

**Registration**
See www.ifeh.org

**Further Information**
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