



HURRICANE SCENE SAFETY

Following a hurricane, scene safety and use of PPE becomes significantly more important. Hazards may be present that are not normally an issue during normal operations. Staff are strongly encouraged to wear rescue gear and respiratory protection for all responses following hurricane Frances. Needless to say, safety glasses and latex gloves are required.

Some Additional Areas of Concern:

Electrical Safety:

Before exiting a vehicle and approaching a scene, check for downed power lines and signs of possible electrocution.

Natural Gas Leaks:

Strong winds and structural damage increase the likelihood that there have been breaks in gas pipelines. Do not operate any electrical equipment in confined areas until the possibility of gas leaks has been ruled out. Radios, cell-phones, flashlights, and any electrical equipment can trigger an explosion.

HAZMAT Incidents:

Chlorine leaks and chemical spills are possible anywhere. If you suspect a chemical leak, maintain a safe distance up hill and up wind of incident. Use binoculars to attempt to size the scene and identify products. Don highest levels of PPE in anticipation of spills.

CO2:

There still may be some people who have not gotten the message not to run generators or use outdoor grills inside an enclosed area. Whenever you enter a confined space, consider the possibility of CO2 build-up.

Biohazards:

It is almost inevitable that during flooding, sewage systems will overflow and back-up. Wear full rescue gear when standing water is present at a scene.

Animals:

Domestic animals may be left homeless and uncontrolled following a hurricane. Domestic pets may become more dangerous following the trauma of going through a storm. Use caution around all animals. Snakes and other wild animals may also migrate towards higher ground and could pose a threat.

Mosquitoes:

The threat of insect bites becomes much higher following a hurricane. Stock plenty of insect repellent and apply prior to going to a scene.

People:

Many residents will be on the lookout for looters. Do not let yourself be mistaken for one. Where needed, call for law enforcement assistance.

Personal Care:

During an emergency, there is the tendency not to give much thought to getting proper food, drinking sufficient liquids, and getting enough rest. Do your best to get balanced meals and keep-up liquid consumption. With no electricity and when wearing rescue gear, the chances of dehydration increase. Also, maintain personal cleanliness, grooming and wear clean, dry clothing. A generator-powered washer and dryer will be set-up at support for crew use.