

Coordinating Agency:
Department of Health (DOH)

Primary Agencies:

Department of Ecology (DOE)
Local Air Agencies (LAA)

Support Agencies:

Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)
Department of Enterprise Services (DES)
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Department of Labor and Industries (L&I)
Washington Military Department (MIL)
Emergency Management Division (EMD)
American Red Cross (ARC)

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This appendix is a supporting document to Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8 - Public Health, Medical, and Mortuary Services. It describes how state entities will support local jurisdictions or tribes when responding to an air quality incident that impacts the health of a population within Washington State.

Scope

This document provides overall guidelines and processes that can be employed or adapted to an emergency resulting in deteriorating air quality that impacts human health. Additionally, this appendix focuses on coordination and support activities to address public health and medical needs of jurisdictions responding to an air quality incident causing health issues to the public.

An air quality incident releases pollutants into the air that generates or causes health issues for the public.

Air quality incidents impacting the health of the population can include:

- Wildfires
- Dust storms
- Volcanic activities
- Cleanup activities associated with natural disasters

Over time various types of air quality incidents may be added to this appendix along with attachments that provide more information. This appendix is meant to guide the activities of the staff at the ESF 8 desk rather than to provide guidance for responders or other professionals responding to the incident.

Policies

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 70.94.141, Air Pollution Control Authority – Powers and Duties of Activated Authority

Air quality in most areas of Washington is protected by air pollution control authorities called Local Air Agencies. RCW 70.94.141 defines the agencies' authorities to protect the air quality in their jurisdictions.

RCW 70.94.331, Powers and Duties of Department

In areas of Washington where there is no local air agency the Department of Ecology fills the role of a local clean air agency. RCW 70.94.331 grants to Ecology the same authorities as in 70.94.141 along with other specific authorities.

RCW 70.94.6534 Silvicultural Forest Burning – Reduce Statewide Emissions – Exemptions – Monitoring Program

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulates silvicultural (forest) burning under the Smoke Management Plan.

RCW 76.04.750 Uncontrolled Fire a Public Nuisance – Suppression – Duties – Summary Action – Recovery of Costs

Fires on or threatening any forest land burning, uncontrolled and without proper action being taken to prevent its spread, is a public nuisance and must be suppressed.

EPA and tribal governments have authority over air quality issues on tribal reservation lands.

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Department of Health (Department) will ensure that people with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to the Department's services, and that no customer experiences discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin.

ASSUMPTIONS

This Appendix will address support provided to local jurisdictions and tribes for air quality issues only.

Preservation of life and safety are always paramount.

Public health and medical services resources may be limited in availability or capacity during response and/or recovery.

Local jurisdictions and tribal governments will implement their emergency response plans and request additional resources from the state when their resources are, or it is anticipated their resources will soon be exhausted as outlined in the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and the ESF 8 Annex. State agencies will provide resources as available.

Assistance from federal agencies and other state, local, and tribal governments outside of Washington may be required to supplement in-state resources, though it may not be immediately available.

The Department recognizes that language and cultural factors affect health outcomes, access to services, and access to information.

The Department commits to taking reasonable steps to provide effective and understandable public information and warnings messages to Limited English Proficient (LEP) communities during a public health emergency. (For more information review DOH's Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Plan and Public Information Annex 3 to the DOH Emergency Response Plan-Basic).

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Direction and Control

Upon notification of a developing or occurring air quality incident, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Alert and Warning Center will alert the appropriate ESF 8 lead by contacting the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Duty Officer. The ESF 8 lead will notify the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) Emergency Management Contact of any air quality support needed to protect public health.

The overall state-level medical resource support will be coordinated from the SEOC. DOH will staff the ESF 8 desk if required, provide a liaison to the SEOC Multi-Agency Coordination Group, and coordinate public health and medical air quality support as necessitated by the situation.

DOH will coordinate implementation of ESF 8 as defined by the CEMP and the ESF 8 Annex.

When ESF 8 is activated, DOH as lead will coordinate with Ecology for support in the air quality response to protect public health. All state agencies will carry out their roles and responsibilities as defined by ESF 8.

DOH will implement this plan and lead the health and medical services aspects supporting an air quality response. Ecology leads the coordination of air quality conference calls between the responsible entities, if needed.

Emergency Health and Medical Resources Request

Upon plan activation, requests for health and medical resources will be assigned to ESF 8 in the SEOC.

ACTIONS

Depending on the circumstances of the air quality incident a variety of entities may provide assistance. Actions and assistance may come from:

- federal agencies
- state agencies
- tribal governments
- local governments or jurisdictions

- non-governmental organizations

The level of involvement of each entity will vary depending on their expertise, resources available, and the type and extent of the air quality incident.

ESF 8 will lead the support and coordination of all public health and medical response activities with the agencies, governments, jurisdictions, and non-governmental organizations required during air quality incidents. The level and nature of coordination will vary based on the incident and entities involved.

Please see the attachments to this appendix for more information on possible actions to take.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Primary Agencies

DOH provides supplemental assistance to local and tribal governments in identifying the public health and medical needs or guidelines during emergencies. The functional areas for this support include but are not limited to:

- Coordinate the state-level ESF 8 response when assistance is requested by one or more impacted jurisdictions or tribes;
- Provide public health and medical communication and guidance as appropriate for the situation;
- Provide scientific and technical support to other coordinating agencies;
- Assist health agencies with health messaging related to air quality; and
- Assist with public outreach and education.

DOH can coordinate virtually and is not always needed to be physically present at the SEOC.

Ecology, along with other local air and tribal agencies, monitors ambient air quality throughout the state. Ecology, LAAs, and Tribal Air Programs provide:

- Real-time air quality monitoring data from an existing monitor network and relays monitored data to the public via Ecology's website. Air quality monitoring information is also displayed on the Washington Smoke Blog at wasmoke.blogspot.com.

Ecology, LAAs, and Tribal Air Programs are not the lead agency, but upon request and if resources are available, they may:

- Provide supplemental temporary monitoring if equipment and resources are available;
- Assist health agencies with health messaging related to ambient air quality monitoring;
- Provide assistance with air quality forecasting;
- Provide technical resources/information to emergency management on regulated industrial facilities; and
- Coordinate with other agencies as needed.

Ecology Air Quality program, LAAs, and Tribal Air Programs do not maintain emergency management personnel and typically coordinate with Incident Management Teams (IMT) and other partners virtually. If air quality technical assistance is required in the SEOC, air quality resources will need to be requested through the existing Ecology Emergency Management Contact and directly to LAA and Tribal Program Directors.

Support Agencies

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

- Primary responsibility is to deploy and manage incident management teams to focus on suppression/containment of fires on state lands as outlined in ESF 4 Firefighting in the CEMP;
- If resources are available may order and deploy air quality mobile monitoring equipment and Air Resource Advisors through incident management teams; and
- May provide wildfire status updates through IMTs.

Department of Enterprise Services (DES)

- Assist in procuring facilities and resources to respond.

Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)

- Coordinate with American Red Cross (ARC) and Washington Volunteers Active in Disasters (WAVOAD) to secure clean air shelters and services for those impacted by air quality incidents.

Department of Labor and Industries (L&I)

- Coordinate responder and workplace health and safety issues during emergencies or disasters including air quality impacts.

Emergency Management Division (EMD)

- Coordinate response and recovery in accordance with the CEMP through the SEOC; and
- Assist local governments and others with emergency planning and related efforts which will help Washington State residents in preparing for emergencies and disasters and to minimize casualties, loss of life, and damage to infrastructure.

Washington State Patrol

- Facilitate the movement of emergency medical resources over state highways to locations identified by public health authorities.

American Red Cross (ARC)

- ARC will work closely with WAVOAD and DSHS to support state-level ESF 8 efforts in Washington State as it relates to clean air shelters and feeding of those impacted by air quality incidents.

- This document will not supersede ARC response and relief activities nor shall it require ARC to perform any services contrary to its policies and procedures. ARC relief operations will conform to the ARC Board of Governor's Disaster Services Policy Statements and will be performed in accordance with the ARC Disaster Services Regulations and Procedures.
- ARC will maintain administrative and financial and operational control over its activities and direction of its own personnel.

Please see the attachments to this appendix for more information on responsibilities specific to the type of Air Quality Response. For Wildfire Smoke Response, see Table 2 in Attachment 1, Wildfire Response-Severe Smoke Episodes, which identifies the agencies' areas of expertise and potential involvement.