



The CDC Foundation's Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund

BACKGROUND & HISTORY

Public health teams from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are often among the first on the frontlines of a disaster, monitoring for potential disease outbreaks, testing the safety of food and water supplies, assessing damage to healthcare infrastructures, and providing medical care when needed. In addition, CDC and its partners at the national and local levels engage in ongoing work to develop and improve emergency preparedness plans that can be activated the moment disaster strikes – whether it is a terrorist attack, natural disaster or an infectious disease outbreak.

In 2001, the CDC Foundation established a special fund to help CDC prepare for future public health emergencies and to allow CDC experts in the field responding to an emergency to immediately purchase the specialized equipment or services needed to get the job done.

The CDC Foundation established the Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund in response to the lessons learned from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the following anthrax attacks. During those crises, despite significant commitments for emergency resources from federal and state government, CDC responders faced unforeseen needs that could not be addressed rapidly through normal government channels. For example, CDC workers at Ground Zero in New York relied on cell phones to communicate important data, but could not get through because of the unusually high call volume following the crisis. To legally purchase the satellite phones they needed, CDC responders were required to follow lengthy government purchasing procedures.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund removes these types of roadblocks for CDC experts responding to emergencies. The fund provides for four basic areas of need:

- Emergency purchasing power
- Short-term staffing needs
- Consulting services for strategic emergency preparedness planning and crisis management
- Rapid procurement of equipment and technology

CDC Director Dr. Julie Gerberding activated the Fund for the first time on September 1, 2005, to support the public health response to Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Coast region. The Fund enabled the CDC Foundation to immediately respond to requests for help, providing prescription medications and health screenings for evacuees as well as communications and office equipment, travel assistance and health campaign resources for public health teams.

The CDC Foundation Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund gives all Americans a meaningful way to invest in CDC's readiness - and the nation's safety. To learn more, visit www.cdcfoundation.org or call (888) 880-4CDC.