

NACCHO

Innovative Solutions in Public Health Preparedness

1. Statement of Need:

Coordinated response to severe weather conditions in California has become a priority for both Local and State Public Health Preparedness Planners. Centers are now required each year during both summer and winter seasons and have become a stepping stone for the activation of emergency shelters throughout the state. The El Dorado County Health Services Department recognizes the need for a scalable activation process to mitigate the risk of the extreme weather conditions on our population and has put together a template program for the opening of Warming/Cooling Centers in our county. These Centers have acted as pre-sheltering emergency preparedness responses during the last calendar year and have been both received and recognized as an effective tool for building local partnerships within the community. Special consideration has been taken to target elevated risks in concentrated areas or special needs populations with high potential for emergency level response. The plan provides heightened surveillance of the risk exposure while providing relief to the special populations who need it most. By having small response contingencies in place we have been able to work with a variety of emergency support partners in their own neighborhoods and have established a popular and visible service to the community when it needs it most. Other Local Health Departments (LHD) will benefit by implementing this design and engaging community partners by providing services at a level recognized by the public as a direct mitigation of the existing hazards.

This proposal is designed to provide interested organizations a template for establishing and maintaining Warming and Cooling Centers throughout their jurisdiction in the environment preceding an emergency declaration. The steps defined provide a model for locating potential sites, staffing recruitment processes, inspection procedures, coordination of resources, as well as a clear activation/ escalation process. The proposal documents the steps for the compilation of weather variables principal to the risk, and succeeding needs for the opening of the centers. Communication practices are defined to keep community partners abreast of escalating risk with samples of communiqués to be distributed. All planning and activation steps also transition seamlessly to emergency plans for sheltering.

The Warming / Cooling Center plan will create a deliverable product to fill a GAP in the NACCHO Public Health Preparedness APC Toolkit by creating a practice for formulating, organizing, and activating Warming and Cooling Centers. The proposal will be completed within the six month period allotted and will provide a product that can be shared with other Local Health Departments. The final product will provide Local Health Departments a tool that will cover risk conditions and planning for the entire calendar year. Within the tool design proposed, facility site identification is completed for Cooling Centers during the first quarter of the year. Warming Centers completion would immediately follow. Pre-exposure meetings are held with key stake holders as weather condition meet established risk criteria consistent with local, state, and federal guidelines. Logistical planning and facility review checklists are provided to validate the appropriateness of locations and identify deficits in inventory if the locations become active. Center mapping templates are included for setup and access concerns pertaining to each location. Completion of the processes before weather conditions deteriorate is ideal but the guidelines are applicable in any conditions and scalable by nature.

El Dorado County Health Services Department is recommending the County Board of Supervisors approve, in concept, the submittal of an application to the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for grant funding in the amount of \$100,000 for the term April 1, 2009 through September 29, 2009. This grant would be used to fund the identification of potential warming/cooling center sites through a three-phase process. Upon approval from the board, and authorization of funding by NACCHO the project will commence.

2. Project Description:

El Dorado Health Services has been working with the local Office of Emergency Services and various community based organizations to develop the Warming/Cooling center plan within our community. This project will provide for refinement of the existing plan and development of a product that can be utilized by any jurisdiction interested in providing the same services to their own community. The first stage of the project requires the completion of a Needs Analysis with key personnel prepared to address the concern across all communities within the jurisdiction. (Membership of this group is outlined in the plan.) The goal will be to identify target areas of risk and geographical locations for the centers. LHD representatives will contact facility managers of appropriate structures within the geographical areas to present the proposal of becoming a Warming / Cooling Center. (Note: Some locations may not be appropriate for both) Their objective is to gain the commitment of the facility and organization supporting the center within their own community. Emphasis is placed on establishing agreements with community based organizations serving the local populations. Existing partnerships will be utilized to both establish centers and solicit support in staffing of the individual locations. As potential locations are defined a representative from the LHD will utilize site inspection procedures defined within the proposal and will complete a site review checklist. The checklist will help define any deficits that may exist at the site and will help coordinate planning processes for activation, site setup, and logistical support.

The second phase of the process involves coordinating emergency response partners within the local jurisdiction with the overall goal of adopting an operational plan for activation. A three stage response plan will be provided with escalation steps defined for both warm and cold weather exposures. Sample meeting agendas to discuss escalation processes will be included with suggestions on communications to be sent to the facility managers/partners at the centers. Phase two is initiated by the lead agency before the onset of the weather hazard and should occur during the months of April-May, and August-September. Their objective is to secure agreement on the processes to be followed before the risk arrives. Upon adoption of the operational plan the subsequent meetings to discuss potential openings would be conducted by the LHD and would require only emergency preparedness partners and community contacts in the at risk communities. Meeting minutes and status updates would be shared with all center contacts.

The third and final phase of the proposal involves the opening of a Warming / Cooling Center and subsequent After Action Report followed by an Improvement Plan. An after action event template will be provided to help facilitate the collection of best practices with guidance for improvement planning. The goal of the review is to correct any problems and implement any required changes. Objectives set forth in the improvement plan would be implemented as quickly as possible and monitored by the group for progress and completion. This coordinated review will facilitate better response activities and enhance both relationships with the community based organizations and public in general. The added best practices and improved preparedness capabilities will enhance the APC toolkit by providing a legitimate example of real life applications of the program. Webinar highlights will provide LHDs a clear and concise assessment of the tool with applicable examples of how the proposal will work within their own jurisdiction.

3. Staffing Plan:

Staffing funded under the El Dorado County Health Services Department Warming / Cooling Center project will include six part time positions including a Project Manager, Health Program Specialist for community contact and promotional activities, Disease Investigator for site review, two Health Education Coordinators for Planning/Coordination, and one Medical Office Assistant II. The Project Manager has been identified as Chris Weston who will be responsible for project oversight and coordination of needs analysis review with the key stake holders in the jurisdiction. (See Appendix A) Chris will also monitor the progress of Center development and assist in the validation of appropriate locations. His role will include liaison activities with agency representatives and emergency partners to solidify activation processes and support measures between service providers. As project manager he will monitor the escalating risk and will call together pertinent parties for meeting to review the risk and activate the appropriate locations as the need arises. Chris will confirm the process is documented in a manner consistent with planning processes and suitable for distribution as a tool under the APC Toolkit.

The Disease Investigator will review each site and determine if it is suitable for use as a Warming / Cooling center. Emphasis will be placed on public health considerations, warming and cooling capabilities, meal preparation areas if appropriate, and ventilation. The Investigator will also provide suggestions on changes required to better protect public health within the active facility when active.

The Health Program Specialist will contact community representatives at each facility identified as a potential center. She will attend Board Meetings as needed to promote the program and will act as a liaison between the emergency response partners and the facility contact person. She will also seek out community support for the staffing of active centers within the localized neighborhood organizations.

The Planning / Coordination staff assigned to the project will complete the site reviews and establish the lines of communication to the facilities to activate the Centers. These individuals will utilize and refine the existing checklists to provide a more refined product for distribution as a complete tool. Cooling Center site inspections and activation processes will be completed by the end of the second quarter and will include a list of materials needed to support the facility for 3-5 days of activation between the periods of 10:00am to 8:00pm. A separate take-a-way document will be completed for each location with photos of the facility and a set up map of the facility layout configured as a Cooling Center. EDCHS has already developed templates for these deliverables and will refine each through the proposed project into a refined finished product that can be included in the NACCHO Public Health Preparedness APC Toolkit. The same processes are included for the development of Warming Centers with the initial phase scheduled for completion by the end of the third quarter. Logistical considerations for the activation of each facility will be created and presented to the Office of Emergency Services in a binder created for each Center established.

The Medical Office Assistant II will provide support of project scheduling, meeting coordination, copy/fax activities, and general office duties related to proposal related requests.

Vendor/contractor services are expected to be utilized in the Webinar development portion of the proposal with possible costs to be shared with partner agencies located in Sacramento County.

4. Evaluation Plan:

The proposal will lead to the development of a tool for identifying, evaluating and activating Warming / Cooling Centers through linear steps leading from the initial needs assessment to the post activation after action analysis. Qualifiable objectives set for center location and evaluation are built into the first phase with partnership developments and logistical support considerations included in the second. Evaluation of plan development will be inherent in the number of sites filling the needs defined, and the number of centers ready to respond to the call for activation. Project management goals will be defined within the initial phase with supervision provided by the Project Manager. Phase three will prove avenues for formal evaluation on quality of design and emergency capability response. Upon activation of a center the resulting response will provide insights specific to the facility and population being served. After Action planning will be completed in accordance with the proposal guidance and Improvement Plans will be generated as a result of the review. A suggested timeline of goals and objectives is listed below:

Cooling Centers (CC) Warming Centers (WC)

- January- February...(CC &WC).....Meeting of key stake holders- Need Assessments Completed.
- February-June...(CC).....Site locations identified/ reviewed Facilities/Organizational contacts made. Activation contacts established.
- Site Activation...(CC).....As Needed- Post activation reviews.
- July- September...(WC).....Meeting of key stake holders- (As Needed) Need Assessments Completed. Site locations identified/ reviewed. Facilities/Organizational contacts made.
- Site Activation...(CC).....As Needed- Post activation reviews.

5. Communication and Marketing Plan:

The proposal includes steps promoting the education of the public in risks associated with severe weather prior to the onset of the heat or cold. This promotion includes active advertising with local media sources as well as flyer distribution through partners to special populations and high risk locations. Phone contact measures are suggested when automated distribution tools are on hand or if staff is available to make the calls. LHD websites and partner agency advertising boards will be used for posting the materials.

The plan will be shared by the Health Program Specialist and Planning/Coordination staff with community contacts, Volunteer organizations, emergency partners and public health professionals in surrounding jurisdictions through Emergency Planning and Disaster Council Meetings. The completed plan will be posted on-line via California Health Alerting Network (CAHAN) by the Project Manager. Additional communication and marketing efforts will be sought with the program partners and through their established lines of communication within the communities they serve. Webinar promotion will be done through NACCHO and all appropriate Local, State and Federal agencies authorizing distribution. (Target agencies will include; California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Ca CALEMA, EMSA, ARC, MRC, CERT, Lions, IOOF, Community Centers, Meal on Wheels, and Listserv.)

6. Budget Narrative: See Appendix B

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APPLICATION FORM

Applications must be received by: Friday, March 13, 2009

Part I

Local Health Department

Name of agency: El Dorado County Health Service Department

Title of project: El Dorado Public Health Warming/Cooling Center Plan

Street address: 921 Spring Street

City/State/Zip: Placerville, Ca. 95667

Telephone: (530) 621-6252 **Fax:** _____

Contact Persons

Contact person (include job title): Chris Weston, Program Manager

E-mail: Cweston@co.el-dorado.ca.us

Jurisdiction

Population size served: < 50,000 50,000 – 199,999
 200,000 – 1 million > 1 million

Type of population served: Urban Rural
 Mixed Frontier

Appendix A

CHRISTOPHER WESTON

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Currently serve on NACCHO Project Public Health Ready Workgroup
- Developed and implemented goals/objectives for Public Health Preparedness Division
- Administered and executed Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) National Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness Program
- Implementing Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) to integrate the local, State, and federal responses to a bioterrorism event
- Developed Medical Reserve Corp., to enlist citizen volunteers to assist in the establishment of an organized pool of resources capable of being deployed to support Emergency Management Systems in the event of a major emergency
- Participated in program development and development of the annual budget
- Identified program funding sources
- Prepared grant applications and proposals to secure funding
- Established and chaired a collaborative with organizations through membership in forums and alliances
- Prepared required reports associated with grant funding and state/federal mandates
- Managed operations of multi-million dollar project
- Developed, negotiated and monitored contract service proposals
- Planned, supervised, and evaluated work of staff
- Participated in the development and assisted with in-service training and staff development programs
- Analyzed policies, laws, regulations, and pending legislation regarding public health preparedness and response issues
- Recommended and implemented changes needed for compliance
- Forecasted costs and prepared budget analysis on these projections
- Implemented/developed management improvements and practices
- Planned/participated in and evaluate training and exercises both internal and external
- Consulted on County emergencies
- Worked with other County Departments and outside agencies in disaster preparedness activities in addition to state and federal agencies
- Authored/implemented monthly agendas for Board of Directors
- Presented monthly fiscal reports to Board of Directors
- Prepared employee manuals and policy and procedure manuals for non-profit organization
- Authored detailed reports/correspondence for State and Federal officials
- Proven ability to work independently and as a team player

RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Program Manger, El Dorado County Public Health Department, Disaster Preparedness Division, 2001 to present

Chief Deputy Public Guardian, El Dorado County Dept. of Community Services, 1997 to 2001

TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE

Proficient on personal computer, Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint. Possess a basic understanding of the County's FAMIS system.

EDUCATION

University of California at Santa Barbara, B.A. Business Economics