

## **Welcome to the Iowa Department of Public Health EHRT!!!**

### **History**

Following the events of 9/11, the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) recognized the need for a rapid response environmental health response team that could be deployed on short notice to assist local resources. Understanding that federal assistance may not arrive for 72 hours, IDPH determined the need to fill the gap from the time of incident to the arrival of federal assistance. The IA-DMAT concept was formed. (Disaster Medical Assistance Team) During the same time period a group of local and state environmental health practitioners formed a planning committee, under the guidance of the Office of Local Board of Health Technical Assistance, within the IDPH Environmental Health Division. The planning group met to plan the structure for the EHRT (Environmental Health Response Team) and look at resources and operational plans that would be required to meet the needs of the EHRT (team).

By the fall of 2004, the need for an EHRT Coordinator was recognized and the need was fulfilled as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2005. The EHRT Coordinator was tasked with identifying the EHRT members from the planning group and finalize the needs of the team to become fully functional and active. A team kickoff meeting and training was scheduled for the spring of 2005 where EHRT members were identified and received training regarding the Incident Command System and the NIMS process. Additional team equipment was identified to supplement the EHRT GO-KIT that was distributed to each member, ([Contact EHRT Coordinator for Content List](#)) and the team competencies were also identified to allow for the educational and training needs to be selected. Additional team members were identified following the first EHRT meeting bringing the team to full force of 20 responding members. [Recent departmental and State policy has now changed the structure of the Ste response teams to create the Iowa Public Health Response Teams. The teams include the IA-DMATs, IA-EHRT, Epi teams, and smallpox teams.](#)

### **EHRT Summary**

When natural disaster or terrorist activity threatens a community, local responders, government agencies and private organizations take action. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) has initiated local partnerships to provide a 20 member volunteer Environmental Health Response Team (EHRT) that may be mobilized on short notice to respond to in/out-state natural/man made disasters or terrorist incidents. Local emergency management is the key local agency that may request the IA-EHRT through the incident command structure to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). The team is then available for activation through the Iowa Department of Public Health in the event of an emergency that overwhelms or depletes local environmental health capabilities. This team will not replace the role and responsibilities of local boards of health or local environmental health staff. Rather, the team is a resource that can be requested to temporarily enhance the local capacity to respond to an emergency. This effort will assist in ensuring the provision of comprehensive environmental and public health care to disaster victims and supplement and support disrupted or overburdened local environmental and public health agencies. Single or multiple volunteer members may be

mobilized and deployed during an event. The EHRT or member could be deployed for up to 24-72 hours of the incident depending upon the scope of the emergency or disaster. EHRT members who are within the affected area will not be called upon to respond due to the scope of the incident involving their locality. Occasionally the IA- EHRT team may be deployed to other States when an emergency or disaster strikes through the EMAC (Emergency Management Assistance Compact) process. Iowa is a member of EMAC and has deployed public health resources such as the Iowa Public Health Response Teams to the Gulf Coast during Hurricane Katrina.

### **Scope**

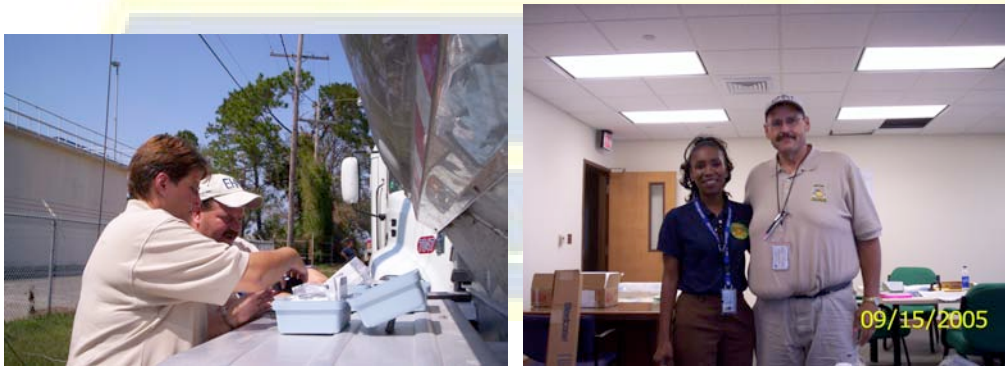
Generally, this team can provide technical assistance, regulatory enforcement, investigation/inspection services, assessment of hazards, and provide problem solving solutions to areas such as private/public water supplies, waste water treatment, vector control, food safety, air quality, solid waste, shelter/general sanitation, and any other common environmental health programs. The EHRT will practice the Public Health Ten Essential Services, utilizing the three core functions of public health service to ensure that the local environmental health capacity is bolstered or revitalized. The service area for the EHRT is all of Iowa's 99 counties and their respective communities.

### **Team Composition:**

**EHRT Coordinator** – Individual appointed by the Director of the Division of Health Protection and Environmental Health. The Director of the Division of Health Protection and Environmental Health will be the first contact for SEOC. The Division of Environmental Health Director or IDPH Incident Management Command and Control Center will notify the EHRT Coordinator to activate the EHRT team.

**Deputy Coordinator**– Serves as back up to the EHRT Coordinator.

**Team Members** – Serve on one or more response categories. Members agree to be available for activation upon becoming a team member. All 20 team members are organized into response annexes according to the environmental medium. Members are responsible for notifying the EHRT Coordinator when they will not be available for activation (vacation, work requirements, etc.).



## **Contact Us**

### **Iowa EHRT Coordinator**

Iowa Department of Public Health  
321 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lucas State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa 50039-0075

Attn: **Cory Frank**

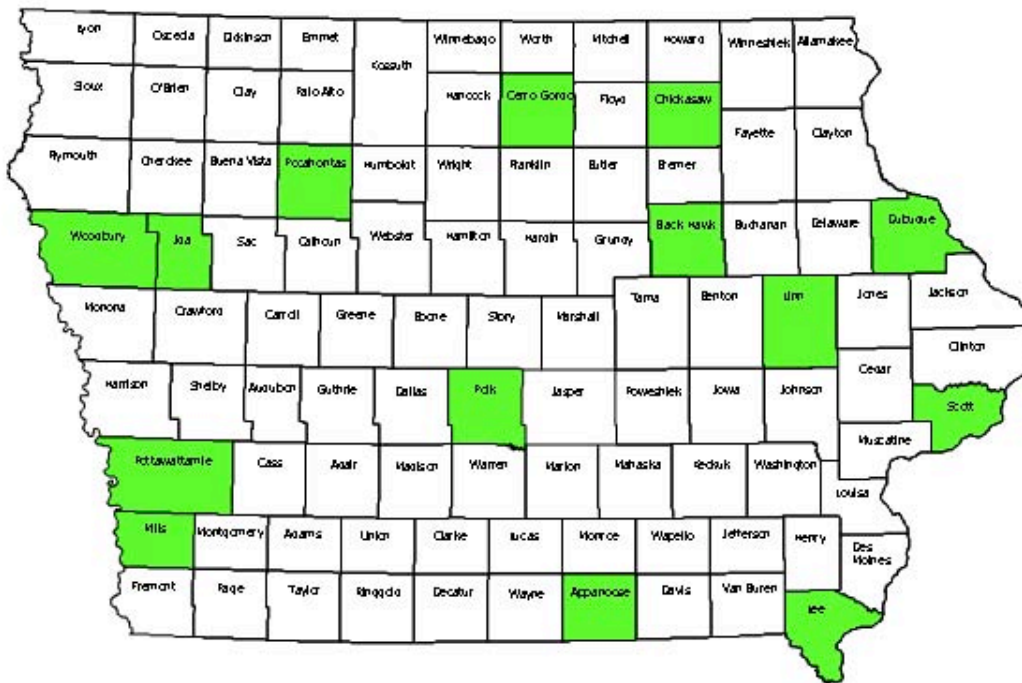
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### **Iowa Deputy EHRT Coordinator:**

Ken Sharp  
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Team Member locations in Iowa:



Links of Interest:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/ETP/default.htm> (NEW) Great Resource!

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/>

<http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/>

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/emergency/index.html>

<http://www.ieha.net/>

<http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org>

<http://www.neha.org/>

<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/>

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/>

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/oswer/ceppoweb.nsf/content/index.html>

[http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/hygiene/emergencies/emergencies2002/en/](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/emergencies/emergencies2002/en/)

<http://www.fda.gov/ora/training/orau/FoodSecurity/startpage.html>

<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/ohs.html>

[http://www.redcross.org/preparedness/cdc\\_english/CDC.asp](http://www.redcross.org/preparedness/cdc_english/CDC.asp) Great Resource!

<http://www.iowadnr.com>

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/>

**PICTURES**

**PRESENTATIONS**

**TOOLS** (Local Response Plan Template, Fact Sheets, HAN documents)