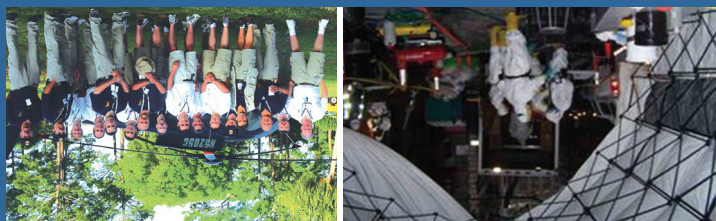


EPA's EMERGENCY RESPONSE SPECIAL TEAMS
work together to prepare for and respond to emergency releases of hazardous substances. They play a critical role in helping the Agency accomplish its mission to protect human health and the environment during chemical, biological, and radiological emergency incidents. In addition to each team's specialized skills, they also maintain an extensive network of emergency response capabilities with other agencies and branches of the military.



United States
Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Radiation and Indoor Air
Radiation Protection Program

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Emergency Response SPECIAL TEAMS



*Your Partners in
Environmental
Emergency Response*

To report an emergency, contact your Regional OSC
or call the National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802.



Radiological Emergency Response Team (RERT)

As part of EPA's Office of Radiation and Indoor Air, the Radiological Emergency Response Team (RERT) supports federal, state, tribal, and local agencies responding to radiological incidents and emergencies. The RERT provides technical advice, monitoring, sampling, data assessment and cleanup assistance. These services focus on minimizing threats to public health and the environment.

The RERT has specialized equipment including two mobile laboratories and two scanning systems used for on-site field sample analysis and assessment. State-of-the-art communications equipment enables the RERT to keep in contact with responders both on- and off-site. The national RadNet air monitoring system is utilized by RERT and provides hourly data on radioactive materials in the air. It comprises both fixed monitors and deployable components that can be transported to the immediate area of a radiological incident.

For more than 35 years, the RERT has prepared for and responded to incidents, such as Three Mile Island and in 2000 the wildfires near the Los Alamos and Hanford National Laboratories as well as non-radiological emergencies, such as Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The RERT also supports NASA launches containing radioactive power sources and high profile events such as major political conventions.



Environmental Response Team (ERT)

As a component of EPA's Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation, the Environmental Response Team (ERT) provides multi-disciplined technical expertise and logistical support in responding to hazardous substance emergencies, oil spills, potential and actual releases of biological and chemical agents as well as long-term remedial activities. The ERT assesses the site, verifies the nature and severity of the event, and participates in development of a strategy for the cleanup, decontamination or disposal, and remedy selection. Its response capabilities include, but are not limited to, air surveillance, geophysical surveying, underwater diving, radiation health and safety, modeling, risk assessment, rapid turnaround analytical support and the capacity for contaminant-specific method development for sampling and analysis. The Team's extensive response knowledge base is complemented by many specialized assets such as the Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) mobile laboratory.

Since its inception in 1978, the ERT has been active in all 50 states, all U.S. territories and Commonwealths, and 28 foreign countries. The Team has responded to more than 2,000 hazardous substance releases, oil spills, terrorist incidents, and other high-profile emergencies.



In addition, the ERT offers a wide variety of training courses related to all aspects of response.

National Decontamination Team (NDT)

In 2004, EPA's Office of Emergency Management established the National Decontamination Team (NDT). The NDT joins the other Special Teams under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (commonly called the National Contingency Plan) and is available to support On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs). Headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, the NDT is dedicated to providing decontamination expertise, especially related to chemical, biological, and radiological contaminants that can be used as Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Working closely with the ERT, RERT, EPA's National Homeland Security Research Center, and other agencies and research organizations, the NDT provides scientific support and technical expertise for decontamination of buildings, building contents, public infrastructure (including waste/drinking water systems, chemical plants, power plants, food processing facilities, and mass transit facilities such as airports, bus and subway systems), agriculture, and associated environmental media (air, soil and water). Specialized expertise, such as biochemistry, health physics, toxicology, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, engineering, and industrial hygiene, is available to assist local, national and international agencies supporting hazardous substance response and remedial operations.



National Criminal Enforcement Response Team (NCERT)

As a component of the Office of Criminal Enforcement, Forensics, and Training (OCEFT), the National Criminal Enforcement Response Team (NCERT) provides law enforcement response personnel and support for environmental crimes investigations involving chemical, biological, or radiological hazards. NCERT also prepares for specialized law enforcement duties (i.e., protective escorts) in support of the EPA's emergency response to a man-made or natural disaster or during a major environmental criminal investigation. NCERT supports Special Agents from OCEFT's Criminal Investigations Division, OSCs, and the other EPA Special Teams.

While not traditional first responders, NCERT endeavors to achieve initial on-site response within 12 hours, 24/7, 365 days a year. OCEFT maintains several forensic response platforms (i.e., trucks and trailers) to support environmental crimes investigations and other proactive enforcement operations (i.e., surveillance). The platforms contain safety and forensic equipment to properly process a contaminated crime scene and are strategically placed across the United States for rapid deployment. NCERT consists of Special Agents and scientific and technical personnel from all OCEFT Divisions and is managed by OCEFT's Field Operations Program. NCERT members have extensive knowledge of investigations involving EPA programs and operations. They are specially trained to provide forensic evidence collection at high hazard environmental crime scenes or proactive law enforcement operations such as surveillance and to provide law enforcement liaison and protective escorts to EPA OSCs and EPA Special Teams during national emergencies.

Since its formation in 2001, NCERT has prepared for and responded to numerous environmental crime scenes; emergency incidents, such as the anthrax attacks, the ricin incident at the Capitol and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. It has also supported national special security events such as the 2002 Winter Olympics, the G-8 Nations Summit in 2004, the Republican National Conventions in 2004 and 2008, and the Democratic National Convention in 2008.



EPA's Special Teams supported OSCs responding in 2005 and 2006 to Hurricane and in 2010 to the Deepwater Horizon Spill.

