



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor

Bureau for Public Health
Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services
Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology
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Karen L. Bowling
Cabinet Secretary

July 18, 2016

Amy F. Wolkin, MSPH, DrPH
Health Studies Branch Chief
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Environmental Health
4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

Dear Dr. Wolken:

I am writing to request epidemiologic assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) in the form of an Epi-Aid to assist with a Community Assessment of Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) following a natural disaster in West Virginia. On June 23, 2016, a band of severe thunderstorms and heavy rain throughout the state overwhelmed numerous rivers and streams, causing extensive flooding. A State of Emergency was declared in 44 counties, and a Federal Disaster Declaration was granted for 12 of these counties. Twenty-three (23) lives were lost and 3,800 homes were damaged or destroyed. Approximately 3,500 persons were displaced and are living with family in group shelters or tents. Extensive infrastructure damage and debris hampered early response efforts. Currently, the affected population's access to routine health care and public health systems, information sources, water sources, and perception of health impacts due to flooding and flood damage is unclear. There is urgent need of the information on the aforementioned topics in order to focus efforts to support ongoing health care and public health response and recovery in the affected communities. The goals of this Epi-Aid are as follows:

- Perform a CASPER investigation among populations affected by the flooding
- Conduct a descriptive analysis of health effects associated with the flooding
- Develop recommendations for improving disaster response

West Virginia Bureau for Public Health will collaborate with personnel from CDC/NCEH in designing a CASPER survey instrument, defining the sampling methodology, collecting responses and analyzing data, and disseminating study results.

Our Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer, Dr. Joel Massey, will serve as the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health contact for this request and investigation. Dr. Massey can be reached at (304) 356-4007 (Office), (304) 206-6867 (Mobile) or via email at yxm4@cdc.gov or joel.g.massey@wv.gov.

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Please feel free to contact me if additional information is needed. Thank you for your assistance and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Loretta E. Haddy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Loretta E. Haddy, PhD, MS
State Epidemiologist and Director

LEH:ja

cc: Cabinet Secretary Karen L. Bowling, WVDHHR
Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP, Bureau for Public Health