SAN DIEGO BIOWATCH PROGRAM

Overview for San Diego Unified Disaster Council

June 16, 2016

LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO

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BIOTERRORISM

"Bioterrorism is a constant worry and requires the best we have in figuring out responses"

Bill Foege, World Expert in Global Health
June 7, 2016

BIOWATCH OVERVIEW

- A nationwide air monitoring system that detects the presence of select biological agents in the air
- A tool for detecting and responding to a bioterrorist attack
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security Program
  - Locally-operated
  - Federally-managed
- Most aspects of the program are FOUO

OVERVIEW

BioWatch Detection = Environmental Detection

Does not necessarily mean

- ***Human illness is present***
- ***Risk to public***
- ***Bioterrorism act***

BioWatch

Office of Health Affairs

BioWatch's critical mission is to build the preparedness of jurisdictions in case of a biological attack and to provide early warning in case of the intentional release of select, airborne biological agents in more than 30 metropolitan areas across the United States.

Building Jurisdictional Preparedness

BioWatch builds jurisdictional preparedness by leading exercises, providing training, and by offering written guidance and standardized methodologies for response.

The BioWatch community consists of hundreds of individuals representing federal, state, and local organizations nationwide, including public health officials, laboratorians, first responders, and environmental health representatives.

Saving Lives through Early Detection

BioWatch provides early warning through accurate detection and enables key decision-makers to initiate a coordinated response that can save lives.

Outdoor Release of Biological Agent (~100 grams with 50,000 people exposed)

With Early Detection: **More Lives are Saved**		Without Early Detection: **More Lives are Lost**	
Illness Rate with Early Detection:	Expected Fatalities:	Illness Rate without Early Detection:	Expected Fatalities:
45-58%	**8,500**	**81%**	**18,320**

Data based on Sandia Report SAND2012-0125, BioWatch Technical Analysis of Biodetection Architecture Performance

BioWatch Operations

If laboratory analysis reveals a BioWatch biological agent, then a series of response actions occur

Routine, Daily Operations

- Continuous air monitoring (24/7)
- Filter collection
- Transportation to the laboratory
- Filter sample process and analysis
- Data interpretation and results reporting

Detection

Laboratory director may seek consultation • The director reports a detection

Response Activities

Local jurisdictions activate their response plans, determine resource needs in preparation for a national conference call to assess threat level and the public health risk • Additional tests may be conducted • BioWatch stakeholders are notified and the public is informed

Homeland Security

dhs.gov

SAN DIEGO DISTINCTIVES

- Started in San Diego February 2003
- Cohesive BioWatch jurisdiction
- Actual detections and response
- Special events
- Military collaborations
- Numerous exercises
- Leadership in sharing best practices to other jurisdictions

BioWatch Advisory Committee (BAC)

- County of San Diego
  - Public Health Services
  - Public Health Lab
  - DEH HazMat
  - Emergency Medical Services
  - Office of Emergency Services
  - County Media Affairs Office
  - Air Pollution Control District
- Local FBI WMD Coordinator
- Local military installations
- BioWatch Jurisdictional Coordinator

KEY RESPONSE DECISIONS

- Determining actual risk to the public
- Conducting field sampling
- Initiation of medical counter measures
- Mobilizing response
- Coordinated risk communication (local, state, federal)
- Active surveillance and case finding

Thank You