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FM COMCOGARD MLC LANT NORFOLK VA//K//  
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SUBJ: POST-HURRICANE HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISORY

1. REQUEST WIDEST DISSEMINATION TO CG PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS.
2. CG UNITS, PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY SEVERAL HURRICANES RECENTLY, TWO OF WHICH WERE MAJOR DISASTERS. IT APPEARS THAT THE WORST IS OVER. HOWEVER, MANY POST-HURRICANE HAZARDS WILL BE ENCOUNTERED BY PERSONS RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES AND WORKPLACES. THIS MESSAGE DISCUSSES A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC POST-HURRICANE SAFETY AND HEALTH HAZARDS.
3. CARBON MONOXIDE (CO). THERE HAS BEEN A SHARP INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CO RELATED DEATHS AMONG GULF COAST RESIDENTS STEMMING FROM THE UNSAFE USE OF OUTDOOR PORTABLE GENERATORS IN THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE KATRINA. ELEVEN DEATHS AND NUMEROUS INJURIES HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO CO POISONING DUE TO USE OF PORTABLE GENERATORS AND PORTABLE COMBUSTION ENGINE EQUIPMENT SUCH AS CHAIN SAWS; NINE OF THESE WERE CG INJURIES. RECOMMENDED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:
  - A. NEVER USE PORTABLE GENERATORS OR EQUIPMENT IN ENCLOSED OR SEMI-ENCLOSED SPACES.
  - B. KEEP GENERATORS AND EQUIPMENT OUTSIDE AWAY FROM OPEN DOORS, WINDOWS, AND VENTS.
  - C. IF YOU START TO FEEL SICK, DIZZY, OR WEAK WHILE USING GENERATORS OR EQUIPMENT, IMMEDIATELY MOVE TO A LOCATION WITH FRESH AIR. CO EXPOSURE CAN LED TO INCAPACITATION AND EVEN DEATH.
4. ANIMAL/INSECT RELATED HAZARDS.
  - A. THERE ARE DOMESTIC ANIMALS LOOSE BECAUSE OF THE DISASTERS. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESCUE THEM SINCE THEY MAY BE DANGEROUS. CALL 1-800-HUMANE1 FOR ANIMAL RESCUE ASSISTANCE.
  - B. FLOODING IN HURRICANE AREAS WILL LEAD TO AN INCREASED MOSQUITO POPULATION. AVOID MOSQUITO BITES BY WEARING LONG-SLEEVE SHIRTS AND USING INSECT REPELLANT. APPLY PERMETHRIN (NSN 6840-01-278-1336) TO CLOTHING AND REPELLANTS CONTAINING >20% DEET (NSN 6840-01-284-3982) ON SKIN AS DIRECTED BY THE MANUFACTURER.
  - C. RODENTS AND OTHER WILD ANIMALS CAN CARRY DEADLY DISEASES. BE PARTICULARLY WARY OF RACCOONS, SKUNKS, AND OTHER ANIMALS THAT CAN CARRY RABIES.
  - D. SNAKES MAY BE FOUND SWIMMING IN FLOODWATERS OR HIDING UNDER DEBRIS AND MUST BE AVOIDED. IF BITTEN, REMEMBER THE COLOR AND SHAPE OF THE SNAKE AND SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION.
5. CHAIN SAWS. EACH YEAR APPROXIMATELY 36,000 PEOPLE ARE TREATED FOR INJURIES FROM CHAIN SAWS. THE POTENTIAL FOR RISK OF INJURY INCREASES AFTER HURRICANES DUE TO THE USE OF CHAIN SAWS IN TIGHT SPACES CREATED BY FALLEN TREES AND BRANCHES. CHAIN SAW SAFEGUARDS INCLUDE:
  - A. OPERATE, ADJUST, AND MAINTAIN CHAIN SAWS ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURERS' INSTRUCTIONS.
  - B. PROPERLY SHARPEN CHAIN SAW BLADES AND PROPERLY LUBRICATE THE BLADE WITH BAR AND CHAIN OIL. IN ADDITION, OPERATORS SHOULD PERIODICALLY CHECK AND ADJUST THE TENSION OF CHAIN SAW BLADES TO ENSURE PROPER CUTTING ACTION.
  - C. CHOOSE THE PROPER SIZE OF CHAIN SAW TO MATCH THE JOB, AND ENSURE THE CHAIN SAW HAS SAFETY FEATURES SUCH AS A CHAIN BRAKE, FRONT AND REAR HAND GUARDS, STOP SWITCH, CHAIN CATCHER, AND A SPARK ARRESTER.
  - D. WEAR APPROPRIATE PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING HARD HAT, SAFETY GLASSES, HEARING PROTECTION, HEAVY WORK GLOVES, CUT-RESISTANT LEG WEAR (CHAIN SAW CHAPS, PREFERABLY KEVLAR) THAT EXTEND FROM THE WAIST TO THE TOP OF THE FOOT, AND BOOTS THAT COVER THE ANKLE.
  - E. AVOID CONTACT WITH POWER LINES.

F. ALWAYS CUT AT WAIST LEVEL OR BELOW TO ENSURE PROPER CONTROL OVER THE CHAIN SAW.

G. BYSTANDERS OR COWORKERS SHOULD REMAIN AT LEAST 2 TREE LENGTHS (I.E., AT LEAST 150 FEET) AWAY FROM ANYONE FELLING A TREE AND AT LEAST 30 FEET FROM ANYONE OPERATING A CHAIN SAW EITHER TO REMOVE LIMBS OR CUT A FALLEN TREE.

H. IF AN INJURY OCCURS, APPLY DIRECT PRESSURE OVER THE SITE(S) OF HEAVY BLEEDING AND SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION. I. TAKE EXTRA CARE WHEN CUTTING SPRING POLES, WHICH ARE TREES OR BRANCHES THAT HAVE BEEN BENT, TWISTED, HUNG-UP ON, OR CAUGHT UNDER ANOTHER OBJECT DURING HIGH WINDS. IF THE TREE OR BRANCH IS SUDDENLY RELEASED, IT MAY STRIKE THE PERSON CUTTING IT, OR A BYSTANDER, WITH ENOUGH FORCE TO CAUSE SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH. EVEN A SEEMINGLY SMALL (I.E., 2-INCH DIAMETER) TREE OR BRANCH MAY POSE A HAZARD WHEN RELEASED FROM TENSION.

6. ELECTRICAL HAZARDS. AFTER A HURRICANE, FLOOD, OR OTHER NATURAL DISASTER EXTRA CAUTION MUST BE EXERCISED TO AVOID ELECTRICAL HAZARDS BOTH AT HOME AND ELSEWHERE.

A. NEVER TOUCH A FALLEN POWER LINE. CALL THE POWER COMPANY TO REPORT FALLEN POWER LINES.

B. AVOID CONTACT WITH OVERHEAD POWER LINES DURING CLEANUP EFFORTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.

C. DO NOT DRIVE THROUGH STANDING WATER CONTAINING DOWNED POWERLINES.

D. IF A POWER LINE FALLS ACROSS YOUR CAR WHILE YOU ARE DRIVING, STAY INSIDE THE VEHICLE AND CONTINUE TO DRIVE AWAY FROM THE POWER LINE. IF UNABLE TO DRIVE AWAY FROM THE POWER LINE, REMAIN IN THE CAR UNTIL RESCUE PERSONNEL SAFELY REMOVE THE POWER LINE.

E. NEVER TURN POWER ON OR OFF YOURSELF, OR USE AN ELECTRIC TOOL OR APPLIANCE, WHILE STANDING IN WATER. DO NOT TURN THE POWER BACK ON UNTIL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN INSPECTED BY A QUALIFIED ELECTRICIAN. ALL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES MUST BE COMPLETELY DRY BEFORE RETURNING THEM TO SERVICE. HAVE A QUALIFIED ELECTRICIAN CHECK THESE ITEMS IF THERE IS ANY QUESTION.

F. IF YOU SEE FRAYED WIRING OR SPARKS WHEN YOU RESTORE POWER, OR IF THERE IS AN ODOR OF SOMETHING BURNING BUT NO VISIBLE FIRE, IMMEDIATELY SHUT OFF THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM AT THE MAIN CIRCUIT BREAKER.

G. CONSULT YOUR UTILITY COMPANY ABOUT USING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING POWER GENERATORS. DO NOT CONNECT GENERATORS TO YOUR HOME'S ELECTRICAL CIRCUITS WITHOUT THE APPROVED, AUTOMATIC-INTERRUPT DEVICES; IF A GENERATOR IS ON-LINE WHEN ELECTRICAL SERVICE IS RESTORED, IT CAN BECOME A MAJOR FIRE HAZARD AND MAY ENDANGER LINE WORKERS HELPING TO RESTORE POWER IN YOUR AREA.

7. MOLD: AFTER NATURAL DISASTERS SUCH AS HURRICANES AND FLOODS, EXCESS MOISTURE AND STANDING WATER CONTRIBUTE TO THE GROWTH OF MOLD IN HOMES AND OTHER BUILDINGS. WHEN RETURNING TO A HOME THAT HAS BEEN FLOODED, BE AWARE THAT MOLD MAY BE PRESENT AND MAY BE A HEALTH RISK FOR YOUR FAMILY. PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA, ALLERGIES, OR OTHER BREATHING CONDITIONS MAY BE MORE SENSITIVE TO MOLD. PEOPLE WITH SUPPRESSED IMMUNE SYSTEMS ARE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO MOLD INFECTIONS. PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPOSED TO MOLD MAY EXPERIENCE STUFFY NOSE, IRRITATED EYES, WHEEZING, OR SKIN IRRITATION. PEOPLE ALLERGIC TO MOLD MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY BREATHING AND EXPERIENCE SHORTNESS OF BREATH. PEOPLE WITH WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEMS AND WITH CHRONIC LUNG CONDITIONS MAY DEVELOP MOLD INFECTIONS IN THEIR LUNGS. IF YOU OR YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE HEALTH PROBLEMS AFTER EXPOSURE TO MOLD, CONTACT YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FOR PREVENTING EXPOSURE TO MOLD INCLUDE:

A. CLEAN UP AND DRY OUT THE BUILDING QUICKLY (WITHIN 24 TO 48 HOURS). OPEN DOORS AND WINDOWS. USE FANS TO DRY OUT THE BUILDING. READ THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) FACT SHEET FOR DRYING OUT YOUR HOUSE AT [HTTP://WWW.BT.CDC.GOV/DISASTERS/MOLD/REENTER.ASP](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/mold/reenter.asp).

B. WHEN IN DOUBT, TAKE IT OUT. REMOVE ALL POROUS ITEMS THAT HAVE BEEN WET FOR MORE THAN 48 HOURS AND CANNOT BE THOROUGHLY CLEANED AND DRIED. THESE ITEMS CAN REMAIN A SOURCE OF MOLD GROWTH AND SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM THE HOME. POROUS, NON CLEANABLE ITEMS INCLUDE CARPETING AND CARPET PADDING, PAPER, DRYWALL, AND FOOD. REMOVAL AND CLEANING ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE EVEN DEAD MOLD MAY CAUSE ALLERGIC REACTIONS IN SOME PEOPLE.

C. TO PREVENT MOLD GROWTH, CLEAN WET ITEMS AND SURFACES WITH DETERGENT AND WATER.

D. IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE BLEACH TO REMOVE MOLD, NEVER MIX IT WITH AMMONIA. MIXING BLEACH AND AMMONIA CAN PRODUCE A TOXIC GAS. OPEN DOORS AND WINDOWS TO PROVIDE FRESH AIR AND WEAR NON-POROUS GLOVES AND PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR.

8. GENERAL POST HURRICANE SAFETY AND HEALTH PRECAUTIONS INCLUDE:

A. DO NOT ENTER OR RETURN TO DAMAGED BUILDINGS UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN CERTIFIED FOR SAFE ENTRY BY THE PROPER AUTHORITIES: FOR CG HOUSING, THE PROPER AUTHORITY IS THE COGNIZANT HOUSING OFFICER, WHILE LOCAL AUTHORITIES WILL PROVIDE GUIDANCE REGARDING NON-CG HOUSING.

B. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER WHILE DOING REPAIR WORK TO PREVENT DEHYDRATION. SYMPTOMS OF DEHYDRATION INCLUDE SWEATING, HEADACHE, AND DRY MOUTH.

C. IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE WORKING IN THE SUN, WEAR SUNSCREEN (AT LEAST SPF 15), SUNGLASSES, AND A BRIMMED HAT TO PREVENT EXCESSIVE SUN EXPOSURE.

D. FLOODING HAS CAUSED MANY TRAFFIC LIGHTS TO FAIL AND TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNS MAY BE MISSING. ROADS MAY ALSO BE DAMAGED. STRONGLY RECOMMEND EXERCISING EXTRA CAUTION WHEN DRIVING IN STRICKEN AREAS.

E. USE TEAMS OF TWO OR MORE PERSONS TO MOVE BULKY OBJECTS. AVOID LIFTING ANY MATERIAL THAT WEIGHS MORE THAN 50 POUNDS PER PERSON LIFTING.

F. WEAR HARD HATS, GOGGLES, HEAVY WORK GLOVES, AND WATERTIGHT BOOTS WITH STEEL TOES AND STEEL SHANKS FOR CLEANUP WORK.

G. WEAR EARPLUGS OR EARMUFFS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF HEARING DAMAGE FROM EQUIPMENT NOISE.

H. AVOID WADING IN WATER; GLASS, METAL FRAGMENTS, AND OTHER DEBRIS MAY BE IN THE WATER.

I. PACE YOURSELF AND GET HELP TO AVOID BOTH PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION.

J. IF YOU SMELL GAS OR SUSPECT A LEAK, LEAVE THE HOUSE IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT TURN ON THE LIGHTS, LIGHT MATCHES, SMOKE, OR DO ANYTHING THAT MAY CAUSE A SPARK. REPORT THE LEAK TO THE GAS COMPANY AND FIRE DEPARTMENT.

K. DO NOT RETURN TO THE HOUSE UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.

L. CLEANUP, HYGIENE, AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE ISSUES MUST BE CONSIDERED. REMOVE AND DISCARD ITEMS THAT CANNOT BE WASHED AND DISINFECTED SUCH AS MATTRESSES, CARPETING, CARPET PADDING, RUGS, UPHOLSTERED FURNITURE, COSMETICS, STUFFED ANIMALS, BABY TOYS, PILLOWS, FOAM RUBBER ITEMS, BOOKS, WALL COVERINGS, AND PAPER PRODUCTS. REMOVE AND DISCARD DRYWALL AND INSULATION THAT HAS BEEN CONTAMINATED BY SEWAGE OR FLOOD WATERS. THOROUGHLY CLEAN ALL HARD SURFACES SUCH AS FLOORING, CONCRETE, MOLDING, WOOD AND METAL FURNITURE, COUNTERTOPS, APPLIANCES, SINKS, AND OTHER PLUMBING FIXTURES WITH HOT WATER AND LAUNDRY SOAP OR DISHWASHING DETERGENT. AFTER COMPLETING THE CLEANUP, WASH WITH SOAP AND WATER.

M. IF THERE IS A BOIL-WATER ADVISORY IN EFFECT, WASH ONLY WITH WATER THAT HAS BEEN BOILED FOR ONE MINUTE THEN ALLOWED TO COOL. WATER CAN ALSO BE DISINFECTED FOR PERSONAL HYGIENE USE (I.E., WASHING) BY ADDING 1/8 TEASPOON OF HOUSEHOLD LIQUID BLEACH (CONTAINING 5.25% SODIUM HYPOCHLORITE) PER ONE GALLON OF WATER, THEN LETTING THE WATER STAND FOR 30 MINUTES. FOR CLOUDY WATER, USE 1/4 TEASPOON OF HOUSEHOLD LIQUID BLEACH PER ONE GALLON OF WATER, THEN LET THE WATER STAND FOR 30 MINUTES.

N. IF YOU HAVE ANY OPEN CUTS OR SORES THAT WERE EXPOSED TO FLOODWATER, WASH THEM WITH SOAP AND WATER AND APPLY AN ANTIBIOTIC OINTMENT TO DISCOURAGE INFECTION. SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU BECOME INJURED OR ILL. WASH ALL CLOTHES WORN DURING CLEANUP OPERATIONS IN HOT WATER AND DETERGENT. THESE CLOTHES SHOULD BE WASHED SEPARATELY FROM UNCONTAMINATED CLOTHES AND LINENS.

9. MLCLANT (K) POINT OF CONTACT IS MR. VINCENT ANDREONE, WHO CAN BE REACHED AT (757) 628-4412 OR VIA E-MAIL AT VINCENT.F.ANDREONE(AT)USCG.MIL. ADDITIONAL HURRICANE KATRINA AND RITA INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT [HTTP://CGWEB.LANT.USCG.MIL/KDIV/KSEHOMEPAGE.HTM](http://CGWEB.LANT.USCG.MIL/KDIV/KSEHOMEPAGE.HTM).

10. RELEASED BY CAPT M.K. DOLLYMORE.

11. INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.

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