



DiversityPreparedness.Org E-Newsletter

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Dear Colleagues,

This issue of the DiversityPreparedness.org E-Newsletter contains resources and translated materials pertaining to the Gulf oil spill, information on funding opportunities and upcoming events, and features Hurricane Season as the Topic of the Month—providing links to a variety of translated materials and research articles. Additionally, we spoke with Daniel Le of Boat People S.O.S. to learn about the impact of the Gulf oil disaster on local Vietnamese communities and Boat People S.O.S.'s efforts to meet their needs.

Topic of the Month: Hurricane Season

June 1st signaled the official start of Atlantic hurricane season. This year's hurricane season marks the five year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina—the tragic storm which graphically highlighted the urgent need to address racial/ethnic disparities in preparedness and disaster outcomes. While federal, state, and local efforts to address these issues have



gained momentum in recent years, disparities continue to persist. Below is a select list of resources to strengthen hurricane preparedness in diverse communities and inform planning across all phases of an emergency.

Translated Materials:

- **Disaster Supply Kit:** Provides general information on creating disaster supply kits (**English, Croatian, Haitian Creole, Kurdish, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, and Vietnamese**).
- **Hurricane Super Course:** Provides information on the natural causes and health-related issues associated with hurricanes and basic emergency preparedness (**English, Chinese, and Spanish**).
- **Emergency Wound Care After A Natural Disaster:** Provides tips on how to treat small wounds to prevent infection and defines injuries for which immediate medical attention is necessary (**English and Vietnamese**).



- **Reentering Your Flooded Home:** Provides information on reentering homes after a flood and tips on how to begin the drying process (**English** and **Vietnamese**).
- **Prevent Poisoning from Carbon Monoxide- Printable Flyers:** Uses pictures to convey information about the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning (**English, Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Farsi, French, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Nepali, Oromo, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tigrigna, Ukrainian, Vietnamese**).
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hurricane Resources:** The CDC has centralized hurricane preparedness materials (**English, Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, German, and Portuguese**).
- **American Public Health Association Get Ready Fact Sheets:** Provides preparedness fact sheets in **English** and **Spanish** on a range of topics, such as how to create low-cost preparedness kits. These fact sheets can be customized through the APHA website to allow for organizations to display their logo.

Recovery Assistance:

- **Fact Sheet- Immigrant Eligibility for Disaster Assistance:** This fact sheet provides a concise overview of the services immigrants, with and without documentation, are eligible for in the wake of a disaster.
- **Immigrants and Disaster Assistance:** This Immigration Law Center webpage provides links to a variety of resources on issues surrounding immigration, current legislation, and disasters.

Research Articles:

- **Experiences of Hurricane Katrina Evacuees in Houston Shelters- Implications for Future Planning:** This research article presents findings from surveys and interviews that were conducted in Houston shelters following Hurricane Katrina to develop a socioeconomic and demographic profile of evacuees and their experiences.
- **Katrina-Related Health Concerns of Latino Survivors and Evacuees:** This research article examines health concerns identified by Latinos who resided in the path of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and Mississippi.
- **African Americans' Decisions Not to Evacuate New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina- A Qualitative Study:** This article presents the findings from focus groups that were conducted to identify themes in African Americans' decisions not to evacuate New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina.
- **Rapid Needs Assessment Among Hurricane Katrina Evacuees In Metro-Denver:** This article explores the benefits of conducting rapid needs assessments among displaced populations to identify unique regional and cultural needs of specific populations.
- **A Mobile Medical Care Approach Targeting Underserved Populations in Post-Hurricane Katrina Mississippi:** This article discusses the importance of staffing clinicians who are familiar with social and cultural needs of diverse populations in post-disaster mobile medical care.
- **Displacement of the Underserved- Medical Needs of Hurricane Katrina Evacuees in West Virginia:** This article provides a quantitative analysis of the health care needs of Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

- **Latino Disaster Vulnerability- The Dissemination of Hurricane Mitigation Information among Florida's Homeowners:** This study explores preferred channels for communicating disaster information to Latino communities.
- **Crisis Preparation, Media Use, and Information Seeking- Patterns across Katrina Evacuees and Lessons Learned for Crisis Communication:** This qualitative study examines crisis preparation, information seeking patterns, and media use in 964 Hurricane Katrina evacuees.
- **Voices of The Storm- Health Experiences of Low-Income Katrina Survivors:** This qualitative study explores the experiences of over forty survivors of Hurricane Katrina and their health care needs.

Below are links to recent and upcoming events and initiatives as well as recently published reports and articles.

Funding:

Health Disparities Grants

The HHS Office of Minority Health has announced \$2.3 million in available grants for **umbrella cooperative agreements** to reduce disparities and \$4 million for **community-based networks**.

Events & Training:

2010 National Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations

October 18-21, 2010
Baltimore, MD

The 2010 National Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations, "Improving Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations: A New Place on the National Health Agenda," provides the opportunity for networking and education through over 60 practice-oriented sessions on a wide range of topics, including: cultural competence training, culturally competent health care organization, culturally appropriate care to reduce disparities, and research/measurement. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

2010 APHA Annual Meeting

November 6-10, 2010
Denver, CO

The American Public Health Association Annual Meeting & Exposition is the oldest and largest gathering of public health professionals in the world, attracting more than 13,000 attendees. The conference features numerous sessions on preparedness and diverse populations. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

2011 Public Health Preparedness Summit

February 22-25, 2011
Atlanta, GA

Abstract submissions and registration has opened for the 2011 Public Health Preparedness Summit. The Summit is one of the largest meetings of public health, emergency management, and other professionals to share their best practice training models, tools, or other resources that advance the field of public health preparedness. The deadline for **abstract submissions** is August 16, 2010. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).



Recent Events and Updates:

Deep Horizon Oil Spill:

The ongoing oil gusher stemming from the sea floor in the Gulf of Mexico is estimated to be the largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history. While the parameters of the spill's physical impact remain unknown, the Gulf States of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas are already experiencing adverse effects—states with large proportions of racial/ethnic minorities and individuals with limited-English proficiency (LEP). As the situation continues to unfold, public health officials are taking steps address the health threats associated with the spill—such as contaminated air,

food, and water. Below is a list of translated materials and resources to aid preparedness and response efforts for diverse populations.

- **Vietnamese Fishermen in Gulf Fight to Not get Lost in Translation:** This CNN story describes the plight Vietnamese fishermen who have been affected by the Gulf Coast oil spill and the need to consider the intricacies of local communities when developing relief strategies. The article discusses issues surrounding the importance regional dialects in translation and developing relief plan that acknowledge the unique histories of immigrant communities. To access the article [CLICK HERE](#).
- **Spill Takes Toll on Gulf Workers' Psyches:** This *New York Times* article describes the preliminary mental health impacts of the Deep Horizon oil spill on Vietnamese fishermen in the Gulf Coast region. The spill has had an immediate economic impact on the fishermen and their way of life—leading to feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, stress, anger, depression and suicidal thoughts as a result. To view the article [CLICK HERE](#).
- **Boat People S.O.S. Provides Services for Vietnamese-American Victims of Deep Horizon Oil Spill:** BPSOS, a community-based organization serving Vietnamese-Americans across the country, is providing a range of services to assist the Vietnamese-American victims of the Gulf Coast oil spill. These include direct services, such as translation and interpretation, community education, and legal assistance. To learn more about their efforts, [CLICK HERE](#).
- **OSHA Deepwater Horizon/Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill Fact Sheet:** [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Vietnamese](#)
- **NIEHS Oil Spill Cleanup Initiative- Safety Awareness for Oil Spill Cleanup Workers:** [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Vietnamese](#)
- **National Library of Medicine Tox Town- Crude Oil:** [English](#), [Spanish](#)
- **National Library of Medicine: Multilingual Resources**

Voices from the Field: Daniel Le, Boat People S.O.S.

The precise extent and consequences of the ongoing oil gusher nearly a mile below the ocean's surface in the Gulf of Mexico remain unknown. As government officials and researchers work to quantify the potential long-term economic, environmental, and health impacts associated with the estimated 130 million gallons of crude oil that have been infused into the World's oceans, the immediate impacts are readily apparent to residents of towns along the Gulf Coast.

Among this population is a large community of Vietnamese-American immigrants who make their living fishing and trolling in the Gulf. In addition to the direct economic impacts that have resulted from fishing moratoriums, cultural intricacies and linguistic barriers have hindered the effectiveness of response and recovery efforts for these communities.

The non-government organization [Boat People S.O.S. \(BPSOS\)](#) has been integral to helping meet the immediate recovery needs of Vietnamese-American communities affected by the spill and formulating sustainable long-term solutions. We spoke with Daniel Le of BPSOS to learn more about their efforts and issues specific to Vietnamese communities that could potentially be overlooked by 'one size fits all' relief plans.

BPSOS's commitment to Vietnamese immigrants and refugees spans over three decades. From its origins as a San Diego-based agency dedicated to rescuing Vietnamese refugees in the coastal waters of Thailand and Malaysia, BPSOS has evolved into national organization with 18 office locations across the United States. It is estimated that BPSOS has provided direct assistance to approximately ten percent of all Vietnamese-Americans since 1980. As Mr. Le explained, BPSOS is no stranger to the cultural, linguistic, and political complexities that often complicate disaster relief efforts. BPSOS was extremely active in providing legal assistance, translation services, advocacy, and mobilizing communities following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

In the recent wake of the Gulf oil spill, BPSOS has focused on providing direct services and has begun to advocate for long-term plans that are inclusive of the needs of Vietnamese-Americans. As Mr. Le explained, BPSOS has served as a liaison between British Petroleum (BP) workers providing recovery

assistance and Vietnamese-Americans with limited English proficiency and little familiarity with byzantine bureaucratic processes. Cultural and linguistic isolation have also posed barriers. "There has been a lot of inaccurate information circulating within communities... BPSOS serves as a bridge between the Vietnamese-American communities and BP officials," said Mr. Le. While the provision of cash assistance is a pragmatic strategy for meeting immediate needs—such as money for food, housing, and boat payments—it is in stark contrast to the virtues of Vietnamese culture. "Working is a way of life for the Vietnamese... they are very prideful. They will accept handouts if necessary, but only as a last resort," said Mr. Le.

BP has proposed to hire affected fishing vessels to assist in cleanup efforts to help compensate for lost wages. While this strategy meshes well with the Vietnamese's cultural inclination to work for a living and not accept handouts, Mr. Le has observed that many of the initial cleanup contracts have wrongly gone to recreational vessels that were not directly affected by the spill. In response, BPSOS has advocated for the Vietnamese community through meetings with BP officials and local government authorities. BPSOS's role as a vocal advocate is a critical component to their success.

According to Mr. Le, there is a cultural aversion to publically airing grievances and "rocking the boat" among the Vietnamese. Mr. Le described how affected Vietnamese-American communities have expressed outrage and concerns at community meetings and with BPSOS in private, but remained calm and complacent when speaking directly with BP officials. BPSOS has served as their voice and been a strong advocate when interacting with BP and federal, state, and local officials.

While BP and the federal government have both made promises to redress the consequences of the spill, the affected communities are rather skeptical. As Mr. Le explained, there were a lot of broken promising after Hurricanes Katarina and Rita, broken promises that have eroded already weak trust in government officials.

The long-term impact of the Gulf oil spill on local Vietnamese-American communities is still far from being known. At best, clean up efforts will be successful, fishing waters will re-open, and Vietnamese-American communities along the Gulf Coast will regain self-sufficiency and some semblance of their way of life. At worst, these communities will be forced to continue to rely on handouts, abandon their native trade, and seek professions in alternative industries. Regardless of the course, BPSOS will be key service provider, partner, and advocate for Vietnamese-Americans in crisis.

*We encourage you to share the **National Resource Center** with your peers and colleagues and welcome you to link to the website. Please also feel free to e-mail your comments and any feedback to our team. We look forward to working with you to making this site a resourceful and useful tool in advancing the preparedness of our nation's diverse communities.*

Sincerely,

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