

NIEHS Launches Website with GIS for Assessing Environmental Hazards from Hurricane Katrina

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) (NC, USA) has launched a new website with a GIS will provide valuable information for assessing environmental hazards caused by Hurricane Katrina. The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), one of the National Institutes of Health, created the website to provide the most up-to-date data to public health and safety workers on contaminants in flood waters, infrastructure and industry maps, as well as demographic information for local populations.

The NIEHS Hurricane Katrina Information website accessible at the link below, provides information on assessing and evaluating hundreds of potentially hazardous environmental pollutants that may pose a risk to human health. The website draws from information that NIEHS has acquired from a variety of sources including its research programs, as well as through its Superfund Basic Research Program, Worker Education and Training Program, and Environmental Health Science Centres.

The website also includes a link to a new GIS that NIEHS is developing with several academic partners. The GIS will contain layers of data, including the locations of refineries, oil pipelines, industrial facilities, Superfund sites, Toxic Release Inventory Data, agricultural operations, as well as maps and satellite images of schools, neighbourhoods, and medical facilities, that will help assess the short and long effects of Katrina on the Gulf region.

Information in the GIS, such as the demographics of populations before Katrina will be helpful as health officials treat displaced citizens who may have been previously exposed to toxicants. Subsequent phases will provide more in-depth information to fully assess exposures and make informed decisions about risk of disease.

Other partners working with NIEHS in the development of the various phases of the GIS include Duke University, University of California at San Diego, University of Kentucky, Johns Hopkins, University of Arizona, Boston University, Columbia University, Research Triangle Institute and Harvard University.

The Hurricane Katrina Information website also provides other ongoing NIEHS efforts related to recovery efforts, including collaborations with other federal agencies.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/niehs-launches-website-with-gis-for-assessing-environmental-hazards-from-hurricane-katrina>
