



Bureau of Laboratories

Government Public Health and Private Environmental Laboratory Partnerships

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Bureau of Laboratories

Emergency Response in Puerto Rico Post Hurricane Maria Environmental and Public Health Laboratory Assessments

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Overview

- Mission
- Team/Partners
- Emergency Response Preparation
- Evaluating Essential Laboratory Testing Services
- Impacts on Laboratory Testing Service
- Challenges and Lessons Learned

► Engaging Partners and Information Sharing

- Write report using APHL assessment template for findings and recommendations (e.g. CLIA and DW compliance, COOP etc) for each of the facilities visited (4 total).
- 5 days onsite using APHL assessment tool to evaluate four facilities (one central and three regional) to determine physical fitness (power, electricity, equipment etc) and technical capacity & capability.

Partners

- CDC – requested APHL assess Main PHL and 3 regional PHLs
- US EPA Assessment Follow Up – including private lab status
- US Army Corp of Engineers
- PR DOH Liaison to EOC

▶ Emergency Response Preparation

- Preparations – teleconferences
- Medications
- 30% DEET
- Water and Protein Bars
- Clothing Flashlights
- Candles



EOC



▶ Evaluating Laboratory Services



Write report using APHL assessment template to share drinking water compliance with partners



Comprehensive Assessment Tool

- Organizational Structure/Contacts
- Funding Sources
- Quality System Regulations
- Physical Fitness of Lab Facilities (space, equipment, reagents, safety)
- Collection and transport of samples
- Testing Services
- Partnerships and Communication







Day 2

- Regional Laboratory Visits 2 of 3 regional labs were visited due to time constraints.
- Travel was difficult due to stop lights not functioning. Both laboratories perform environmental testing for drinking water and milk testing.
- Arecibo Hygiene Laboratory
- Mayaguez Hygiene Laboraotory

▶ October 25, 2017

- Arecibo Hygiene Laboratory
- US EPA and Army Corp of Engineers had completed air quality assessment. FEMA delivered and installed a generator to power the laboratory.
- Minimal infrastructure damage
- The Arecibo Lab was the only public service lab capable of testing drinking water.

▶

“We are the
lucky ones.”



PRIVATE LABORATORIES		ASSESSMENT STATUS:	Power Status	Comments
Beckton Env. Lab Ponce		Micro/Chem HAA5, TTHM, EDB, DBCP, some metals, alkalinity, nitrate, nitrite, fluoride, cyanide, TDS, total coliforms, E.coli, HPC	Line Power Instruments Operational	Currently Functioning No Internet Capability; not currently DW certified for HAAs and TTHMs
EQ Laboratories Bayamon, PR		All DW parameters except: asbestos, dioxin, PCBs, Cryptosporidium and Radionuclides	Powered with generator Instruments Operational	Currently functioning, running all PRASA samples for DW compliance (micro/inorganics/metals/organics); have 70 analysts and willing to add 2nd & 3rd shifts; expect line power week of 10/23
ACUALAB Humacao, PR		Total Coliforms, E. coli, HPC	Powered with generator Instruments Operational	Running off generator; do not expect assistance request
ALCHEM Ponce, PR		Total Coliforms, E. coli, HPC	Powered with generator Instruments Operational	Currently functioning, Running off generator; do not expect assistance request. Also have some capability for wastewater chemistry analysis
North Coast Superaqueduct Project Operated by CH2MHill		Total Coliforms, E. coli, HPC	Powered with generator Instruments Operational	Currently functioning
Laboratorio Analitico, Inc. Ponce, PR	7	Total Coliforms, E. coli, HPC	Line Power + backup generator Instruments Operational Need supplies and reagents	No land-line for phone, but have cell service & internet access



Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Communications
- Travel
- Coordination
- Funding Approval
- COOP
- Partnerships









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