



SAFETY TALKS:

Mitigating Risk During Infectious Disease Outbreak

What is Risk mitigation?

- Risk mitigation is the process of planning for disasters and having a way to lessen the negative impact.

What is the goal?

- The goal is to slow the transmission of the disease.
- To protect individuals at increased risk for severe illness, including older adults and persons of any age with underlying health conditions.
- To protect the healthcare and critical infrastructure workforce.
- To minimize morbidity and mortality and the social and economic impacts.

Four types of risk mitigation

- **Acceptance:** This does not reduce the any negative effects but is practiced when the mitigation of the risk by avoidance or limitation may outweigh the cost of the risk itself.
- **Avoidance:** This involves avoiding any risk whatsoever and is usually the most expensive option.
- **Limitation:** This strategy limits a company's exposure by taking some action. It is a strategy employing a bit of risk acceptance along with a bit of risk avoidance or an average of both.
- **Transference:** Risk transference is the involvement of handing risk off to a willing third part.

Strategies applied to infectious disease outbreaks

- **Avoidance:** The risk during infectious disease outbreaks can be avoided entirely by staying home and working from home. This is not an option for all businesses such as the food industry. However, businesses and individuals should consider it an option for those who are at increased risk for serious illness.
- **Limitation:** This type of risk mitigation would involve both some acceptance of the risk and some actions being taken. An example of this would be returning to work and implementing safety practices such as social distancing, hand washing, limiting crowds, and encouraging good housekeeping by disinfecting frequently used surfaces often.
- Every community is different and should tailor their mitigation actions to fit their situation.