

Utah Disaster Recovery Counselor

July 2024 Newsletter



What's in a name?

We are officially updating the name of our certification from Disaster Crisis Counselor to *Disaster Recovery Counselor* to more accurately reflect the type of services this certification supports.

Climate change and behavioral health

A recent study concluded that climate change is causing more intense and more frequent extreme weather disasters (SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center, May 2024). These disasters can have effects on people's mental and behavioral health such as increased anxiety, depression, PTSD, and even service disruptions for people with emergency needs. Research points to many potential ways behavioral health systems can prepare for and help bolster resilience in their communities considering climate-related disasters, including allocating resources to those in greatest need or at greatest risk of poor health outcomes, offering climate-informed behavioral health services, and educating people about the likely behavioral health effects of climate change and ways to foster resilience. Learn more:

[SAMHSA DTAC: Supplemental Research Bulletin — Climate Change and Behavioral Health](#)

Thank you!

We want to thank everyone who was able to attend the annual disaster recovery counselor workshop. This year the topic was Psychological First Aid for Schools. You can find the presentation materials as well as how to become a disaster recovery counselor on our [website](#).



Are you ready for wildfire season?

During wildfire season, power companies may place some of their system equipment on more sensitive settings to lessen the risk of igniting a fire if a power line is contacted. This means a power line will de-energize more quickly if a line is touched. Power outages are more likely to occur when these more sensitive settings are in place. It's important we prepare our homes and communities for not only the chance of a wildfire, but more frequent power outages during the hot, dry summer months. Here are some ways you can prepare for wildfire season:

- Sign up for emergency notifications/alerts on your local emergency management or public safety website.
- Consider a backup power source if you have medical equipment that requires electricity.

International Self-care Day

July 24 is International Self-care Day. This annual celebration is an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of self-care in your organizations and communities, and of course, to take good care of yourself as well. Self-care is something we need to be mindful of 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Self-care tips can be found on the National Institute of Mental Health website, [Caring for your mental health](#).