



Dr. Robyn Gershon is a Professor in the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. She is also a co-investigator and member of the Columbia University Center for Public Health Preparedness, a CDC-funded Center for advancing the professionalism of the public health workforce in the U.S., as well as a senior faculty member with the newly formed National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University. She is an occupational health and safety researcher with over 15 years of experience in conducting large-scale multidisciplinary occupational health research studies. Prior to her doctoral training, Dr. Gershon served for several years as the Director of Biological Safety at Yale University. She received her doctorate in Public Health from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and served on faculty in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences.

Using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, Dr. Gershon has focused her research on the psychosocial aspects of workplace safety, with a specific emphasis on safety culture and climate with respect to the adoption of safe work practices. More recently, she has been involved in a number of emergency preparedness projects, most notably as the Principal Investigator of the World Trade Center Evacuation Study, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This study is designed to identify the individual, organizational, and structural (environmental) factors associated with evacuation from the World Trade Center Towers One and Two on September 11, 2001. For the past year, Dr. Gershon has been working closely with the Fire Department of New York and New York City's Office of Emergency Management on new legislation in New York City (Local Law 26) that specifies the roles and responsibilities of the Emergency Action Plan Directors. This new legislation targets the nearly 2,000 high rise building business occupancies in New York City and involves emergency preparedness at all levels (e.g., training, education of Emergency Action Plan Directors, Fire/Evacuation safety personnel, leaseholders, and occupants) in order to ensure that high rise buildings are prepared for mass evacuation and other building emergencies. In addition to her research program, Dr. Gershon plays an active role in her department, Sociomedical Sciences (SMS), teaching (*The Social and Policy Implications of*

*Weapons of Mass Destruction*, fall term), mentoring students, and serving on various safety and health committees and panels. Dr. Gershon has been involved in a number of WMD training programs; she helped prepare curriculum and course materials for several different courses, and helped present the material to clinicians, including first responders. Dr. Gershon is developing new courses for her department, including, "*Public Health Response to Disasters*"

Dr. Gershon has over 60 publications, as well as a number of book chapters, monographs, and abstracts. She collaborates with a number of colleagues from a wide variety of specialties and is a frequent presenter at scientific meetings. Dr. Gershon also spends a good deal of time in public service activities, providing training, resources, and expertise to study participants through the agencies that represent them and through the National Center for Disaster Preparedness and the Center for Public Health Preparedness.