

#DM2002-2

“FORENSICS”

WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES, PEOPLE MAY BE UNIDENTIFIABLE VISUALLY OR BY PAPER IDENTIFICATION.

THIS IS WHEN A FORENSIC DENTIST BECOMES INVOLVED.

DENTAL FORENSICS IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO IDENTIFY VICTIMS.

TEETH ARE THE HARDEST SUBSTANCE IN THE BODY AND CAN WITHSTAND FIRES, EXPLOSIONS OR FLOODS.

ALSO, TEETH DON'T DECOMPOSE.

THE ABILITY OF THE TEETH TO WITHSTAND ADVERSITY, HELPS DENTISTS TO IDENTIFY PEOPLE BY USING TOOLS SUCH AS DIGITAL X-RAYS AND FEDERAL DATABASES.

AND SIMILAR TO DNA, EVERY PERSON HAS A UNIQUE SET OF DENTAL RECORDS.

DENTAL FORENSICS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN HELPING IDENTIFY VICTIMS OF THE SEPTEMBER 11TH EVENTS.

TEAMS OF 20 TO 30 DENTISTS WORKED IN SHIFTS AROUND THE CLOCK.

THESE DENTISTS WORKED TOGETHER WITH STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES IN HOPES OF MAKING POSITIVE IDENTIFICATIONS.

FOR THE ADA DENTAL MINUTE, I'M DR. MARIA LOPEZ HOWELL.

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