

MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS REVIEW

"Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities"

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SERVING THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS UNITS OF IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI AND NEBRASKA

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Upcoming Events

15th Annual Earthquakes Mean Business Seminar. February 6, 2009 in St. Louis, MO. Sponsored by the Gateway Citizens Corps Coalition. See <http://www.gatewayccc.us/earthquake.htm> for more information.

2009 Local, State and Federal Public Health Preparedness Summit. February 18-20, 2009 in San Diego, CA. Sponsored by NACCHO and other organizations, including the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps. For more information, visit <http://www.phprep.org>.

2009 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit (MRC National Conference). April 4-8, 2009 in Dallas, TX. Sponsored by the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (OCVMRC), National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), Emergency System for the Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP) and the U.S. Public Health Service Office of Force Readiness and Deployment (OFRD). For more information, visit <http://teams.hhs.gov/conference/>.

MRC Flu Vaccination Promotions

Influenza season is here, and it provides MRC units with an opportunity to be involved in an important prevention initiative that can improve the public health of their



communities. Influenza (commonly referred to as “the flu”) is a contagious respiratory illness that can cause mild to severe illness, though in some cases it may lead to death. Approximately 5 to 20 percent of the population becomes ill with influenza annually, and on average, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized, and about 36,000 die. According to the CDC

(<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>), “anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting the flu can get vaccinated. However, it is recommended by the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) that certain people should get vaccinated each year. They are either people who are at high risk of having serious flu complications or people who live with or care for those at high risk for serious complications.” The MRC can have a profound impact on the health of communities across the nation by becoming involved in promoting and administering flu vaccinations.

How Can MRC Units Be Involved in Flu Vaccinations?

First and foremost, it is important for MRC leaders and volunteers to serve as role models by receiving flu vaccinations. Additionally, MRC members should encourage ALL healthcare workers in their community to receive flu vaccinations. MRC units can be involved with flu vaccinations in a number of different ways.

MRC units can promote, support and even host flu vaccination clinics for their communities. These activities can serve both public health and emergency preparedness (i.e., pandemic influenza) purposes. We encourage all MRC units to provide reports about your flu-related (and other) activities on your unit profiles.

These reports help to show the impact the MRC is having on the health of America.

More Information

HHS' Office of Public Health and Science has created the *Health Care Personnel Initiative to Improve Influenza Vaccination Toolkit*, which can be accessed at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ophs/programs/initiatives/vacctoolkit/index.html>. This toolkit provides background on influenza, promotional tools, published articles, and other flu vaccine-related resources. We encourage you to take advantage of this information as you develop ways for your MRC to become involved in this initiative.

FEMA Study Examines Impact of Large New Madrid Seismic Zone Earthquake

Adapted from FEMA Press Release #HQ-08-249
November 20, 2008

On November 20, 2008, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released a report entitled *Impact of Earthquakes on the Central USA*, which presents the findings of a two-year study on the impact of a 7.7 magnitude earthquake on states in the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ). The study was conducted for FEMA by the Mid-America Earthquake Center at the University of Illinois in partnership with the Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and George Washington University's Institute for Crisis, Disaster and Risk Management.

The study, the first of its kind to be conducted on such a large scale, is part of FEMA's NMSZ Catastrophic Earthquake Disaster Response Planning Initiative. It is primarily intended to provide scientific data upon which to base response and recovery planning for the devastating earthquakes that have long been predicted for the New Madrid region, which includes areas of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee. The study is available at:

<https://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/8971>

According to the study, areas within the NMSZ would experience widespread and catastrophic physical damage, adverse social impacts, and economic losses.

Three different earthquake events were considered, one for each segment of the New Madrid Fault - northeast, central and southwest. For example, an earthquake event that occurs in the central part of the seismic zone would cause significant damage to buildings and structures, transportation systems, and utility lifelines in southeastern Missouri, and would displace over 121,000 people. The study notes that the total economic impact of a series of NMSZ earthquakes is likely to constitute the highest economic losses due to a natural disaster in the United States.

The report provides state-specific information, including damage levels specific to building and occupancy type; essential facilities; highway bridges; electric power, potable water, waste water and communications facilities; and pipeline damage where appropriate. It also identifies the counties that could be expected to sustain the most damage in each state and provides information on potential interruptions of utility services and impacts on essential facilities, such as hospitals, schools, emergency operations centers, and police and fire stations.

The assessments provided in the study have been used to facilitate earthquake response operations planning sessions in 30 FEMA-supported workshops, conducted with the 747 counties and the eight states in the NMSZ. The workshops were designed to support the development of integrated state and local plans for response and recovery operations following a catastrophic earthquake. Participants included more than 3,800 representatives of federal, state, tribal, local and county emergency management and responder organizations, as well as the private sector.

Additional planning workshops are scheduled, including FEMA regional- and national-level workshops. A capstone workshop will involve the integration of all the plans developed through the scenario-based workshops.

The scenarios for the workshops were developed using FEMA's Hazards U.S. Multi-Hazard (HAZUS-MH) earthquake impact modeling software. HAZUS-MH is a tool used to assess risk and provide estimates of hazard-related damage and takes into account various impacts of a hazard event, such as the physical damage, economic loss and social impacts resulting from earthquakes, floods and hurricanes.

Earthquake resources from FEMA are available at:

- *Are You Ready? Earthquakes*
www.fema.gov/areyouready/earthquakes

- *Earthquake: How Can I Protect Myself?*
www.fema.gov/hazard/earthquake/index.shtm
- *HAZUS-MH Earthquake Model*
www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/hazus/hz_eq.shtm

Suggestions for December Volunteer Recognition Activities

Recently, Shelly Boden, coordinator of the Central Nebraska MRC, posted a request on the MRC Listserv for activities for a volunteer recognition event in December. Terri Clark, coordinator of the Island County MRC in Washington, offered an extensive list of suggestions in response to Shelly's request. Many of these suggestions are very creative and we would like to share them with all the Region VII MRC unit leaders. They are posted below for your review (these suggestions for volunteer recognition activities were also e-mailed to Region VII MRC unit leaders in early November):

1. Have a pot luck
2. Set up a "giving tree" for foster children
3. Have a gift exchange with items for your "go-kits"
4. Have a piñata with emergency goodies inside
5. Play "ICS charades" (to sneak in some training!)
6. Play indoor golf (to encourage physicians to participate!)
7. Door prizes
8. Go Christmas caroling in hospital wards (for MRC units sponsored by hospitals)
9. Announce your MRC unit's "volunteer of the year"
10. Invite VIPs to the event
11. Videotape the event to archive and use in marketing and outreach activities
12. Invite families of volunteers to participate (perhaps hire babysitters, if necessary)
13. Encourage volunteers to bring a friend and get an extra ticket for a door prize
14. Distribute certificates of appreciation for volunteers
15. Create awards for volunteers who have served the most hours, completed the most training courses, participated in the most exercises or actual responses, etc.
16. Write a press release about the event (although these events are not generally open to the public, it enhances public recognition of the volunteers)
17. Make sure the facility is festive and fits the occasion (not too crowded, but cozy enough for socializing)
18. Keep costs to a minimum by asking for donated meeting space, prizes, decorations, etc. (remember to recognize donors at the event)
19. Send Christmas cards or other holiday-specific greeting cards to your volunteers (it is a meaningful gesture to take the time to send them a thoughtful note)
20. Enjoy the season without putting a strain on your budget and stress level
 - a. Make the event light and fun
 - b. Share the workload by having volunteers help plan and conduct the event

If you have suggestions for similar events and activities, we encourage you to share them with the other MRC unit leaders in the region. Thank you!

FEMA Launches Children-In-Disasters Initiative

Adapted from FEMA Press Release #HQ-08-246
November 17, 2008

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is teaming up with the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), Save the Children Foundation and the American Red Cross to launch an initiative that will enable the emergency management community to better address the needs of children in disasters.

"This initiative will involve concrete steps to focus attention on the needs of children in disasters and help the emergency management community address children's special needs in the emergency planning process," said FEMA Administrator Paulison. "Although this initiative is a work-in-progress, we're committed to a course of action that involves assessing and adjusting disaster response services for children."

The first action involves the development of a training course for state and local emergency managers by the FEMA National Preparedness Directorate, Emergency Management Institute in collaboration with IAEM and Save the Children. The course will be designed to help state and local emergency managers incorporate the needs of children into the emergency planning process and standard Emergency Operations Plans. It will be based on Save the Children Foundation's emergency management guide, *The Unique Needs of Children in*

Emergencies, a Guide for the Inclusion of Children in Emergency Operations Plan.

"Children are extremely vulnerable during an emergency and evacuation," said Mark Shriver, vice president and managing director of Save the Children's U.S. programs and chair of the National Commission on Children and Disasters. "It is crucial that communities plan ahead for disasters, with a special focus on assisting children."

The collaborative effort by FEMA, IAEM, Save the Children Foundation and the American Red Cross and the development of the course for the emergency management community was announced Monday, November 17, 2008 at the annual conference of IAEM in Overland Park, KS. The course is expected to be completed by the end of June 2009.

For more information on children in disasters, visit the following:

- *Children-In-Disasters Initiative Fact Sheet*
<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=46826>
- *Helping Children Cope with Disaster*
http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/recover/cope_child.shtm
- *Helping Children Prepare for Disasters*
<http://www.fema.gov/mitigationbp/brief.do?mitsld=5747>

Highlights of MRC Unit Activities

Public Health

Members of the **Nebraska/Western Iowa MRC** assisted at the MS Society Bike Ride by checking riders for hydration and heat exhaustion at water stops. Members also assisted with the 28th National Veterans Wheel Chair Games.

The **Sedgwick County, KS MRC** participated in a Boys and Girls Club Health Fair. Volunteers provided information to attendees on the location of clinics for the uninsured, underinsured, and underserved. The unit also provided blood pressure checks and answered health-related questions.

The **Douglas County, KS MRC** conducted a hand-washing demonstration for the Lawrence Public Schools C-TRAN program.

The **South-Central Missouri MRC** assisted with Stage 4 of the Tour of Missouri bicycle race by participating in the Health and Wellness Expo, staffing a first-aid shelter, and monitoring over 7,500 spectators to identify emergency needs.

The **Stoddard County, MO MRC** participated in the Golden Living Health Fair.

Nebraska/Western Iowa MRC volunteers provided over 200 blood pressure checks and medical care at a road race, parade, and BBQ cook-off during the River City Roundup Celebration.

The **Shawnee County, KS MRC** partnered with every public school in Shawnee County to provide flu shots to all children in grades K-12. The goal of this campaign was to immunize 6,000 children between October 10th and November 24th. MRC volunteers gave vaccinations, managed clinic flow and handled necessary paperwork to make this campaign a huge success.

The **Bollinger County, MO MRC** assisted with a mass influenza clinic at the Bollinger County Public Health Center on October 23rd.

The **MRC of Kansas City** provided volunteer support for a regional flu clinic/SNS exercise on October 23rd.

The **Jefferson County, KS MRC** worked with the local LEPC and health department to staff a mass influenza vaccination clinic at a county voting site ("vote and vax" event).

Members of the **Bollinger County, MO MRC** participated in a "vote and vax" influenza clinic on November 4th at four voting precincts in the county.

Volunteers from the **Nebraska/Western Iowa MRC** provided first aid services at the Sarpy County Chamber of Commerce/Millard Business Association Expo on November 13th. An estimated 1,000 people attended the event. MRC volunteers staffed a booth and handed out informational materials.

Preparedness and Training

Harvey County, KS MRC volunteers participated in a mass dispensing exercise.

Sedgwick County, KS MRC members supported the county CRI SNS Strike team and POD teams in a full scale exercise involving three municipalities in two

counties. The Strike Team practiced receipt of the SNS, breakdown, and redistribution process. The POD teams provided the sites with JIT training, POD setup assistance, and support.

The **Butler County, KS MRC** participated in a mass pharmaceutical distribution exercise.

Jefferson County, KS MRC volunteers assisted with a regional public health epidemiology tabletop exercise.

Southeast Nebraska MRC members participated in a tabletop exercise which evaluated the capability of hospitals and health department personnel ability to handle the influx of patients during a pandemic.

The **Lincoln-Pike-Warren Counties, MO Regional MRC** hosted a full-day NIMS 100 and 700 training session.

St. Louis County, MO MRC and CERT members participated in a full-scale mass dispensing exercise.

Texas County, MO MRC members participated in IS-700 training with CERT and Neighborhood Watch, and distributed 2-1-1 information at the Texas County Health Fair.

Jefferson County, KS MRC members assisted the local public health department during a state-sponsored functional exercise testing the ability to distribute medical assets (SNS distribution), as well as with a local exercise testing the ability to set up and conduct a POD site for identified private partners.

Nebraska/Western Iowa MRC members participated in an Offutt Air Force Base disaster drill.

Marshall County, KS MRC members participated in a pandemic influenza mass dispensing exercise.

Douglas County, KS MRC members received Psychological First Aid training.

Central Nebraska MRC staffed a Safety Day booth at Hilltop Mall in Kearney, NE.

The **South-Central Missouri MRC** participated in a POD exercise using NIMS during the Phelps County Health Department's 2008 Fall Flu Clinic and provided 401 flu vaccinations.

Central Nebraska MRC members participated in decontamination training and training with a portable hospital POD at the Nebraska LEPC Conference.

The **Northeast Missouri MRC** participated in an Outdoor Search and Rescue class and exercise sponsored by the Northeast Missouri Fire Chief's Association.

The **MRC of Kansas City** staffed an information booth at the Church of the Resurrection Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Fair. MRC volunteers handed out emergency preparedness booklets and informational brochures promoting the MRC and other volunteer opportunities related to emergency preparedness.

The **Texas County, MO MRC** participated in a functional exercise with CERT, Neighborhood Watch and amateur radio operators.

Members of the **Central Nebraska MRC** participated in a full-scale mass casualty incident (MCI) exercise involving 60 injured victims in Hastings, NE. MRC members practiced their moulaging skills, participated as injured victims and acted as observers. The MRC unit was also able to test its notification system.

A nurse with the **Southeast Nebraska MRC** represented the MRC unit in a pandemic mass dispensing tabletop exercise on November 4th. Other agencies participating in the exercise included the local emergency management agency, Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department, Lincoln's three major hospitals and local fire and rescue units.

Administration

The **Shawnee County, KS MRC** hosted the Kansas statewide MRC meeting.

Kathy Mersch, a volunteer with the **Nebraska/Western Iowa MRC**, received a "Be Prepared" Award from Nebraska Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy. The award was given for Mersch's efforts in tornado and high-winds disasters during the summer, when she helped mobilize and ensure volunteers' safety during recovery efforts.

Members of the **Nebraska MRC Consortium** met with Nebraska Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy and other state representatives on November 6th to discuss volunteer liability protection. The group plans to meet with the Lt. Governor again in the future.