



Central District Health Department

Medical Reserve Corps

Back issues of this publication are available on our website: cdhd.idaho.gov

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Local MRC News

Medical Reserve Corps Recruits Volunteers

Over the last few months, you may have seen and heard a lot about the Medical Reserve Corps. Central District Health combined resources with Southwest District Health to launch a multi-pronged advertising campaign designed to recruit new members to the Medical Reserve Corps in both health districts. The "Everyday Heroes" campaign ran on the radio, bus boards, online at KTVB.com and 2NEWS.TV, and numerous posters throughout the Treasure Valley.

As a result of the campaign, we received approximately 147 inquiries about our MRC program and registered a total of 78 new volunteers - all of them ready, willing, and able to serve their community in times of need.

Be One of the Treasure Valley's Everyday Heroes

Took my class on a field trip.
Baked cookies for the church social.
Enjoyed the Matzo cracker with my granddaughters.

Join the Medical Reserve Corps.

Be one of the Treasure Valley's everyday heroes. Everyday you accomplish a lot - for your family, friends, and at work. Now you can accomplish something for yourself and your community.

Join the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The health districts in the Treasure Valley are looking for medical and non-medical volunteers to help out in an emergency. Joining is quick, the time commitment is small and the training is free. So accomplish something for yourself and help your community when it needs help most. Join the Medical Reserve Corps today.

Join today by calling the Idaho CareLine 2-1-1

www.publichealthidaho.com
www.cdhd.idaho.gov

Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP)

Soon you will all be hearing a lot more from us about a new national initiative from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services called the *Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals* or ESAR-VHP.



ESAR-VHP is a federal program that has been installed to provide guidance and assistance for the development of standardized Local-State-Federal coordination of volunteer health professionals. Its mission is to develop a unified and systematic way to register, classify, and verify the credentials of volunteer health professionals in advance of an emergency or disaster. Each state in the U.S. is required by law to have an ESAR-VHP program as part of their preparedness and response plan and it serves as just one more way to improve the nation's ability to prepare for and respond to public health and medical emergencies.

We're A Tobacco Free Zone



To protect the health of **everyone** at CDHD, no smoking or other tobacco use is permitted in our facilities or on our property, both indoors and out. **Thank you for your cooperation.**



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National MRC News

Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism

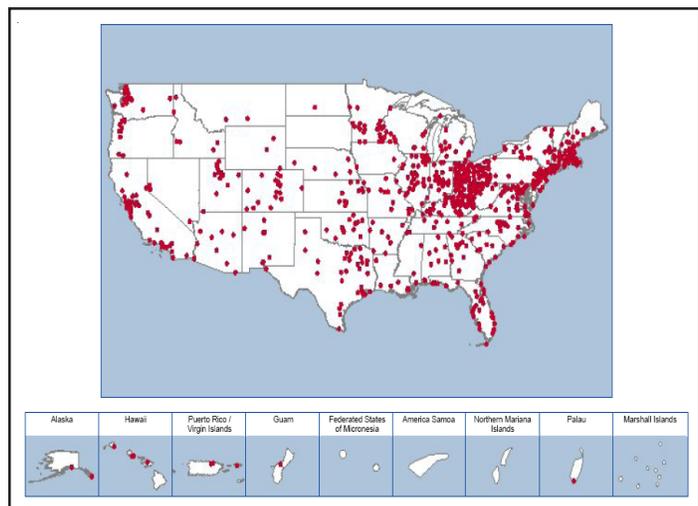
Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation released the sixth annual *Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism* report, which finds that progress made to better protect the country from disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and bioterrorism is now at risk, due to budget cuts and the economic crisis. In addition, the report concludes that major gaps remain in many critical areas of preparedness, including surge capacity, rapid disease detection, and food safety. The report contains state-by-state health preparedness scores based on 10 key indicators to assess health emergency preparedness capabilities. More than half of states and the District of Columbia achieved a score of seven or less out of 10 key indicators. Louisiana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin scored the highest with 10 out of 10. Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Montana, and Nebraska tied for the lowest score with five out of 10.

How did Idaho do? Idaho scored 6 out of 10 along with eight other states; Alaska, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nevada and Texas. The report found potential weaknesses in the following areas: a state public health lab that has an intra-state courier system that operates 24 hrs a day, a state level MRC coordinator, and the state's level of funding for public health services. To view the entire report, please visit: <http://healthyamericans.org/reports/bioterror08/>.

Growth of MRC in the U.S.

Our ability to prepare for and respond to public health and medical emergencies continues to improve within our nation's communities. At the end of August 2008, there were 168,996 volunteers enrolled in 787 MRC units in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Palau, and Puerto Rico. That's a huge leap from the 93,714 volunteers making up the 483 units a little over two years ago in 2006. (Note: the number of volunteers is collated from the information provided by MRC units as part of their profiles on the MRC website)

The threat of pandemic influenza, recent flooding, the devastation caused by record-breaking storms during the 2008 hurricane seasons and the September 11th terrorist attacks have underscored the importance of having an emergency response plan that allows our hospitals and healthcare systems to quickly mobilize the resources they need to maintain or increase facility, equipment and personnel capacity. By volunteering during a large-scale disaster or public health emergency, you will be ensuring that citizens - your family, friends and neighbors - have uninterrupted access to vital healthcare resources when they need them most!



Emergency Preparedness Pointers

Preparedness In A Can

There are a variety of ways to stock a 72 hour kit with food. Shelf -stable boxed goods, Meals Ready To Eat (MREs) and nutrition bars are all possible food types to include in a kit. Another alternative is canned goods. Canned foods have a relatively long shelf life, provide a wide variety of choices and are well sealed from outside environmental factors (flood waters, dirt, etc.).

How Long Will Canned Food Last?

According to the US Department of Agriculture's Food Inspection Service the shelf life for canned foods are as follows:



High Acid Foods (tomatoes and other fruits) ...
Low Acid Foods (meat and vegetables) ...

up to 18 months
2 to 5 years



These timeframes are based on proper storage. Canned foods and other shelf-stable products should be stored in a cool, dry place. Do not keep them above the stove, under the sink, in a damp garage or basement, or any place exposed to high or low temperature extremes. If any cans are leaking, bulging, rusting, badly dented, or have a foul odor when opened, dispose of them immediately. These cans may contain the rare and potentially lethal *botulinum* toxin. The best way to avoid this is to rotate the food at least annually.

What Foods Should You Include?

First, you should store foods that you enjoy. In an emergency situation tensions are high. There is no reason to compound the issue by changing your diet. Food can help provide comfort to family members, so choose foods that the family will enjoy.

Second, choose foods that could be eaten cold. During an evacuation or even a shelter in place incident you may not have the ability to cook the food. It is also important to consider whether or not the food requires added water for preparation. Clean water is precious during an emergency so the food you choose should not require water to prepare.

Third, make sure that the cans are the correct portion size for your household. You may not have the ability to refrigerate leftovers, so make sure that the opened can will be consumed in a single meal by the members of your household.

Lastly, have a can opener in your 72 hour kit. Many canned foods now come with a pull tab top, but there are still many that don't. It is much better to have a can opener you don't need than to need a can opener you don't have.

Have A Green Thumb?

February is "Plant the Seeds of Greatness" month. It is a time to contemplate changes you would like to make to achieve personal goals. It can also be a time to start thinking about what great vegetables you would like to plant in your garden. Properly prepared home grown foods can be an excellent addition to a 72 hour kit. Home canning is a skill that was once common in the United States and is now a rare art. Safe canning practices require specific training and the use of proper equipment. For information on home canning go to: <http://foodsafety.cas.psu.edu/canningguide.html>

March 2009

Emergency Preparedness Pointers

The Treasure Valley: A River Runs Through It

Flooding is a natural and inevitable part of life along any river. Nationwide, 75 percent of Presidentially Declared Disasters are due to floods. The Boise River is a beautiful amenity in our community, but we must never forget that it is still a force of nature. March 16-20 is Flood Safety Awareness Week. Now is the time to heighten our awareness of the flood history and flood potential of our community.

What Causes Flooding?

► Heavy Rains, Winter Storms & Spring Thaws

Heavy snowpack in the mountains can be a mixed blessing. When the Treasure Valley receives warmer weather, coupled with long periods of significant rain, localized flooding can occur. This year the snow pack is slightly below average, but that does not mean flooding will not occur. Significant weather events during Spring can create flooding in the foothills and perhaps even along the river.

► Overburdened or Clogged Drainage Systems

Water will take the path of least resistance. If storm drains or culverts are clogged with debris or pushed beyond capacity, water will spill out over the adjacent area. This type of flooding can occur both within and outside of a floodplain.

► Construction and New Development

Changes made to the environment by development can affect natural drainages and create new flood risks.

Recent Flood Events

► May 2006

Above average snow pack along with warm wet weather brought on high river flows during Spring. The river bank breached and required repair. No homes were flooded, but a septic tank failure did effect 8-10 homes.

► May - June 1998

Two weeks of rain fell on melting snowpack causing flooding along Boise River drainages. A levee break near Eagle Island caused flooding of nearby homes. Sixty residents were evacuated. A mobile home park and some farm lands were flooded.

► January 1997

Boise River flows were increased in order to make room in the reservoirs. A dike near South Eagle Road broke, flooding the road. Two homes were flooded and others were evacuated. Parts of the Greenbelt were closed.

What River Flows Will Create Flooding?

The river flows measured at Glenwood Bridge in Cubic Feet Per Second (cfs) are the best indicator of potential flooding. The Boise River has not flowed through town at the 100 year Flood rate of 16,600 cfs since the completion of Lucky Peak Dam in 1955. It's high flow of 9850 cfs occurred in 1983 and caused significant flooding. The river is considered to be at flood stage at 7000 cfs. Below are a couple of examples of potential flood scenarios according to the National Weather Service.

FLOW RATE	POTENTIAL EFFECT
7000 cfs	Large sections of the Greenbelt Path adjacent to the river will be submerged. Erosion of the river banks may become a significant problem. Minor flooding will be observed on sections of Eagle Island and other low spots along the river.
10500 cfs	Flooding near the river will occur in low areas of Boise, Garden City, Eagle and Star. Portions of Eagle Island will be submerged. Access in/out of some neighborhoods may be limited by high water.



What's New Inside PHP

CDHD's Public Health Preparedness Program

In an effort to enhance our working relationship with our MRC volunteers, we'd like to take the opportunity to provide you with an update on just a few of the things the Office of Public Health Preparedness (PHP) has been working on:

Training and Education

- In the coming year, we are developing a comprehensive training and exercise plan for our organization in order to prepare for our future exercises and improve our abilities to respond to a public health emergency. Training and exercising are vital activities that allow us to test the effectiveness of our emergency response plans.

Planning & Exercises

- We are in the process of re-writing our Emergency Response Plan. We anticipate having the new version complete in early summer.
- We are collaborating with the Southwest District Health Department on the development of a joint functional exercise, slated for early summer. This exercise will test our ability to receive medications and supplies through the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) and manage warehouse operations. **Keep an eye out for volunteer opportunities associated with this exercise!**
- We are continuing to work with local planning partners to expand pre-event agreements that will facilitate mass dispensing of medications in the case of a large scale public health emergency.

Other Activities

- **Special Olympics** - MRC volunteers from both Central and Southwest District Health Departments were requested to assist the Medical Operations Section Chief in the Emergency Operation Center (Area Command) during the Special Olympics World Winter Games in February.

Volunteers worked in 6 hour shifts from February 5th to 14th. They provided support primarily by reviewing and maintaining athlete medical records, coordinating the transmission of medical records to outside health care facilities, and maintaining medical unit logs.

A total of 18 MRC volunteers gave their valuable time to this unique opportunity – 11 of them from CDHD-MRC. Special thanks to: Darcy Barnet, Lowell Burdel, Ian Elder, Patty Culpepper, Erica Koepf, Lois Moore, Carol Moreno, Betsy Moynihan, Kathy Reavy, Kathy Stockton, and Bobbi Stoddard.

- Working on organizing training dates for use of the BLU-MED Mobile Medical Facility sometime this spring. Stay tuned, more information to come.

For more information about CDHD's coordination with local healthcare facilities, contact George Pinque at 580-6014 or GPinque@cdhd.idaho.gov





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A Look Ahead

Keep an eye on this section for a schedule of quarterly meetings, upcoming volunteer opportunities, response exercises, and other public health events.

- April** • Distribution of new *CDHD-MRC Member Handbook*
- CDHD-MRC Quarterly Meeting & Training Session – *exact date TBA*
 - CDHD-MRC New Member Orientation – *exact date TBA*

Training Courses Available - FEMA and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offer self-paced training courses designed for people who have emergency management responsibilities and the general public. All are offered free-of-charge. To get a complete listing of courses available through FEMA – Independent Study Programs, go to: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>

There are a number of valuable training and educational opportunities open to MRC members that can be found locally. Many of them can be found through the Idaho Learning Management System (LMS) at www.idahoprepares.com . If you would like more information about the LMS or any of the classes available locally, please contact our Health Educator, Kathryn Quinn at 327-8597 or e-mail her at KQuinn@cdhd.idaho.gov .

Member Contact Information – The majority of our communication with you is done via e-mail. It has proven to be a great way to get information out to a large group of people easily and quickly. We realize however that e-mail addresses change often. If you have recently changed your e-mail address, or have perhaps noticed that you haven't heard from us in a while, please give us a call or shoot us an e-mail with your current contact information. We want to stay in-touch! Please contact Mary at 321-2215 or mbarlow@cdhd.idaho.gov . Thanks!

We want to hear from you

This is YOUR newsletter! We want your help in making it as interesting and useful as possible for our MRC members – just like you. Please share your ideas, news, and suggestions with us. E-mail Mary at mbarlow@cdhd.idaho.gov or call 321-2215.