



Albany County Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Newsletter

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The Albany County Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Newsletter is designed to keep our volunteers informed about Albany County's emergency preparedness efforts, volunteer training opportunities, and pertinent emergency preparedness news.

Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers Respond!

Fall 2011 was a busy time for MRC volunteers. Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee affected many areas of Albany County and MRC volunteers responded quickly! On August 28, Albany County Sheriff's Emergency Management Unit requested MRC volunteers to augment staffing at an American Red Cross shelter opened at Cohoes High School. Three MRC volunteers were deployed late in the evening and seven more were deployed on August 29, 2011. Volunteers assisted with general shelter operations including shelter set-up, registration and mass care and feeding. This was the first time Albany County MRC volunteers were integrated into a Red Cross Shelter and it proved to be an invaluable learning experience not only for the volunteers but for preparedness staff as well. Lessons learned resulted in changes to the Albany County Volunteer Activation and Deployment Plan.

The New York State Volunteer Program also activated and deployed fourteen Albany County MRC volunteers to areas across the state including Broome and Schoharie counties. Both counties were severely affected by the storms and were in need of additional volunteers to provide general shelter operations assistance as well as to administer vaccine.

In October and November, Albany County Department of Health tested its ability to activate Push PODS with municipal and community partners. After training on how to set up and operate a POD, participating organizations held five PODS with MRC volunteers providing both clinical and non-clinical staffing assistance.

Much appreciation and thanks are extended to the following MRC volunteers who assisted with response and POD activities: Desiree Arthurton, Rick Cook, Patricia Christian, Bonnie Crocetta, Rachel DiNola, Maureen Duffy, Cinnia Edwards, Valerie Flanders, Edward Fraley, III, Maria Englert, Rev. Stephen Lalor, Diane Link, Judy Martin, Jonathan Maskin, Lori McCormick, Jeanne Millet, Anne Patnode, Dorothea Pratt, Robin Raco, Arthur Small, Robin Torres, Gail Voorhees, Scott Weis, Barbara Zittel, and Robert Zittel.



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Give the Gift of Preparedness

Debra Robinson, Project Director, Medical Reserve Corps, NACCHO

As the holiday season approaches, our thoughts can become consumed with holiday festivities, shopping lists, and preparing for family visits. For many however, the thought of preparing for an emergency during the holiday season does not cross their minds. According to the United States Fire Administration, approximately 400 people will lose their lives in holiday house fires each year and another 1,600 or more will suffer injury. Over \$900 million in damage will occur to property.^[1] These statistics serve as a reminder that disasters do not take holiday vacations and personal preparedness must be a 24-hour, seven day a week commitment.

Seasonal house fires occur for a variety of reasons. Overloaded electrical outlets, frayed electrical cords, cracked sockets, unattended candles, embers from fireplaces, stove and grease fires, chimney fires, and non-flame-retardant decorations are among the most common culprits. It is important to be vigilant, perform safety checks on electrical supplies, and be attentive around open flames.



Are you looking for a unique holiday gift? There are a number of life saving ideas that come to mind. First aid kits, personal and family preparedness kits, and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors make perfect stocking stuffers. Other gift ideas include items that prepare your loved ones for the winter months. Emergency road kits and or home emergency generators can be invaluable during winter storms.

For parents of college students who will be returning back to dorms and apartments after winter break— check to see if your child has a preparedness kit for their living quarters, backpacks, and vehicles. Consider purchasing an emergency ladder or fire extinguisher for their room. Don't forget to discuss with your child what plans they have in place should an emergency occur in their apartment or dorm and also make sure they have a personal communications plan...who they will notify in the event of an emergency and if they are unable to get in touch with you.

Many community groups such as the Medical Reserve Corps and the Community Emergency Response Teams, offer free training and educational materials on personal and family preparedness. Look up a group nearest you!

This year, consider doing something new and different. Make preparedness a part of your holiday and show someone how much you really care.

[1] U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2006). Topical Fire Research Series In *December and Holiday Fires*. Retrieved November 2, 2011 from <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/statistics/v6i4.pdf>.

Seasons Greetings and Happy New Year !!!



Update Your ServNY Profile

As part of our Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant requirements, the Albany County Medical Reserve Corps must perform an annual notification drill for volunteers using the ServNY system as well as validate and ensure profile updates are made. To assist with this requirement, please take a few moments to review and update your volunteer record at the ServNY Volunteer Management System. Additional information on the notification drill and how to respond will be provided.

Training Opportunities

Creating a Family Preparedness Plan

Since most disasters are unexpected, it's imperative to plan now! When a disaster strikes, where will your family be? Where will you find each other? What if a family member has special needs? Training participants will consider these and other scenarios as they create a personal family preparedness plan. This training will be presented by Susan Riedy.

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

5:30 pm—7:30 pm

Albany County Department of Health

Auditorium

Dinner will be served

To RSVP, please click [HERE](#) to register online. Or contact Sue Riedy at susan.riedy@albanycounty.com or 518-447-4590.

On-Line Training Opportunities

The Albany County Medical Reserve Corps highly encourages all volunteers to complete ICS100b An Introduction to Incident Command System and ICS 700 An Introduction to National Incident Management System (NIMS). Both trainings are available on the FEMA website. After completion of the final exam, please email a copy of your Certificate of Achievement to Susan Riedy, MRC Coordinator, at susan.riedy@albanycounty.com or mail to 175 Green Street, Albany, NY 12202.

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100b.asp>

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700a.asp>

“LIKE” us on Facebook

The Albany County MRC created a Facebook page to recruit volunteers, announce volunteer and training opportunities as well as provide preparedness tips. Please visit our [PAGE](#) or visit Facebook and search “Albany County Medical Reserve Corps” and “Like” us!