

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.

MRC Volunteers Participate in End Game Exercise

On May 25, 2011, the New York State Department of Health sponsored a full-scale exercise called "End Game". This exercise was designed to test and evaluate Albany County Department of Health's response plans and capabilities for a bioterrorism response. Fourteen members of our Medical Reserve Corps enthusiastically supported this drill by staffing a non-medical Point of Dispensing (POD). The use of this non-medical model was designed to test the



ability of trained non-medical volunteers and staff to conduct medical screening and dispense antibiotics. MRC volunteer, Barbara Zittel, was assigned the role of POD Manager. She oversaw the operational aspects of the POD including staff assignments, Just In Time Training and POD flow.





"End Game" was the first time Albany County Department of Health (ACDOH) tested a non-medical POD model. MRC volunteers were in a unique position to provide immediate feedback to improve the POD process. Average patient throughput was 5 minutes. Utilizing feedback from the MRC volunteers, ACDOH employees ran a second POD in the afternoon and were able to reduce throughput to 4 minutes.

Operationalizing a POD using a non-medical POD model enabled Public Health Preparedness staff to re-evaluate and reduce staffing needs in preparing for a large-scale emergencies where mass-prophylaxis may be dispensed.

Thank you to the MRC volunteers who participated in End Game!



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For More Information:
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"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!



MRC Volunteer Receives Award

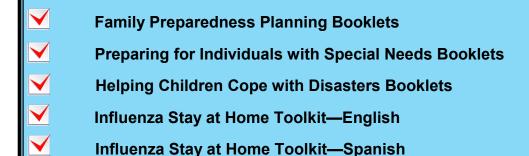
Congratulations to Bonnie Crocetta, recipient of the 2011 County Executive's Volunteer Award! Each year, Hon. Michael G. Breslin, Albany County Executive, honors dedicated volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to service. Bonnie has been a valued Medical Reserve Corps volunteer since 2006. Throughout her tenure, she has assisted with Points of Dispensing operations, seasonal flu clinics, immunizations clinics and the Albany County Special Needs Registry. Great job, Bonnie!



Bonnie Crocetti, front row, third from the right.

Free Preparedness Resources Available

The Albany County Department of Health is offering the following resources to Albany County residents, community based organizations and businesses:



✓ Influenza Say at Home Toolkit—Karen

To place an order, please complete the <u>Resource Request Form</u> or contact Sue Riedy at susan.riedy@albanycounty.com or 518-447-4590.



Training Opportunities

4 Lenses Training

Join us for the last installment of our *Cultural Competency and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Training Series*. Now that we have learned strategies on how to best serve residents of varying cultures, this training will help volunteers discover how their individual personality type influences their communication style. Learn strategies to improve interpersonal communication based upon individual strengths identified in the training.

Tuesday, September 27, 2011 Tuesday, September 27 2011

12:30 pm—3:00 pm 5:30 pm—8:30 pm

Albany County Department of Health

Albany County Department of Health

Auditorium Auditorium

Lunch will be served Dinner will be served

Registration is required. Please click <u>HERE</u> to register online or contact Sue Riedy at <u>susan.riedy@albanycounty.com</u> or 518-447-4590.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

This introductory training will provide MRC volunteers with an overview of chemical, biological and radiological weapons of mass destructions and their unique characteristics and implications for public health emergency preparedness and response.

Monday, October 17, 2011

5:30 pm—7:30 pm

Albany County Department of Health

Auditorium

Dinner will be served

Please click <u>HERE</u> to register online or contact Sue Riedy at <u>susan.riedy@albanycounty.com</u> or 518-447-4590.

New Volunteer Orientation and Point of Dispensing (POD) Training

This training will provide MRC volunteers with a brief orientation to the MRC, an introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS) and details on the County's POD plan and the roles we will ask volunteers to fill in an emergency. This training is for new and existing volunteers who have not yet attended a Point of Dispensing training.

Thursday, November 3, 2011

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Albany County Department of Health

Auditorium

Dinner will be served

Please click <u>HERE</u> to register online or contact Sue Riedy at <u>susan.riedy@albanycounty.com</u> or 518-447-4590.



Albany County Citizen Corps Unveils Volunteer Registration Website

In 2010, the Albany County Citizen Corps was tasked with creating a plan to manage Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers (SUV).

A subcommittee was convened and committee members quickly recognized the need for ongoing and collaborative recruitment efforts among its partner agencies.

Emergency Response Volunteers Needed!!

Are you ready to help your community?

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Knowing spontaneous unaffiliated volunteers will arrive unsolicited at the scene

volunteers will arrive unsolicited at the scene of a disaster, the SUV subcommittee understood the need to create a volunteer reception center (VRC) to coordinate them. There was much debate on how best to staff a traditional VRC when staffing resources are already scarce. A creative solution was needed and the idea of a virtual volunteer reception center was born.

In February 2011, the subcommittee members worked with a website development team to create the nation's first virtual volunteer reception center for emergency response volunteers. RegisteredandReady.com provides volunteers with the opportunity to register with designated response agencies before, during or after a disaster event.

Volunteers who are unsure of which emergency response organization best suits them can complete an on-line quiz to quickly determine which agency best fits their skill set, interest and time commitment. In addition, they can learn about each agency's mission, emergency assistance role, and any requirements to volunteer. The volunteer chooses an agency to affiliate with and is navigated to that agency's website where they complete the registration process. The volunteer coordinator receives notification, coordinates any required background checks and trainings and incorporates them into the emergency response.

Volunteers can also learn more about family preparedness, coping in a disaster as well as questions to consider when choosing a response organization in which to volunteer.

The Albany County Medical Reserve Corps is a proud partner agency of www.RegisteredandReady.com. Please consider sharing this website with your family, friends and co-workers.





MRC Notification Drills

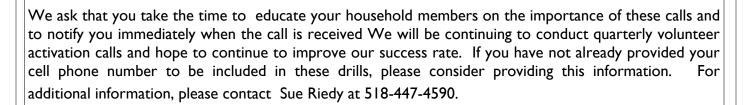
Over the past several years, the Albany County Medical Reserve Corps has conducted quarterly volunteer notification drills utilizing the Albany County Community Emergency Support System (ACCESS), a sophisticated reverse 911 technology. The purpose of these drills has been to assess volunteers' ability to respond to an emergency situation.

Despite the majority of our volunteers reporting that this is a good way to reach them, our response rates continue to be low. During our May 2011 Volunteer Notification Drill, we were only able to reach 25% of our volunteers. Out of the 25%, 10% of those who answered the call hung up before completing the response process.

ACCESS notification drills are an important communication method that we will utilize in an emergency situation. We would like all of our volunteers (and their family members who may answer the phone) to fully understand and be comfortable with this process.

The computer generated call comes from the Albany County Sheriff's Office. The message will begin.... "This is a test of the Communicator NXT notification system. Please press a key at anytime to receive an important message." Please respond by:

- Pressing any key to continue on to hear the message. The message will state, "This is a test of the Communicator NXT notification system. Had this been an actual emergency, you would have received incident specific information. Can you respond to an emergency?".
- Press I for "YES", You will be prompted to enter the number of minutes it would take you arrive at the Albany County Department of Health.
- Press 2 for "NO". You will hear a message thanking you for participating in the test.





REMINDER:

The next Volunteer Notification Drill will occur during the month of September. Please answer the CALL!