



MRC ★ In Touch

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Featured Article

Hands Across the Bay

Although the 7.0 earthquake presented to volunteers in Oakland, California for a disaster training was fictitious, the threat of an earthquake of this magnitude locally is a very real possibility. The full-scale exercise at O.co Coliseum in Oakland on May 4th and 5th was described to volunteers as a "massive 7.0 earthquake that struck along the notorious Hayward Fault" on the eastern side of the San Francisco Bay. Together, the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) and more than 200 Medical Reserve Corps volunteers (MRC) and Disaster Healthcare professionals prepared for the necessary collaboration in the event of a real earthquake or other emergency.

The exercise was designed to test the functionality of the new Deployment Operations Manual from California's Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV) program. The manual supports the deployment of professional healthcare volunteers across county lines. The MRC unit coordinators from Fremont, Oakland, Marin, and Coastside in San Mateo County helped design the exercise with California EMSA and served as team leaders and class instructors during the event.

The Bay Area was fortunate to have twelve active MRC units that were able to "answer the call" from emergency officials to deploy healthcare volunteers from communities throughout the region. Rapid communications to a wide breadth of volunteers in the midst of chaos would have been impossible without California's DHV program as a guide.

Patrick Lynch, California EMSA Disaster Medical Services Division's Response Personnel Unit Manager, states, "close cooperation between the California EMSA and all of the healthcare and emergency officials in the counties in the Bay Area enables us to mount a significant response to medical and healthcare needs that might result from an earthquake or other major incident." A well-planned and well-coordinated effort can minimize the loss of life and property and set the stage for recovery in an actual emergency.

The individual evaluation sheets, the "Hot Wash" at the conclusion of the event, and an internet survey provided important feedback to be used for revising deployment plans for future events. More than 97% of the participants expressed strong interest in participating in future similar events. The exercise demonstrated that collaboration of California EMSA and the MRC has the capacity to mobilize the energies of a large contingent of volunteers during future emergencies or disasters.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

Volunteer Management Webinar

Did you miss the July 20th webinar, "Volunteers: Vital Partners in Public Health Emergency Response"? Last month NACCHO and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services conducted a free webinar that brought together presenters from the MRC and the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP) to provide local and national perspectives on volunteer management. As funding for public health preparedness continues to dwindle, many local and state health departments count on the participation of trained and qualified volunteers to supplement their workforce. Based on audience participation the speakers addressed the most pressing concerns of volunteer management. You can listen to the webinar at

<http://www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/webinars/webinar3VVP-72012/lib/playback.html>.

Announcements

September is National Preparedness Month- Are you Ready?

NACCHO will be showcasing Preparedness resources and activities for Local Health Departments throughout the month that will help your MRC and community to plan, respond, recover and integrate during a public health emergency. These resources and activities include factsheets, issue briefs, webinars, info-graphics, stories from the field and social media interaction. If you would like a chance for your MRC Preparedness Month activities to be featured on the NACCHO Preparedness Month web site, submit your stories at

<http://www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/stories.cfm>.

Be on the lookout for details on NACCHO's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NACCHOHQ>), Twitter page (<http://twitter.com/NACCHOalerts>), publications, and web site (<http://www.naccho.org>) throughout August and September.

Year Six of MRC Capacity Building Awards

NACCHO, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (DCVMRC), is pleased to offer Capacity Building Awards (CBA) for the sixth consecutive year. The MRC CBA program is designed to help local units increase their capacity and resiliency by providing limited funding that can be used for specific projects, training, or other activities that address their needs and interests in emergency

response and/or public health activities. A two-tiered CBA award process will be offered to include a Non-Competitive Award and a Competitive Award. MRC units may apply for one or both awards.

NACCHO released the request for applications (RFA) on Thursday, August 2nd, 2012. Applications for the 2012-2013 CBA will open August 27, 2012. Applications must be completed and submitted online by September 28th, 2012 by 5:00pm EDT. Paper applications will not be accepted. NACCHO will be providing three technical assistance calls throughout September to assist MRC units in completing their CBA applications.

MRC units applying for an FY2012-13 CBA must be registered with the DCVMRC by August 27, 2012. Likewise, prospective MRC units in the process of registering must have applied for MRC registration by August 27, 2012 in order to be eligible for a CBA. Units that have previously received the CBA and/or are already listed on the DCVMRC web site do not need to register again. Unit registration information, including instructions and criteria, are located on the DCVMRC web site at <https://medicalreservecorps.gov/leaderFldr/HowToStartAnMRC>.

Please visit the NACCHO CBA web site at <http://www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/MRC/CapacityBuildingAwards.cfm> for the most current information and updates.

If you have any other questions about applying for a CBA, email mrc@naccho.org.

Submit Your Abstracts for the 2013 Public Health Preparedness Summit

The 2013 Public Health Preparedness Summit Planning Committee invites you to present at the nation's largest gathering of public health preparedness professionals. The Public Health Preparedness Summit offers an opportunity for you to showcase your best practice training models, tools, or other important resources that illustrate proven results in building and sustaining public health preparedness at the local, state, tribal, or national level. Abstracts must be submitted by Friday, August 31, 2012 at 11:59 PM, EDT.

Go to the Public Health Preparedness Summit web site at <http://www.phprep.org/agenda/> to learn more about submitting an abstract.

HHS Announces Grant Awards for PHEP and HPP

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has issued a press release that outlines its awards of more than \$971 million to continue improving preparedness and health outcomes for a wide range of public health threats within every state, eight U.S. territories, and four of the nation's largest metropolitan areas.

To read the HHS press release that outlines the official Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) and Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) grant awards, please visit <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2012pres/06/20120702a.html>.

Don't Spoil Your Summer Picnic Season

Corn on the cob, potato salad and hamburgers are all part of a delicious menu at summer BBQs and cookouts. However, these familiar favorites can turn deadly in the summer heat. Food-related diseases are preventable, yet affect millions and kill thousands each year. Read how to protect you and your family from food-borne illness this summer with the FDA's, "Eating Outdoors, Food Facts" education document.

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/UCM239489.pdf>

To submit information for either MRC: In Touch or MRC: In Focus, please contact Stacy Hosler at shosler@naccho.org or (202)507-4197.



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