



MRC ★ In Touch

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PHRC Participates in Earthquake Drill with the Red Cross

In July, the Public Health Reserve Corps (PHRC) of Seattle and King County (WA) participated in a full-functional earthquake drill with the American Red Cross. The scenario included a 6.8 magnitude earthquake along the Seattle Fault, part of the "Sound Shake" exercise series that occurs multiple times a year in the Puget Sound.

MRC participants included seven registered nurses, two emergency medical technicians, two AmeriCorps members, and MRC unit coordinator, Dave Nichols.

The victims of the earthquake were sent to two different shelters—one was located at the south end of the county, and the other in the middle of the county. On day two of the drill, the MRC unit deployed to one of the shelters.

Roles of MRC Volunteers

At the shelter, the MRC volunteers checked-in and were assigned roles. The MRC unit operated in support of the Red Cross Health Services at the shelter and treated patients in need of medical care. Nichols said after briefing volunteers, that he stepped back and "they [volunteers] worked among themselves and elected" a leader who helped volunteers function as a team. Nichols says his unit was prepared to function as a team by using the principles they learned in IS 100h and 700. Nichols says it was "very heartening to watch this group kick into action as they treated victims with heat exhaustion, crush injuries, and engage with victims who were experiencing alcohol withdrawal and a lack of medication." In the afternoon, the MRC volunteers managed the medical aspects of the shelter on their own continuing to provide medical care to victims.

How the MRC Got Involved with the Exercise

The PHRC does not have a formal agreement with the Red Cross; however, both organizations are familiar with each other and operate on a handshake agreement. The Sound Shake exercise was the first operation between both parties. Nichols is a former

Assistant Director of the American Red Cross and prior to becoming the MRC unit coordinator, he and others at the Red Cross worked to integrate the MRC into Red Cross shelter operations in support of the Green River flood.

Successes and Challenges

Both the success and challenge of the drill was the act of volunteers working together. MRC volunteers reflected that the Red Cross and MRC volunteers interacted respectfully and everyone was helpful toward one another during the exercise. The MRC will have a follow-up meeting with the Red Cross to build procedures and policies to work together in the future. The Sound Shake exercise helped other MRC units in the state follow in similar footsteps to begin conversations with the Red Cross. In addition, volunteers were given real world scenarios that helped them work through such challenges as where to get water, food, and additional supplies.

Additional Information

1. In order to watch a video of the exercise, please visit <http://soundshake2010.com/blog/index.php>. Nichols speaks about the drill at approximately 13 minutes into the video.
2. To learn more about the multi-year Sound Shake event, visit <http://soundshake2010.com>.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

Gulf Oil Spill Disaster Response

NACCHO has recently created a "Gulf Oil Spill Disaster Response" webpage. This webpage contains information and resources for local health departments (LHDs) about the Gulf Oil Spill Disaster Response from federal, state, and local partners.

For information about the latest and up-to-date news, information, resources, and upcoming events related to the Gulf Oil Spill disaster, visit <http://www.naccho.org/topics/environmental/gulfdisaster/index.cfm>.

Announcements

2010–2011 Capacity Building Awards Available

The Office of the Surgeon General, the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (OCVMRC) and the National

Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) are pleased to announce the availability of Capacity Building Awards (CBAs) for the 2010-2011 funding year.

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

Register Today for the 2011 Public Health Preparedness Summit

The 2011 Public Health Preparedness Summit will be held in Atlanta February 22-25, 2011.

Register early to save money for the 2011 Public Health Preparedness Summit! Register today at <http://www.phprep.org/2011/register/>.

To learn more about why you should attend the 2011 Summit, visit <http://www.phprep.org>.

2010 National Health Security Biennial Implementation Plan

To read and comment on the draft of the 2010 National Health Security Strategy Biennial Implementation Plan, please visit <http://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/authority/nhss/comments/Pages/default.aspx>.

MRC Lessons Learned and Experience-Sharing

"MRC lessons learned and experience sharing" is a way for MRC units to share their practices, examples, and success stories. It is designed to highlight the challenges and successes of MRC units' involvement with emergency preparedness, response, and public health activities; therefore, MRC units and their leaders can learn from one another. To submit a story, visit the below link.

<http://www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/MRC/resources/mrcshare.cfm>



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