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MRC ★ In Touch

In This Issue:

Featured Article

MRC/NACCHO
Connections

Announcements

CALENDAR



February—American Heart
Month

LINKS

MRC

NACCHO

Featured Article

The SMART MRC Prepares for a Zombie Apocalypse

The SMART MRC (Support and Medical Alert Response Team) in Abilene, TX distributed emergency planning information at the Buffalo Gap Zombie Run and Survival Fest on December 1, 2012. The event was designed to reach a younger audience to highlight the importance of preparing for emergency situations.

Event organizers contacted the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to request preparedness expertise at the event, and the DSHS engaged the Abilene-Taylor County Public Health District, housing organization for the greater Abilene area's SMART MRC. The SMART MRC and the Abilene-Taylor County Public Health District were excited to be involved in an event that promoted the public health preparedness message in a new way.

Nearly 450 individuals from the Abilene area participated in the Zombie Run, and dodged zombies on the course. Once runners completed the course and received "I Survived" or "Zombies Ate My Brain" gear, attendees celebrated their survival or mourned their fictional demise at the Survival Fest.

At the festival, the SMART MRC handed out literature on emergency preparedness planning, Ready Texas emergency kits, immunization coloring books for children, and information on Abilene-Taylor County Public Health District Services, influenza vaccinations and West Nile prevention. Approximately 750 participants from the Abilene area attended the Survival Fest.

Presenting at the Zombie Run allowed the SMART MRC to reach a new audience since the event attracted many single adults and young families from smaller communities outside of Abilene. The SMART MRC also distributed unit information and posted signs to recruit new volunteers. They are looking forward to participating again next year to educate new zombie victims and survivors.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

What Does Your MRC Unit Look Like?

The upcoming Network Profile Survey is your opportunity to share an in-depth picture of your MRC unit! The Network Profile Survey of the MRC will launch April 1. The profile survey continues the efforts of the DCVMRC and NACCHO to provide a complete and accurate picture of the MRC volunteer network across the nation. It is designed to present the most up-to-date and complete information about the people, resources, and activities of the MRC national network. Since the profile survey is the only source for much of this information, your participation is essential.

Each unit leader will receive an email invitation to participate in the survey, and responses will be due by May 15. Be sure to share your information so that the DCVMRC and NACCHO can take your responses into consideration to improve the MRC network. Please update your unit's profile on the DCVMRC website to ensure that all current unit leaders receive the email invite. Following the profile survey, the information will be compiled into a longer report that will highlight the strengths and needs of the MRC. Emerging themes from the profile survey will shape future funding and the strategic direction of the MRC in years to come, and can enhance the operations of your MRC unit at the local level!

Now is a great time to start thinking about the key demographic information of your unit and examples of exceptional service to your community. Units that exemplify excellence in a particular area will be featured in the final report.

Announcements

The 2013 Public Health Preparedness Summit is Almost Here!

Join us in Atlanta March 12-15 for the 2013 Public Health Preparedness Summit! Several interactive and sharing sessions will highlight the MRC's role in pandemic surge planning, rural communities, building community resiliency, volunteer readiness and management, and strategic planning. For more details on the Summit, visit <http://www.phrep.org>.

Building Partnerships before a Disaster Strikes

This issue brief provides emergency management personnel with practical information to build and strengthen partnerships prior to crises. The brief also features the Corpus Christi-Nueces County MRC's Intentional Food Contamination Tabletop Exercise as an example of developing effective early partnerships. View the issue brief [here](#).

Feb. 28 Webinar: Federally Qualified Health Centers and

Public Health Emergencies: Opportunities and Challenges for Collaboration with State and Local Public Health

This webinar will provide a brief overview of the functioning of federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), highlight collaborative efforts between health departments and FQHCs, and explore opportunities for future partnerships between public health and FQHCs. The webinar will take place from 1PM – 2PM EST on Feb. 28. Join the meeting [here](#).

To submit information for either MRC: In Touch or MRC: In Focus, please contact Alyson Jordan at ajordan@naccho.org or (202) 783-5528.



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