



# MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

---

November 2013

[www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)

---

## Featured Article

---

### California MRC Units Participate in the 2013 Golden Guardian Exercise

From August 21 – 23, 88 volunteers from 11 California MRC units and two County Disaster Healthcare Volunteer units participated in the 2013 Golden Guardian Exercise. This three-day annual training and exercise, sponsored by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, took place at Moffett Airfield in Mountain View, CA to train medical response teams for a catastrophic earthquake as part of the Northern California Bay Area Catastrophic Earthquake Plan. The California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) organized the event in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Emergency Medical Services. More than 250 participants, including medical professionals, students, and trained disaster responders, joined in the exercise.

The exercise tested the capabilities of MRC and ESAR-VHP volunteers to staff and operate an alternate care site using principles of the Incident Command System (ICS). While many of the MRC and ESAR-VHP volunteers had never worked together before, they integrated well as one team. Standardized training throughout the state of California has allowed all volunteers to feel comfortable working with ICS.

"This is as realistic as you can get in training," said Dr. Howard Backer, EMSA Director. "Although we plan for disaster response year-round, there is no substitute for putting medical personnel and equipment into action in a full-scale exercise with a realistic scenario to ensure readiness."

Participants learned valuable skills from the training and exercise. The Golden Guardian exercise also allowed EMSA to review and make improvements to its disaster emergency response plan. All of the organizations involved were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to discover other organizations that could complement some of their shortfalls. The event reminded everyone that they share the common goal of making their communities a healthier place for all.

## MRC/NACCHO Connections

---

### Getting More Exposure for Your MRC Unit

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September 2013, NACCHO conducted a digital media campaign in select markets across the U.S. to encourage residents to volunteer with the MRC. The campaign included radio interviews with MRC unit leaders and online advertising on Google, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Some unit leaders in the metropolitan areas of Detroit, Louisville, KY, Houston, San Francisco, and Portland, OR were asked to participate in radio interviews with their local radio stations to discuss National Preparedness Month and how to get involved with the MRC.

NACCHO is happy to report that at the conclusion of the campaign on Sept. 30, traffic to the [www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov) website had increased by 1,187% and many units in the targeted markets reported an increase in the number of volunteer signups. For example, one unit leader involved in the campaign, Lunetta Sims, Volunteer and MRC Coordinator from Harris County Gateway to Care MRC (TX), shared how her MRC volunteers have grown since the campaign: "My numbers are increasing every week. I have orientated 104 people to the MRC since the [radio] interview... I've had an additional 2-4 people signing up on the website each week. I have to attribute this to the advertising and word-of-mouth." Results from the campaign show that many more people are hearing about the MRC!

While NACCHO's Preparedness Month campaign was conducted on a large scale across several markets, MRC units can conduct similar outreach efforts on a smaller scale. NACCHO has images of the ads used during the campaign for your reference to reach similar groups of [medical professionals](#), [students](#), and the [general public](#). As a reminder, this one-minute MRC [video](#) is available for all MRC units to use for volunteer recruitment. This video

can be added to your website and social networking sites. You can also send the video to your local television and radio stations to be played as part of their public service rotation.

Thank you to all of the MRC unit leaders whose participation helped to make this campaign a success!

## Announcements

---

### Call for Applications: National Leadership Academy for the Public's Health

Applications are now open for the National Leadership Academy for the Public's Health (NLAPH). NLAPH offers an innovative approach to leadership development that brings together teams of leaders from multiple sectors to advance their leadership skills, build stronger collaborations, and move towards health equity in their communities. MRC volunteers can develop advanced leadership skills through blended learning, including a series of webinars, a national retreat, coaching support from national experts, and peer networking. The academy concludes with an applied health leadership project aiming to improve population health. [Apply](#) by Nov. 26 at 5:00PM EST.

### Registration is Now Open for the 2014 Preparedness Summit

NACCHO, a lead partner in the 2014 Preparedness Summit, is inviting MRC unit leaders and volunteers to reserve their spots at the 2014 Preparedness Summit and register now. The Preparedness Summit is the premier national conference in the field of public health preparedness and is organized by leading public health, healthcare, and emergency management organizations, including NACCHO and the DCVMRC. The four-day annual event brings together approximately 1,800 attendees from all levels of government (local, state, and federal) and professionals working in emergency management, volunteer organizations, and healthcare coalitions. This year's Summit will take place April 1-4, 2014 in Atlanta. The theme is "Stronger Together: Aligning Public Health and Healthcare Preparedness Capabilities to Protect Our Communities." The Summit offers exciting learning opportunities that are valuable to all MRC units. Register now at [www.preparednesssummit.org](http://www.preparednesssummit.org).

### Seasonal and Pandemic Influenza Vaccination Assessment Toolkit

As flu season gets underway, review the [Seasonal and Pandemic Influenza Vaccination Assessment Toolkit](#) for resources for conducting annual community assessments related to flu vaccine beliefs and behaviors. The San Francisco Bay Area Advanced Practice Center developed these tools to aid in establishing services for hard-to-reach populations, maintaining partnerships with clinical providers, and developing effective emergency preparedness communications. Use the toolkit now to assess your community's perceptions about influenza risk and vaccines. As a reminder, National Influenza Vaccination Week is Dec. 8-14!



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local public health departments.

1100 17th St, NW, 7th Floor Washington, DC 20036  
P 202-783-5550 F 202-783-1583

© National Association of County and City Health Officials

Please contact Alyson Jordan, NACCHO's MRC Communications Specialist, with any questions or suggestions for the newsletter at 202-783-5528 or at [ajordan@naccho.org](mailto:ajordan@naccho.org).