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July 2015

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## Featured Article

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### Harris County Gateway to Care MRC Responds After Historic Flooding

In May 2015, Texas was hit with a record amount of rainfall, causing an estimated \$10 million in damage and displacing many area residents. The Harris County Gateway to Care MRC works with organizations across the Houston area to prepare for and manage emergencies. Naturally, the MRC unit stepped in to assist with these recovery efforts.

The MRC's volunteers went above and beyond in helping with the recovery efforts. Several volunteers worked with emergency responders to rescue residents trapped in their cars on flooded roads. The MRC volunteers trains with the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to increase disaster and emergency response skills.

MRC volunteers were assigned to three different shelters in the area. They assisted shelter clients who were displaced from their homes with basic triage and case management. They volunteered more than 250 hours of their time staffing them. The shelters served nearly 200 clients who needed resources or housing during the flooding. They also partnered with a local grocery store to distribute supplies to area shelters using donated gift cards. Lastly, MRC volunteers worked with a local synagogue's members who needed help repairing damages in their homes and mental health services. MRC chaplains were also on call to provide psychological first aid.

The MRC's presence was clearly felt in the Houston area after these devastating floods. Their unit was able to provide essential services to their community and continue developing powerful partnerships. The MRC showed its capability and flexibility when responding to a natural disaster.

## MRC/NACCHO Connections

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### New Resources for MRC Core Competencies on MRC-TRAIN

In June, NACCHO, in collaboration with the DCVMRC, launched a National MRC Training Plan and the integration of the new MRC Volunteer Core Competencies into MRC-TRAIN. The National Training Plan in MRC-TRAIN is an online version of the [NACCHO-MRC Training Plan](#) released in April. It will allow MRC-TRAIN users to select courses based on the DMPH Competency and Learning Path they choose and track their progress.

In addition to the training plan, NACCHO produced and released four new eLearning modules related to the new MRC Volunteer Core Competencies. The first course, "[MRC Volunteer Core Competencies: An Introduction and Overview](#)", reviews the background of the MRC Core Competencies and its evolution to the adoption of the DMPH Competency Set. It also describes the Learning Paths and MRC Performance Qualification for each of the new competencies. This is an ideal course for unit leaders and volunteers. The other three courses are part of a blended learning series called "[Managing for Results](#)". The three courses cover leading and managing an MRC, strategic planning, and evaluation methods respectively. The content for this series was provided by the Marin Medical Reserve Corps Foundation.

If you are new to MRC-TRAIN or need a refresher course, please reference [MRC-TRAIN 101 for Volunteers](#). Look for more exciting resources to come around the new MRC Volunteer Core Competencies.

## Announcements

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### Share Photos of Your MRC Unit in Action!

NACCHO is currently developing the next installment of the 2013 Network Profile of the MRC. This updated 2015 report will again feature units from around the country providing public health, preparedness, and response activities to their local communities. We would love to feature pictures of your unit in action! If you have great photos of your unit's activities from the past few years, send them to [mhodge@naccho.org](mailto:mhodge@naccho.org). Take a look at the 2013 profile for the types of photos we featured. View the [2013 Network Profile of the MRC](#).

Before you send your photos to NACCHO, please ensure all volunteers featured in the photos have signed a photo release form or given permission to you to share them with us. If you have any question, please let us know.

### How Local Health Departments Can Use "Flu Near You"

In this [blog post](#) on the Preparedness Brief Blog, read how the Person County Health Department (NC) is using the Flu Near You platform and get tips for how local health departments and MRC units can promote the benefits of Flu Near You in their communities. Flu Near You is an online health reporting system where thousands of volunteers answer a brief, weekly digital questionnaire about their health to benefit their community's flu awareness and tracking.

Want to get involved with Flu Near You? Sign up today at <https://flunearyou.org/> and encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to do the same. If your local health department is interested in or already using Flu Near You data for local influenza surveillance efforts, email [infectiousdiseases@naccho.org](mailto:infectiousdiseases@naccho.org).

### MRC Units Celebrate National Safety Month

In honor of [National Safety Month](#) this June, MRC units across the country continued to honor their mission by holding events dedicated to promoting community safety. National Safety Month focuses on reducing leading causes of injury and death at work, on the road, and in our homes and communities. This year, National Safety Month highlighted the important topics of prescription painkiller abuse, transportation safety, ergonomics, emergency preparedness, and slips, trips, and falls. Unit leaders shared how their volunteers are participating in National Safety Month using the [MRC Connect](#) application.

Read about the [MRC unit activities](#) for National Safety Month. Visit the [National Safety Council website](#) for free resources.



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

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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).