



September 2015

www.medicalreservecorps.gov

Featured Article

New Orleans MRC Commemorates Hurricane Katrina

On August 29, the city of New Orleans commemorated the 10th anniversary of the landfall of Hurricane Katrina. In 2005, the storm ravaged the city, leaving 80 percent of it underwater. The city government worked with community partners to plan a citywide day of service, in order to give back to the longtime city residents. Their goal was to have 10,000 volunteers participate, the same number of volunteers who came to New Orleans to assist with the recovery process in 2005. The day of the event, even more than that showed up.

The New Orleans MRC, along with many other community organizations, participated in the planning process. They helped organize cleanup events in six neighborhoods across the city. Volunteers cleaned up trash, planted trees, and repainted schools. A park in each neighborhood functioned as the meetup place for all volunteers. The MRC volunteers staffed first aid tents in each of the parks. MRC and EMS volunteers worked together to run the first aid stations. They assisted more than 100 people, providing sunscreen, band aids, bug spray, and ice packs. Two patients were treated for heat exhaustion.

After the day of service, the city hosted a Resilience Festival, celebrating the city's residents. The thousands of volunteers were given tickets to attend events and parties across the city. Giving back to the people of New Orleans on the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina was important to the local unit. While the New Orleans unit hadn't been created when the storm hit, MRC volunteers from across the country flocked to Louisiana to assist in recovery efforts. In addition to helping out with the anniversary event, the New Orleans MRC works tirelessly to prepare the area for future hurricanes. In the past year, they've created hurricane readiness materials in multiple languages to reach underserved populations, distributed 23,000 brochures, trained 103 community partners, and reached more than 1,200 households. The MRC is doing their part to make sure New Orleans is equipped to react quickly in the event of another major weather event.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

Participate in NACCHO's Preparedness Month Activities!

Each September, preparedness efforts and activities are highlighted and encouraged through National Preparedness Month. This year, the CDC's Preparedness Month 2015 theme is "Prepare for Everywhere." Each week of the month focuses on communities of preparedness, building from the micro-level of preparedness actions in the family setting to the macro-level of preparedness activities that help ensure global health security.

This year, MRC Connect users can take the Preparedness Month Challenge! Each Tuesday, a new preparedness-related task will be unlocked. Users who complete all tasks will receive a Preparedness Badge. Their unit will also be featured on NACCHO's [Preparedness Brief Blog](#).

NACCHO is joining Preparedness Month efforts, by creating a Preparedness Pledge campaign where local health departments are able to commit to conducting activities that promote preparedness. MRC volunteers can take the

NACCHO Preparedness Pledge by filling out a short survey to document the activities their health department will do as part of Preparedness Month. [Learn more about the pledge.](#)

Announcements

The 2015 Network Profile of the MRC is Almost Here!

Did you know that 93 percent of units offer in-person CPR/first aid/automated external defibrillator (AED) training? Don't miss out on these and other fascinating statistics about the MRC network, which will be available in the 2015 Network Profile of the Medical Reserve Corps report.

The Network Profile report will be ready for release this fall. To ensure that you receive your printed copy of the report, verify your contact information on the DCVMRC's website. Please be sure that the mailing address in your unit profile is up to date.

Stay tuned to the MRC listserv for more information about the release of the report. In the meantime, view the [2013 MRC Network Profile](#).

Submit an Abstract for the 2016 Preparedness Summit

Abstract submission for the [2016 Preparedness Summit](#) is now open. This year's Summit will explore the theme, "Planning Today for Rebuilding Tomorrow: Focusing on Resiliency and Recovery in the 21st Century." Abstracts are encouraged on subjects such as:

- Building and sustaining resilient communities
- Effectively using, producing, and disseminating medical countermeasures and nonpharmaceutical interventions
- Ensuring situational awareness to support decision making, data management, and information sharing
- Enhancing the integration of public health, healthcare, and emergency management systems
- Strengthening global health security

The Summit is the premier national conference in the field of public health and healthcare preparedness, delivering cross-disciplinary opportunities to share new research and practices with nearly 1,700 colleagues from across the nation. Last year, more than seven MRC volunteers presented at the Summit. This year's Summit will take place April 19–22, 2016 at the Dallas Hilton Anatole. Abstracts are open now through September 30, during National Preparedness Month. [Start an abstract today.](#)

Sign Up for Flu Near You!

The 2015-2016 flu season is quickly approaching. Local health departments can start to prepare for this year's flu season by registering for the [Flu Near You](#) platform. Through Flu Near You, thousands of volunteers answer a brief, weekly digital questionnaire about their health to benefit their community's flu awareness and tracking.

NACCHO is working with the Skoll Global Threats Fund to explore how local health departments and volunteer groups can work with people in their communities to enroll them in Flu Near You and how to leverage the data as part of ongoing local influenza surveillance efforts. With more people enrolled in Flu Near You, the aggregate data can outline regional flu trends more accurately and complement existing public health surveillance systems.

Want to get involved with Flu Near You? Sign up today at <https://flunearyou.org/> and encourage your friends, family, and fellow volunteers to do the same. If your MRC unit is interested in or already using Flu Near You data for local influenza surveillance efforts, email infectiousdiseases@naccho.org.



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.

1201 Eye Street, NW, 4th Floor Washington, DC 20005

P 202-783-5550 F 202-783-1583

© National Association of County and City Health Officials

with any questions or suggestions for the newsletter at 202-783-5528 or at ajordan@naccho.org.