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Madison County
Health Department

Medical Reserve Corps

101 East Edwardsville Road

Wood River, Illinois 62095

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MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

IL PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Ian D. McVey, AmeriCorps Member

The Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) held their sixty-ninth Annual Meeting and Legislative Action Day on March 9th and 10th in Springfield, Illinois. The conference had several goals, but the primary goal, according to the IPHA, was to: "highlight current legislation and public policy that are important to the public health profession and the communities they represent".

The conference had many different possible sessions to attend, depending on one's interests and areas of expertise. There were pre-conference meetings about Environmental Health, HIV/AIDS Prevention, and Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. I attended the pre-conference meeting on Environmental Health, which detailed how most hospitals had reduced their dioxin production by shutting down their in-house incinerators. The second morning of the conference was dominated by various presentations on the dire fiscal situation in Illinois, and the effects this fiscal situation would have on public health spending in the state. Most of those in attendance hoped that public health budgets would at least be maintained at their current levels, so that the programs that help protect those Illinois residents most at risk would be protected. The afternoon was focused on the federal health care debate, followed by a march to the state Capitol with the mission of providing information to various state legislators on the importance of public health spending in Illinois.

The conference was informative and provided a great deal of information about the current state of public health in Illinois.



RECALL TEST

ACTIVITIES

A test of the MRC Emergency Recall System was conducted February 2—5, 2010. At that time, we had 158 volunteers. We were only able to contact a total of 114 of our volunteers (72%) because we found that we did not have correct or complete information for all our volunteers. Would you, please, be so kind as to email or call Cathy (cmpaone@co.madison.il.us 296-6096) or Ian (idmcvey@co.madison.il.us 296-6095) and let us know if your email, home, cell, or work phone number, or emergency contact information has recently changed. Thank you so very much for all your help!



FAMILY NIGHT AT ORIENTATION

Eight volunteers attended the Orientation Training session held at the Madison County Health Department on March 1, 2010. It was so nice to be able to meet new and long-standing volunteers. We hope to see more volunteers at our next session which we hope to schedule late summer/early fall.



DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Ian McVey, AmeriCorps Member, participated in the Collinsville Middle School Health Fair on March 23, 2010. Over 600 students were in attendance. His presentation focused on Disaster Preparedness as it relates to tornadoes and earthquakes. Family Preparedness packets were distributed.



UNIT TRAINING

On March 22, 2010, Public Health Emergency Response Coordinator, Debra Tscheschlok, MRC Volunteer Coordinator, Cathy Paone, and AmeriCorps Member, Ian McVey, attended a Mobile Emergency Events Management System and Asset Manager Training session along with several other agencies in the metro-East area. This updated system not only allows us to badge our volunteers and manage and track assets during normal operation but also badge and track volunteers and assets during public health emergencies resulting in a more effective response. Funding for the unit was provided through the membership in the St. Louis Area Regional Response System (STARRS).

ILLINOIS HELPS—ILLINOIS' ESAR-VHP

Debra M. Tscheschlok, R.N., B.S.N.

There is a national move to get MRC volunteers to register in advance in a database that has the capability to check credentials and backgrounds in a quick and more in depth manner than locals can. The state government then absorbs the cost of these background checks. In Illinois this system is called **Illinois Helps**, The Illinois Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals. This system not only allows efficient background checks but also allows for you to have the opportunity to be called to duty not only locally but statewide and perhaps nationally if you so choose. Please note that if you choose to be called out to assist anyone beyond this health department you will be under a different Director and volunteer system perhaps with different legal protections and training requirements.

Registering in **Illinois Helps** also allows for you to stay as a local volunteer just as you are now, it is your choice totally, being in the system does not obligate you to anything. The idea behind all of this is the notion that an effective response requires that volunteers be pre-credentialed and deployed through a coordinated effort.

Illinois Helps states that by registering with them “you can be a part of an alert system and respond if available, when activated, to a significant disaster or public health emergency. Once you have registered to become a volunteer, your professional credentials will be verified and this information will become part of the statewide secure database. **Illinois Helps** may only be activated by the Commissioner, Chicago Department of Public Health or the Director, Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) or their designees in the event of an emergency. Healthcare volunteers registered with **Illinois**

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***“When time is
your greatest
enemy, a large
cadre of trained
volunteers can
be your
greatest ally”***

***NACCHO SNS
and the MRC
Poster***

RECRUITMENT

Our Medical Reserve Corps unit's long-range goal is 500 well trained volunteers functioning effectively under the Incident Command System in order to maximize community health during a public health emergency. We now have 160 volunteers. Existing volunteers are the best recruiters!!! If you know anyone who would like to be an MRC volunteer, have them visit www.madisonchd.org and click on the Public Health Emergency Response link.

ILLINOIS HELPS (cont)

Helps are under no obligation to respond to an event."

Madison County Health Department encourages you to register in the **Illinois Helps** system (medical and non-medical professions) but does not require it to be a Madison County MRC volunteer. To register go to www.illinoishelps.com which will provide you with a brief overview of the program and direct you to a site that tells you what information you will need, e.g. credentials, professional license, prior to beginning the **Illinois Helps** registration process. Please read the enclosed flyer for additional information. Thank you so much for your volunteer efforts and support of our MRC unit.

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