

January-April 2008

**Special points of interest:**

- Exercise at Lewis and Clark Community College
- Preparing for floods
- Earthquake
- Health Department contact information



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# MRC VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

March 18, 2008 Exercise at Lewis and Clark College

By Debra Tscheschlok, Public Health Emergency Response

The health department held a disaster exercise/drill at Lewis and Clark College. The disaster/event that was being SIMULATED in the drill was an anthrax release at the St Patrick's Day parade in St Louis. Those Madison County citizens who were at the parade and affected had been asked via the media (all simulated) to report to our clinic site to receive medication that could prevent the disease from occurring. In the simulation the MRC unit personnel was mobilized to report to the clinic site to assist with the response. It is the first time

the health department attempted to test this area of response and much was learned from the simulation and practice.

**Lesson's Learned:**

One thing I learned is I need to do a better job in helping volunteers understand that exercises inherently add false injects into the event that would not occur in a real event. For example we gave the preventative simulated medication to people with special needs and since we never have enough people to

practice we had them go thru the clinic several times, the going back around was a problem for them and the directions were not laid out well to go back around but that would never been a problem in a real event for they would only go through the clinic once in a given day. Another example is in a real event we would have thousands of people lined up and thus we would need more dispensing lanes, require a large number of staff in every area, be it finance, planning, special needs, etc. Continue on page 3



## FLOOD PREPARATION: ARE YOU READY?

By: Katelyn Nonn

Floods are one of the most common hazards in the United States. Natural occurrences, such as hurricanes, weather systems, and snowmelt can cause floods. Failure of levees and dams and inadequate drainage in urban areas can also result in flooding. On average, floods kill about 140 people each year and cause \$6 billion in property damage (usgs.gov). With the Midwest weather at full force, business's, homes, and communities need to be prepared for any weather emergency.

Before you can begin to be prepared for a flood, you must know the flood terms. If possible please tune into a weather radio, commercial radio, or television to get flood updates at anytime time during a watch or warning.

**Flood Watch:** Flooding is possible. Be aware that flash flooding can occur. If the conditions seem to be worse, move to higher grounds immediately. You do not have to wait for instructions to move.

**Flash Flood Watch:** Flash flooding is possible. Be prepared to take action.

**Flood Warning:** Flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately! If you have time, bring in outdoor furniture and move essential items to an upper floor. If instructed to do so, turn off utilities at the main switch and disconnect electrical appliances.

**Flash Flood Warning:** A flash flood is occurring; seek higher ground on foot immediately.

During a time where flooding is occurring, DO NOT walk through moving water if you do not have to! 6 inches of moving water can make you fall. If you do have to walk through water, use a stick or a long object to check how deep the water is and if the ground is firm enough to walk on. DO NOT drive into flooded areas. You and your vehicle can be quickly swept away. DO NOT touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

After a flood, be sure to listen to television or radio for further flood instructions. The media will let you know when it is safe to return home and any information needed that is applicable. All the information in this article can be found at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)



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**Do not walk through  
moving water if you  
don't have to!**



## March Exercise Continued

You could even end up running an area that relates to your expertise, that is a likely scenario. However, it is very important that you understand you could be assigned to do any of the tasks needed to run a large dispensing operation. If you are physically unable to do that task, please tell the person that you immediately report to so they can set up reassignment via the chain of command. In a real event, it becomes all about the mission, which is ultimately to save as many lives as possible. Every job then becomes extremely important for that whole system to function. I was at a training once on preparedness and was told that the following, which holds so true, "If your job is too keep that coffee pot full, then be the best darn coffee maker you can be." That means all of us that are responding need to be prepared to do whatever task is assigned to us and do it well. We never want to waste anyone's expertise, but we need all kinds of jobs to be done and if one area has what it needs, then another area needs to get filled.

We learned also that the staff needs to be taught what to do to get the volunteer moved to a better area for them if they are needed there, but that is what the exercise was all about and that was to see those weaknesses and try to fix them. Every time we exercise, we learn more about how to make it better and better. It will be chaos, no matter how we try to prepare. The best we can do is to keep the situation under control, remain calm, focused on the mission, following the chain of commands. By the way, once you get assigned, you need to know who you report to. While you are working, just that one position name, the person's name is no matter for that could change. That one position above you is who you go to with an issue, and that person then should know the one position they report to with an issue and so on, via this method, we can keep those communications going. It is a tedious way, sometimes to communicate, but in chaos, it is a proven way to keep all along the chain correctly informed.

In the end, with mission focus in mind, we almost tripled our number of people we put through the line per hour, which translates to lives saved. We could have done even better if we would have had enough people to go through the lines to push us. Not having enough victims affects our counts, another false inject, inherent in exercises.

I hope this makes sense to you. You may call me with any questions at 1-618-296-6080 or if you worked the day of the exercise and you wish to give me more insight into how it was for you, then email me at [dmtscheschlok@co.madison.il.us](mailto:dmtscheschlok@co.madison.il.us). Next time, I will see that you get invited to the hot wash, which is where we discuss the exercise after the event, another lesson learned for me.

Lastly, I wish to sincerely thank every volunteer that worked with us that day. We could not improve without you, and we will not be able to function without you. I truly appreciate what you do for your community.



## MADISON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

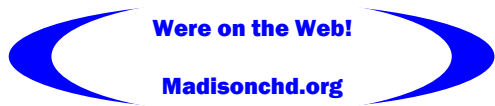
101 E. Edwardsville Road  
Wood River, Illinois 62095

Phone: 618-296-6080

Fax: 618-296-7057

E-mail:

[dmtscheschlok@co.madison.il.us](mailto:dmtscheschlok@co.madison.il.us)



## CPR Training

The Madison County Medical Reserve Corps unit is hosting a CPR training on Tuesday May 27th at 6:00 p.m. at the Health Department in Wood River. There are a couple of openings available to those who are interested in participating. The class that is being offered is the Basic Life Support: Adult CPR/Automated External Defibrillator training. If anyone is interested please call or email me at

[kenonn@co.madison.il.us](mailto:kenonn@co.madison.il.us) or 618-296-6096.

Thank you so much and I hope to hear from you!



## Earthquake in Madison County?

Early in the morning on April 18th, an event happened that took everyone by surprise. An earthquake measured at a 5.2 magnitude hit the Midwest! Even though people have been taught to prepare for earthquakes, many people do not take the reality of an earthquake occurring into consideration. Now that people are aware that an earthquake can and will happen again, its time to review what to do during an earthquake.



### During an earthquake

- \* If indoors, stay there and take cover under a table, desk or other sturdy furniture
- \* Face away from windows and glass doors
- \* Doorways without doors are acceptable to stand in
- \* Lie, kneel or sit near a structurally sound interior wall or corner away from windows, brick fireplaces, glass-walls, etc
- \* Cover your head
- \* Remain where you are until shaking stops
- \* Make sure your family knows exit routes and a meeting place so you can make sure everyone is safe after an earthquake
- \* If outside, get into an open area away from trees buildings, walls and power lines
- \* If driving, stop safely as soon as possible. Stay inside your vehicle until the shaking stops. Do not stop under overpasses or bridges
- \* Stay below window level in your vehicle and turn off the engine and turn on the radio so you can follow emergency instructions