

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS VOLUNTEER BULLETIN

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Regional Annual Training Dinner to Feature Red Cross Sheltering Workshop

This year Region 1 MRC's annual training dinner will feature a Red Cross Sheltering Workshop presented by the Connecticut Chapter of the American Red Cross. The event will be held on Thursday, June 10th at 5:30 p.m. at the Fairfield Senior Center at 100 Mona Terrace in Fairfield. All volunteers who attend will earn a certificate of completion for Red Cross Sheltering. A buffet dinner will be served promptly at 5:30. **If you plan on attending and have not yet responded, please RSVP by emailing mrc@townofstratford.com or calling the Stratford Health Department 203-385-4090.**

Flu Clinic Volunteers Honored at Banquet Meeting



On May 13th over 30 MRC and flu clinic volunteers attended a dinner and meeting to honor their dedication and service at both our seasonal and H1N1 flu clinics. The dinner meeting was held at Stanziale's Restaurant in Stratford. At the meeting Stratford's Mayor, John Harkins, reflected on the importance of volunteering one's time and talent, stating that communities could not function without the dedication of volunteers. All volunteers received certificates of appreciation and H1N1 hero pins. Those who volunteered over ten hours also received a special decorative coin. **If you volunteered at either a seasonal or H1N1 clinic and did not attend the dinner, please call us at 203-385-4090 or email mrc@townofstratford.com to schedule a time where you can pick up your certificate and the tokens of our appreciation.**

Hurricane Season is Here Again!



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is forecasting a very active hurricane season with a 70% probability of four to seven major hurricanes developing from up to 23 named tropical storms. Their prediction considers factors like a weakening El Nino pattern and the increased temperature of the Atlantic's surface. However, the NOAA stresses that it only takes one major storm to devastate a community, so we should always be prepared!

16 MRC Volunteers Attend Worker Safety Training



On April 29th, 16 medical and non-medical MRC volunteers attended a Worker Safety Training course conducted by Bernice Bova R.N. and Margaret Balint R.N., Stratford's public health nurses. This course focused on the precautions to take when dealing with both bloodborne and airborne pathogens. Bloodborne pathogens are found in body fluids, tissues and organs and can be transmitted in an occupational setting by coming in contact with these fluids through accidental needle sticks, contact with broken skin, etc. This presentation focused on three common bloodborne pathogens, Hepatitis B and C, and HIV/AIDS and discussed precautionary measures such as wearing gloves, gown and mask, proper handwashing, and obeying the procedures for dealing with sharps.

Sickness due to airborne contaminants and pathogens such as tuberculosis, measles and chicken pox can be avoided by using N95 masks, also known as respirators. The name N95 signifies that these masks successfully filter 95% of particulate matter 0.3 microns and larger. Because surgical masks are only appropriate to prevent diseases that can be transmitted through droplets 5 microns and larger, the Health Department recommends that all MRC medical volunteers should be fitted with the more protective N95 masks. These masks must be fitted in order to form an airtight seal. While the Stratford Health Department can perform the fit testing, volunteers must first provide a N95 Respirator Clearance Verification form signed by the volunteer's physician. Medical clearance is required because it is slightly more difficult to breath using N95 respirators. Physician clearance for fit testing depends on the answers to the OSHA Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire that can be downloaded from the MRC's website found under the Health Department's emergency preparedness tab at the www.townofstratford.com site. All medical volunteers are encouraged to download these forms or request mailed copies by calling Sandi Sharp at 203-385-4090. Please call your physician's office to find out if you need an appointment to complete the form or if you can simply answer the questions and obtain the physician's signature through FAX.

Worker Safety training is required for all medical and non-medical MRC volunteers. The bloodborne pathogen component of the course is available free of charge on www.ct.train.org as course number 1016368. It consists of a brief Power Point presentation that should take no longer than half an hour to review. Please register through CT-Train so that your training record is updated and notify Sandi Sharp at mrc@townofstratford.com of your completion of this brief program.

Medical Reserve Corps Facts

- There are currently 885 MRCs nationwide with over 207,000 members
- 88.5% of the U.S. population resides in an area with an MRC unit
- MRC units cover 70.3% of U.S. land area

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Coming Soon - Annual Phone Drill!



The Stratford-Trumbull-Monroe MRC will conduct the annual phone drill to assess the number of volunteers who would be willing to report for duty on a given day in the event of an emergency. This drill will take place in June and is only a test!

You will receive an automated call through our voice messaging system known as Everbridge. The system will ask you to press 1 to hear the message. Please follow the voice prompts and indicate your availability to volunteer as if this was a real public health emergency.

Some volunteers have complained of receiving multiple phone calls for the same message. The system will automatically contact the numbers and email addresses that you have provided us. **If there is no answer at the first contact method or if the volunteer answers but does not listen to the entire message and press 1 to confirm receipt as prompted, the system will continue on with another contact method or try that number again.** Thus, it is very important that you listen to the entire message and press 1 when prompted following its completion to let the system know you have received the message.

There are several scenarios that will occur during the phone drill. While some volunteers will answer their phones and press 1, volunteers who do not answer their phones will be left a message asking them to call an 800 number and key in a very long numeric code. We realize that this process seems unwieldy, but your response is important to us and this long code is necessary. Each message has a unique code and you only need to respond to one message, so if you receive messages on both your cell and home phones, you should only respond to one.

Another possible situation is that a household member may pick up the phone. Please instruct household members to **not** press 1 to confirm receipt at the end of the message, but to instead simply hang up. The system will then try to contact you through another method, like your cell phone. If the system contacts the home phone again, the household member should not answer it so that the system can leave the callback number on the answering machine.

The drill is a simulation of a real life emergency event. Since emergencies do not often involve advanced notice, we understand that not everyone would be able to volunteer due to prior commitments. Phone drills are an important component of emergency planning since they provide us with an estimate of the number of volunteers we could expect if the emergency was a real event. Thank you for your participation in this drill.