



CNYMRC Times

Citizen Volunteers: Helping Our Communities, Ready to Respond

Volume 1, Issue 1

A Newsletter of the
Central New York Regional Medical Reserve Corps

Spring 2009

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

News From Around the Region	2
From the Coordinator...	2
Volunteer Spotlight	2
Calendar of Events	3

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MRC Finds Home in CNY Health Departments

In September 2008, management of the Central New York Medical Reserve Corps (CNYMRC) moved from Upstate Emergency Medicine, Inc. to the Onondaga County Health Department. Health Departments in Cayuga, Cortland, Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego and Tompkins Counties, through the Epidemiological Alliance, made the decision to be active partners in this exciting endeavor. Each county is looking forward to its involvement with volunteers, whether through hosting orientations and trainings, providing opportunities with department exercises, or utilizing members in an emergency. The goal of the CNYMRC is to create a fully trained, active group of volunteers. A variety of training opportunities is being provided. There is training that is required to qualify for activation, as well as supplementary training to increase the volunteers' knowledge base and comfort in responding to community needs. Once required training is completed, volunteers are qualified to be activated by the county health commissioners/directors to respond to a community emergency. CNYMRC volunteers can participate in training exercises, like the Special Needs Shelter Tabletop exercise or the First Responders Drive-Through Clinic that CNYMRC members participated in last fall. The drive-through clinic at the CNY Regional Market tested Onondaga County's mass prophylaxis plan by providing the flu vaccine to more than 600 emergency responders (police, fire, EMS) during a four-hour period. CNYMRC volunteers can participate in other activities, such as clinics

following anthrax detection at the post office and assisting with hot-lines. However, the CNYMRC is not just about crisis response. Volunteers can assist in flu clinics, health fairs, and community events to increase awareness of the need for individual and community preparedness. The assortment of activities makes it easy for each volunteer to find something to suit individual interests.

NYSDOH Launches ServNY in CNY

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) recently provided the seven CNYMRC counties the opportunity to join ServNY, the state's web-based registry of health-care and mental health professionals who wish to volunteer during an emergency or major disaster. The CNYMRC has already integrated its registered volunteers into ServNY. Registered volunteers are being asked to log on to ServNY to update and verify information. Future CNYMRC volunteers will register through ServNY, then be contacted by the unit for additional information. The decision to be a part of ServNY was made so that credentials and privileges are automatically verified. When registering, volunteers can choose the counties they are willing to volunteer with or deploy to. The CNYMRC will continue to manage all volunteers in our region, unless the NYSDOH is activating volunteers for a major incident. The anticipated "roll out" date for the CNYMRC to be part of ServNY is April 14, 2009.

News from Across the Region

From Cortland County...

The Cortland County Health Dept. welcomes you to our volunteer staff! We look forward to working with you. We offer CPR/AED training at the health care provider level every three months. For more information, see the Calendar of Events. For questions about volunteering in Cortland County, please contact MJ Uttech at (607) 753-5139 or mjuttech@cortland-co.org.

From Onondaga County...

The Regional Resource Center is offering to sponsor a Trauma Nursing Care Course for CNYMRC members. This 16-hour course, targeted to RNs, teaches the basics of emergency trauma nursing. Other disciplines can audit the course but do not receive a certificate of completion or CEUs. If you are interested in this course, please contact Anne Ryan at (315) 464-2982 or ryana@upstate.edu.

From Oswego County...

The Oswego County Health Dept. would like to welcome you as a member of the CNYMRC. If you have

any questions about being a volunteer for Oswego County, please contact Eliza St. Onge at (315) 349-3573 or estonge@oswegocounty.com. You can also find more information about Oswego County at its web page—www.oswegocounty.com.

County Contacts

Overall/Onondaga: Bobbi Alcock, bobbialcock@ongov.net, (315) 435-3648 or (315) 380-3488

Cayuga: Joan Knight, (315) 253-1454, joan.knight@dfa.state.ny.us

Cortland: MJ Uttech, (607) 753-5139, mjuttech@cortland-co.org

Jefferson: Jeffrey Leiendecker, (315) 786-3720, jeffreyl@co.jefferson.ny.us

Lewis: John Ingham, (315) 376-5453, john@health.co.lewis.ny.us

Oswego: Eliza St. Onge, (315) 349-3573, estonge@oswegocounty.com

Tompkins: Carol Hill, (607) 274-6681, chill@tompkings-co.org

Volunteer Spotlight

Just for starters...As of March 17, 75 people registered as members of the newly reorganized CNYMRC! You live and work (or enjoy retirement) in six CNY counties and span the gamut of healthcare professions.



Spring Birthdays

April Birthdays

Anna DeWitt
Geri Hall
Sharon Jasek
Gracia Marquis
Janet Rasbeck
Michele Wilson

May Birthdays

Virginia Jones
Sheila Kirby
Elaine Lostumbo
David O'Brien Jr.
Peg Maxwell
Michael Shaw
Leigh Wilson

June Birthdays

Kathleen Meadows
Michael Williamson
Robert Zysk

From Your Coordinator...

For this inaugural issue, I wanted to take a little time to introduce myself to you. In the future, this space is dedicated to tidbits of information I think you may find of interest. I am fortunate that the Onondaga County Health Department and our partner counties consider me to be the right leader for you. I come to the OCHD from another four-letter acronym—the MOST, the Museum of Science & Technology. During my fourteen years at the MOST, I did everything from design programs to train staff and volunteers to organize multiple-county events—skills that come together nicely to coordinate the CNYMRC. I know how vital, how necessary volunteers are. You—your skills, time, and generosity—help our families and friends, neighbors, and communities in ways that are too vast to mention.

The chance to work with dedicated individuals on such a community-minded project is what drew me to this position.

On the personal side, I am the new mother to a beautiful 13 year-old. We spend what little “free” time we have on a multitude of things—time with friends and family, biking, reading, camping, movies, and volunteering. We are always on the lookout for a new “adventure.”

I am very excited about what's ahead for the CNYMRC. I look at each task as an opportunity to serve you and address your needs. I look forward to meeting and getting to know each of you. How involved you want to be is really up to you. As we re-establish the CNYMRC, I plan to look to you, as

members, to guide me in how to sustain this organization—how to keep you involved and how to grow. Please feel free to contact me with suggestions and concerns. After all, this is your Medical Reserve Corps.

Bobbi Alcock

Bobbi Alcock
Your CNYMRC Coordinator



Calendar of Events

CNYMRC Orientation

Meet your coordinator and your fellow volunteers while getting an overview of the CNYMRC—what it is, your role in the MRC and the MRC's role in the community. The orientation is required to begin your work with the CNYMRC, so attend a session as soon as possible. Do you know someone who might be interested in joining the CNYMRC? Bring them along! Please RSVP by May 1 to (315) 380-3488 or bobbialcock@ongov.net, indicating which session you plan to attend. To paraphrase that famous movie line, "This could be the beginning of a beautiful partnership."

Wednesday, May 6, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Curtin Auditorium, Central Library, The Galleries of Syracuse (2nd level), 447 S. Salina Street, Syracuse

Saturday, May 9, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Buckland Community Room, Dewitt Public Library, Shoppingtown Mall (rear entrance by food court), 3649 Erie Boulevard East, Syracuse

Wednesday, May 20, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Sargeant Meeting Room, Liverpool Public Library, 310 Tulip Street, Liverpool

IS-100/IS-700

Onondaga County Emergency Management is offering an in-person class for IS-100 (Introduction to the Incident Command System) and IS-700 (National Incident Management System, An Introduction) for those unable to take these courses on-line or would like the personal contact of a class. Please RSVP by June 1 to (315) 380-3488 or bobbialcock@ongov.net.

Tuesday, June 16, 6:00-9:30 p.m.

Public Safety Training Center (J. Stanley Coyne Hall), Onondaga Community College, 4969 Onondaga Road (Route 173), Syracuse

CPR/AED

Cortland County Health Department is offering a CPR Recertification course at the Healthcare Provider level. The class is \$5 for CNYMRC members or free if you volunteer to give shots at a Cortland County Health Department flu clinic. Call (607) 753-5139 to register.

Monday, June 15, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Cortland County Health Dept., 60 Central Ave., Cortland

Check with the American Heart Association (www.americanheart.org) or American Red Cross (www.redcross.org) to locate CPR courses near you. Local organizations like the North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps (315-458-7514) in Onondaga County, Auburn Memorial Hospital (315-255-7123) in Cayuga County, and Samaritan Medical Center (315-785-4575) in Jefferson County regularly offer the AHA course. There is also the option of taking the ARC course online with the skills test completed at the Onondaga/Oswego chapter office within 14 days. For more information, go to www.syrarc.org/Education/catalog.aspx.

Coming Summer 2009...stay tuned!

CNYMRC Orientation, IS-100 and IS-700, CPR, Standard First Aid, Emergency Preparedness, and Psychological First Aid Classes

Plus...Social Opportunities!

September is...

...National Preparedness Month. Now is the time to think about activities the CNYMRC can host or participate in to spread the word about personal and community preparedness. Your ideas are appreciated.



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Inside this issue:

News from Across the Region	2
MRC, Red Cross Sign Joint Memorandum	2
Volunteer Spotlight	2
From Your Coordinator...	3
Summer Birthdays	3
Calendar of Events	4

Summer is the Time for Preparedness

July is Disaster Education and Preparedness Month and September is National Preparedness Month. You may not think of summer, with all its busyness and fun, as time to create your preparedness plan. Kids being out of school, family and friends hanging out, and warmer weather makes it easier to practice your plan. So, summer may be the best time to discuss what to do if a disaster strikes our area. If children live in your home, get them involved. Figure out together where to meet, who to call, and what to do. Children can also help in choosing items for your house and car supply kits. Remember to practice your plan so that you and your children more easily remember what to do. Thinking on a larger scale? Host a neighborhood BBQ where members of your community could discuss what roles they can handle. Whether it is someone who can watch the children as they are brought home from school or has a generator that could supply necessary electrical needs, every person has something to contribute. When making your plans, remember older adults, people with special needs and disabilities, and pets. Some people may not be able to walk the mile to

the neighborhood meeting place and many shelters do not allow you to bring your pets. Plans need to be modified to suit the special requirements of these groups.

Many people believe that emergency responders will handle any situations that arise. That may not be the case, so being prepared

becomes very important. Important enough to be a requirement of the CNYMRC.

Your personal preparedness course will help you get started. Do more than take the course. Create your plans, make a supply kit. Hopefully, you never need to use it but take the time this summer to be prepared. You may be glad you did.

MRC Requested for Upcoming Exercises

The CNYMRC has been given the opportunity to take part in exercises with three Onondaga County partners: Syracuse-Hancock International Airport, the Onondaga County Health Department, and the V.A. Hospital. These valuable exercises assess the ability to effectively respond and help these groups evaluate and refine their plans.

Every three years Hancock International Airport tests its ability to respond to a threat or disaster. On May 13, a number of community resources came together to discuss how to effectively manage each part of a multi-pronged threat to the airport. The plan is slated to be tested on September 12 and will assess emergency response, airline response, security, and managing mass injuries and fatalities.

The Onondaga County Health Department's Drive-Through Flu Vaccination exercise tests their Point-of-Dispensing (POD) plan while ensuring that many first responders are vaccinated against the flu. At the Regional Farmer's Market, first responders receive their shots while staying in their automobiles, providing the



First responders and screeners at drive-through flu vaccination

social distancing necessary during a pandemic. Last October, as part of this exercise, over 600 first responders received their flu shots in four hours.
(Continued on Page 2)

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MRC, Red Cross Sign Joint Memorandum

From the Office of the Civilian Medical Reserve Corps: "On April 2, 2009 the Office of the Civilian Medical Reserve Corps and the American Red Cross (ARC) signed a Joint Memorandum to ARC chapter and MRC unit leaders, which will solidify the organizations' relationship. After successful experiences working together in response to hurricanes and other events, the value of this partnership has been well illustrated. This partnership further connects the MRC and ARC at both the national and local levels. The missions of the MRC and the ARC are complementary and working together will only better prepare and protect our communities to recover from disaster."

Many MRC units across the country are exploring their ability to set up and manage special needs shelters. These shelters would care for those

individuals who manage their own medical needs but may need some assistance during a disaster. Partnering with local ARC chapters allows for a symbiotic relationship. The ARC has mass care shelter plans in place but does not typically handle medical cases. The MRC provides the necessary medical assistance so these individuals do not have to be redirected to other sites for care.

So what does this mean for the CNYMRC? Our unit is in the planning stages of developing these special needs shelters. The joint memorandum at the national level makes it easier to facilitate alliances at the local level since guidelines for certain activities, such as volunteer management, have already been established. Stay tuned as the CNYMRC works with American Red Cross chapters in our region.

News from Across the Region

Cortland County is offering a **Basic Life Saving for Healthcare Professionals refresher course** in late August. The fee is \$5.00 for CNYMRC members or FREE if you volunteer for a flu clinic. Contact Suzanne Osterhoudt at (607) 758-5502 to schedule.

The CNYMRC has been given the unique opportunity to participate in a nationwide emergency preparedness research project. The Public Health Programs at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the National Association of County and City Health Officials is seeking to understand the key elements that might improve our nation's preparedness and response efforts. The main focus is on the beliefs and attitudes associated with emergency preparedness and response rather than the skills and abilities. The survey responses are anonymous, and subsequent data analysis will be shared with the MRC network. The data gathered from the survey will provide insight about the willingness of volunteers to respond to four potential emergency scenarios. Experience in any of these scenarios is not necessary; it is the attitudes and beliefs associated with the scenarios that are important. The online survey takes 15-20 minutes to complete and is available through July 31. You can complete this online survey by going to www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=WUWoUGfyOx2GJkevdIRBAw_3d_3d.

Coordinator's Note: This is a very simple and thought-provoking survey. Please take the time to complete as it could be valuable information for our unit.

Upcoming Exercises (cont.)

The Veteran's Administration Hospital is planning a surge exercise for Spring 2010. Designed to assess our region's ability to effectively respond to an influx of patients, whether from a severely disaster-ridden area or from an overloaded military hospital system, the exercise is part of the V.A. Hospital's readiness mission.

The role of the CNYMRC in each of these activities includes dispensing flu vaccinations and assisting with patient care. Members have the chance to practice with response partners and increase their knowledge of how emergency response is managed. The managing organizations get trained and knowledgeable volunteers that will enhance the plans that are in place.

Note from the Coordinator...

As more information is received about these exercises, it will be passed on to you mail and email. Taking part in at least one drill or exercise per year is a requirement for being a member of the CNYMRC.

Volunteer Spotlight

In April, the V.A. Hospital asked the CNYMRC to assist with their decontamination drill. CNYMRC members David Goldstein and Lynne Odell-Holzer volunteered as victims of an unknown chemical contamination. Good thing it was a warm day on the hill since we were decontaminated outdoors. If you have never seen or participated in a drill like this, the victims are contaminated then thoroughly showered. Fortunately, unlike a real contamination, we were allowed to keep our clothes on. Fun was had by all during this important service provided to the V.A. Hospital. Thank you to Dave, Lynne, and her husband for their participation.

Assisting with activities such as this develops partnerships that help our unit become a valuable resource in our region.

CNYMRC members post-decontamination at the V.A. Hospital exercise.



From Your Coordinator...

Wow...so much has been happening in the last few months! After several months in the planning stage, it feels great to enter the "doing" stage. As a person who loves to garden, this is like going from Spring into Summer.

In early April, I attended the Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit to network with MRC unit leaders from all over the country and to garner ideas for the CNYMRC. One of the ideas I am finding fascinating is social marketing—how do we reach different sectors of the population, get them involved, and keep them informed. We discussed everything from Facebook and Twitter to e-communities. I would love to hear your thoughts on this topic!

April saw the rollout of ServNY, the state's web-based volunteer database. I hope you found the process if not easy, at least not too difficult to navigate. From this database, I was able to contact many professionals who had registered through the state previously and invite them to join the CNYMRC. If you have yet to complete your registration at ServNY, don't worry. You are still a member of the CNYMRC. **Please complete your ServNY registration soon as it makes it easier to contact you in an actual emergency.** You can register by going to www.ongov.net/Health/mrc and clicking on the "Join Now" box. If you are in need of assistance, please give me a call and we can schedule a time to do this over the phone.

In mid-April, the CNYMRC had its first request from a local partner. See *Volunteer Spotlight*. The end of April saw the outbreak of H1N1 flu. What a powerful learning experience it has been for me. With it, we saw the first "activation" of CNYMRC members to assist with the hotline. Fortunately, the hotline and the CNYMRC was not needed. Thank you to those who signed up; your willingness to assist was greatly appreciated!

May was a month of orientation. I was thrilled to meet so many of you and to

provide you with a firm foundation for your volunteer experience. CNYMRC orientations continue monthly throughout the summer for those yet to attend a session. Try to get to an orientation soon. Less than half of our members have been to an orientation.

I met with Lockheed Martin employees about volunteering with the CNYMRC. These employees are the core group that will manage a Point-of-Dispensing (POD) clinic within Lockheed Martin, for employees and their families for mass vaccinations or prophylaxis. This would reduce the burden on public PODs. If you are an employee of a large company that might be interested in managing their own POD, we can help you get started.

June was a month spent beginning to develop partnerships. From attending the Disaster Preparedness Committee meeting and presenting to the Association of Occupational Health Nurses to meeting with University Hospital about assisting with infirmary services at the New York State Fair and working with the Madison County Health Department on the CNYMRC, we are making the contacts necessary to become a known resource for the region. I am continuing to develop relationships and am always looking for groups I may have missed. If your professional organization or employer is interested in knowing more about the CNYMRC, I would be happy to meet or do a presentation.

Some of our members have already been able to complete the required courses for Active status. Many congratulations and thanks! Please continue striving to complete the courses. It would be great to reach the goal of 75% of CNYMRC members attaining active status by year's end. This easily attainable goal makes us "ready to respond," the mission of the CNYMRC.

Have a great summer!

Your CNYMRC Coordinator,
Bobbi Alcock



Summer Birthdays



July

Sharon Boland
Kathleen Burnham
Anita Derby
Bonnie Gallauresi
Jacqueline Jahelko
Michael Jorolemon
Lewis Otto
Marianne Porter
Elizabeth Roberts
Valerie Smithson
Kelly Toia

August

Jessica Anderson
Jacqueline Beal-Greacen
Andrew Felter
Steph Goodell
Amy Lenweaver
Brenda Lotito
Laurie Ann Marrano Johnson
Barbara McDonald
Kay Sharpe
Betty Spafford
Melanie Watson

September

Jean Comiskey
Diane Donovan
Leslie Fladd
Judy Kilpatrick
April Quill
Sara Seifert
Julie Wilmot
Patricia Yackel

Did You Know...

According to the June 2009 FEMA Personal Preparedness in America Report:

- 53% of respondents have supplies set aside at home
- 42% of respondents have a household disaster plan
- 57% expect to rely on emergency personnel in the first 72 hours following a disaster
- 78% of respondents believe preparation, planning, and emergency supplies will help them handle a disaster but 40% felt that preparations would not make a difference

Calendar of Events

Orientation

Meet your coordinator and your fellow volunteers while getting an overview of the CNYMRC—what it is, your role in the MRC and the MRC's role in the community.

SESSION 1: Wednesday, July 29, 6:30-8:00 p.m. RSVP by July 22

SESSION 2: Tuesday, August 11, 6:30-8:00 p.m. RSVP by August 4

LOCATION: Orientation is broadcasted to each county's Health Department. You choose which county site to attend.

Cayuga: 160 Genesee St., Auburn

Cortland: 60 Central Ave., Cortland

Jefferson: 531 Meade St., Watertown

Lewis: 7785 N. State St., Lowville

Onondaga: Civic Center-9th Floor, 421 Montgomery St., Syracuse

Oswego: 70 Bunner St., Oswego

Tompkins: 401 Harris B. Dates Dr., Ithaca

IS-100/IS-700 FEMA

This is a classroom option for the IS-100 (Introduction to the Incident Command System) and IS-700 (National Incident Management System, An Introduction) courses for those unable to take the course on-line or would like the personal contact of a class. The class is free.

SESSION 1: Wednesday, August 5, 6:00-9:00 p.m. RSVP by August 1

SESSION 2: Saturday, August 8, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. RSVP by August 1

LOCATION: Tompkins County Dept. of Emergency Response, 92 Brown Rd., Ithaca

Personal Preparedness

The American Red Cross helps you to understand how to prepare for a disaster—what disasters to expect in CNY, developing your disaster plan, and what should be in disaster supply kits. The class is free.

WHEN: Tuesday, July 14, 6:30-7:30 p.m. RSVP by July 7

LOCATION: Onondaga County Health Dept., Civic Center-9th Floor, 421 Montgomery St., Syracuse

Basic Life Saving for Healthcare Providers—Refresher Course

This is CPR at the healthcare level. If you have been certified in CPR since 2000, you are eligible to take the refresher course. The class is free.

WHEN: Friday, July 17, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. RSVP by July 8

LOCATION: Public Safety Training Center (Coyne Hall), OCC, 4969 Onondaga Rd., Syracuse

Point of Dispensing (POD) Training

POD training provides volunteer workers an overview of how a Point of Dispensing clinic operates. PODs are used to provide mass vaccinations/prophylaxis to large populations. There are many job positions that must be staffed to ensure quality and efficiency. The class is free.

WHEN: Wednesday, August 12, Time TBD. RSVP by August 5

LOCATION: Onondaga County Health Dept., Civic Center-9th Floor, 421 Montgomery St., Syracuse

Syracuse Chiefs (vs. Charlotte) Baseball Game

Come out for a night of fun while getting to know other members of the CNYMRC. Promotions for this evening are the Syracuse Fire Department and Kraft Singles Tuesday Night. Free tickets are available through the SFD or you can bring the outer wrapper of a package of Kraft Singles for buy one ticket, get one free ticket. General Admission Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$4 for children under 12. We are meeting in Section 301.

WHEN: Tuesday, July 28, 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Alliance Bank Stadium, Tex Simone Dr., Syracuse

RSVP to: Bobbi Alcock, CNYMRC Coordinator

Email: bobbialcock@ongov.net

Phone: (315) 380-3488



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Central New York Regional Medical Reserve Corps

Autumn 2009

NYS Requiring Healthcare Worker Influenza Vaccinations

This past summer, New York State passed an emergency resolution that requires all personnel in certain healthcare settings (hospitals, local health departments, specified clinics) to be vaccinated annually against influenza. From a letter released by the NYSDOH:

“On August 13, 2009 an emergency regulation went into effect, which requires that all personnel of certain health care settings receive annual vaccinations against influenza by November 30 of each year unless they have a medical contraindication to the vaccination or the State Commissioner of Health determines that there is an insufficient supply of vaccine for the year. The primary

purpose of this regulation is to protect the health and safety of vulnerable patients, whose risk of serious adverse effects from influenza is high. An added benefit is to maintain a healthy workforce during flu season.

Personnel who must be vaccinated against influenza include all those affiliated with the employer, paid or unpaid, who have direct contact with patients or whose activities are such that they pose a risk of transmission of influenza to patients or to those who provide direct care to patients. ‘Personnel’ is defined as anyone affiliated with any organization (noted above), including but not limited to employees; members of the medical staff, including attending physicians;

contract staff; students and volunteers.”

How does this resolution affect CNYMRC members? Since most duties in a flu vaccination clinic require direct contact with patients, any CNYMRC member who chooses to volunteer in a flu clinic needs to be vaccinated against seasonal and, when available, H1N1 flu. Many of you may already need to receive these vaccines through your employer. If you cannot receive the vaccines through other avenues but agree to volunteer in a flu clinic, the available vaccine will be provided to you by the requesting county. H1N1 vaccine distribution will be based on priority guidelines for the distribution of the vaccine as established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Winter Travel Preparedness

As we know very well in CNY, winter can be challenging. Between blinding lake effect snow and the occasional ice storm, winter travel provides its own unique preparedness needs. You may be wondering why in these days of cell phones and good highways, we should prepare for winter travel. We never know when we may slide off the road or get caught in a white-out conditions and help may not be close by. Fall is the time to get ready for winter. Here are some simple tips to help you prepare for winter travel:

Winterize Your Vehicle

Have a mechanic do a check-up on your car looking at the battery, belts and hoses, radiator, oil, brakes, ignition system, exhaust system, heater/defroster, windshield wipers, and lights. Repair or replace as necessary.

Before the Journey

Check the weather forecast and road

conditions before driving. Consider adjusting your route if poor driving conditions exist. Keep the gas tank more than half full. In the case of long journeys, let someone know your route and estimated time of arrival.

Your Winter Car Kit

Carry a cell phone with you. Consider keeping a bag stocked and always present in your vehicle. Kits should include road maps, a blanket or extra coat, extra socks, scarves, hats and mittens, a flashlight with extra batteries, first aid kit, pocketknife, non-perishable food such as granola bars or crackers, booster/jumper cables, small shovel, small tool kit or multi-purpose tool, and a bag of sand or cat litter for traction.

Caught in the Storm

If you end up off the road or decide to wait out the worst of the storm, there are some simple tips to follow. Stay in your car. Venturing out not only puts you at risk from the weather but also puts you at risk for getting lost or getting hit by

another driver. Call for assistance if you can. Use your hazard lights so that others can see you. For heat, start the car for 10 minutes every hour. Use items in your car kit to keep you warm. If you are alone, do simple exercises such as windmills. If you have passengers, huddle together for warmth. Remember to slightly open a window on the side opposite the wind for ventilation. Keep the exhaust clear of snow to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Hang a bright colored cloth from the antenna or road-side window.

These simple tips can help us be prepared for whatever winter travel is ahead. Be safe this winter.



H1N1 KNOW what to do about the FLU!

Novel H1N1 Flu and Seasonal Flu: Differences and Similarities

Many people are wondering what the differences are between seasonal flu and novel H1N1 flu (Swine Flu). Novel H1N1 flu is caused by a new virus that is different from the seasonal flu we usually see each fall and winter. The virus that causes the seasonal flu changes a little bit each year, but the changes are small and people have some immunity to the virus. This year, the flu virus that is spreading is new and different enough so that many people, especially younger people, do not have much immunity. This is the reason why so many people got sick in the spring and we expect to see many more people, especially children, come down with the flu this fall.

Every year people get sick with the flu and every year some people die or are hospitalized from the flu. With the novel H1N1 flu, the people who are most likely to get the flu and who may get sickest are pregnant women, children under 5 years, people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes or lung disease, and people under 19 who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy.

For the best protection, get vaccinated

Because seasonal flu will likely be around at the same time as novel H1N1 flu, it is important for everyone to get seasonal flu vaccine now. As novel H1N1 vaccine is manufactured and delivered it will go first to people in certain priority groups including pregnant women, people who live with or care for children under 6 months of age, health care workers, emergency medical responders, persons ages 6-24 years, and people 25-64 years old who have chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems. After that, everyone else will be able to get it. For the best protection, get the novel H1N1 vaccine as soon as it is available to you.

Watch for flu symptoms

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. With novel H1N1 flu sometimes there is diarrhea and vomiting. If you get these symptoms, stay home and limit contact with others until at least 24 hours after your fever has gone without the use of medicine. Most people can recover from flu at home with no need for medical treatment. However, if you are at high risk for complications of flu, contact your doctor.

Fight the flu

Take these everyday steps to prevent the spread of germs and reduce your risk of getting or spreading the flu:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or sneeze into your sleeve—not your hands. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based gel hand cleaners are also good to use if you are not near a sink.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Stay at least six feet away from someone who is coughing or sneezing.
- If you have the flu and will be around other people, you should wear a facemask. If you must take care of someone with the flu, and are at high risk of serious illness if you get sick, you should also wear a mask.

More information about the flu is available at www.nyhealth.gov and www.flu.gov.

From Your Coordinator...

I love everything about Fall...the first chilly nip in the air that makes you snuggle under the covers, the beauty of changing leaves, the apples and pumpkins, drinking hot chocolate and hot cider again. This Fall promises to be all that and so much more.

For many of us, Fall also means the start of flu season. I would like to encourage you to get your flu shots. Doing so not only helps to keep you healthy but helps to keep those around you healthy too.

As you have probably heard from your employer or from the article *NYS Requiring Healthcare Worker Vaccination*, it is now required for all personnel in certain settings to be vaccinated for the flu. Regardless of how you may feel about this emergency resolution, if you plan to volunteer in a

flu clinic in any of the CNYMRC counties, you need to get your flu shots. It is best to get your seasonal flu shot as early in the season as your provider advises. Plans are being made to provide H1N1 shots to volunteers who do not have access through their employers as healthcare workers or are not part of one of the priority groups. The H1N1 vaccine will be provided to those volunteers who are expecting to assist in flu clinics.

Your assistance is vital to the success of this year's flu season, so I hope each of you will roll up your sleeve, grit your teeth, and get your shots. I'll be getting mine. Then, back to running through the fallen leaves!

Your CNYMRC Coordinator,
Bobbi Alcock

Fall Birthdays

October

Patricia Cupernall
Gail Duke
Nancy Forsyth
Alexandra George
Kristina Hingre
David Newman
Martin Schaeffer
Cory Seelman
Wendi Zufelt

November

Diane Avery
Sharon Bliss-Chandler
Sandra Burns
Luis Castro
Kathleen Cuddy
F. Lee Dutton
Paul Garvey
Phillip Gioia
Patricia Hudelson
Daniel Mackey
Edward Mehrhof
Lynne Odell-Holzer
Jack Resnick
Brenda Siegfried
Harold Small
Vera Turk
Sara Upfold-Harrell

December

Maritza Alvarez
Tammy Balamut
Theresa Baxter
Steven Berkowitz
Brenda Jackson
Paul Marciniak
Mary Jo Marvar
Kathrin Petterelli
Colleen Redding
Anne Ryan
Carol Sherwood
Rose Stiles
Cheryl Stuper
Christine Vecchio

CNY Regional Medical
Reserve Corps

Lead Agency:
Onondaga County Health
Department
421 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: (315) 435-3648
Fax: (315) 435-3613
E-mail: cnymrc@ongov.net
Web: [www.ongov.net/
Health/mrc](http://www.ongov.net/Health/mrc)

News from Across the Region: Achieving Active Status

Now that the CNYMRC is more established and there is a clearer vision of our mission, the member county health departments are asking all volunteers to consider achieving Active status this Fall. All CNYMRC members are expected to attend an orientation and complete five required courses. These required courses are Personal Preparedness, Psychological First Aid, CPR, IS-100a (Introduction to the Incident Command System), and IS-700a (National Incident Management System). The required courses are considered the nationwide baseline for MRC volunteers to be prepared to respond during a crisis. All but the CPR course are available on-line. The direct links to on-line options for these courses are listed here.

Personal Preparedness

training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is22.asp

Psychological First Aid

[www.centerfordisastermedicine.org/pfa/
PFA_Start.html](http://www.centerfordisastermedicine.org/pfa/PFA_Start.html)

IS-100a: Intro to ICS

training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100a.asp

IS-700a: NIMS

training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS700a.asp

CPR courses are available through your local American Heart Association or American Red Cross chapters. The CNYMRC reimburses up to \$40 for the CPR course.

The Fall Training Conference on October 3 (see *Calendar of Events*) is a classroom option allowing members to attend a CNYMRC orientation and complete the above listed courses in one day.

H1N1 Liability Coverage

Volunteer liability coverage is something the CNYMRC counties have been working on for quite a while. While liability coverage for volunteers is available during a declared crisis, volunteers may not have coverage in some CNYMRC counties during non-emergency activities. That is not the case for volunteering in 2009 H1N1 flu vaccination clinics.

In June, Secretary Sebelius of the Department of Health and Human Services signed a declaration under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act to extend liability immunity against tort claims to individuals and entities involved in all stages of H1N1 vaccine activities, including the distribution, prescription, and

administration of the vaccine. This immunity means that there is no legal tort claim that can be pursued in state or federal court against a volunteer working in H1N1 flu clinics. The exception to this declaration is liability due to willful misconduct.

What does this mean for the CNYMRC? Regardless of the county you are assisting with 2009 H1N1 activities, you have liability coverage. For instance, you cannot be sued if someone with an unknown contraindication has a reaction to the vaccine. This may also help our member county health departments in moving toward obtaining liability coverage for all unit activities.

Calendar of Events

CNYMRC Training Conference

Saturday, October 3, 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Carousel Center, 6th Floor Meeting Room, Syracuse

Complete member orientation and four of the five required courses to reach Active status in one day. These required courses provide you with the baseline of knowledge necessary to be prepared to respond to a crisis. Register for some or all of the offered courses by October 1.

Onondaga County First Responder Drive-Thru Seasonal Flu Vaccination

Wednesday, October 14, 10:00 am-6:30 pm

Regional Market (near Carousel Center), 2100 Park St., Syracuse

This activity serves a dual purpose—vaccinating first responders against seasonal flu and exercising the county's mass vaccination with social distancing plan. Volunteers are still needed to assist with general duties, such as traffic and forms distribution. Volunteers need to attend one of the offered trainings as well as get their own seasonal flu shot. The shot can be provided on the day of the exercise, if necessary. RSVP by October 2.

First Responder Drive-Thru Training

Monday, October 5, 10:00-11:00 am **OR** 6:00-7:00 pm

Onondaga County Health Dept., 9th Floor Civic Center, Syracuse

This training brings you inside the mass vaccination exercise—the whys, whats, and hows. Register by October 2.

Onondaga County Seasonal Flu Vaccination Clinics

Saturday, October 31, 8:30 am-12:30 pm, St. Elizabeth Seton, Baldwinsville

Saturday, November 14, 8:30 am-12:30 pm, Believers Chapel, Syracuse

Wednesday, November 18, 12:30-4:30 pm, Southwest Community Center

Saturday, December 5, 8:30 am-12:30 pm, Northeast Community Center

Screeners (MD, PA, NP, RN) needed in these clinics for seasonal flu. Clinics may expand to include H1N1 vaccinations. Volunteering in a flu clinic fulfills the public health requirement of membership. Volunteers need to attend one of the trainings as well as get their own seasonal flu shot. The shot can be provided on the day of the clinic, if necessary. RSVP by October 15.

Flu Clinic Orientation

Friday, October 16, 9:00 am-12:00 pm **OR** Monday, October 19, 6:00-8:00 pm

Onondaga County Health Dept., 501 East Fayette St., Syracuse

This orientation takes you through the screening process for the Onondaga County flu clinics. Register by October 2.



Communications Drill through ServNY scheduled for October 21. This is just a drill to test the CNYMRC's ability to communicate effectively with our membership.

CNYMRC Member Orientation

Thursday, December 3, 6:30-7:30 pm

Liverpool Public Library, Sargeant Meeting Room, 310 Tulip St., Liverpool

Take the first step toward membership in the CNYMRC by learning about the unit and its activities. Register by November 30.

American Red Cross Mass Care Shelter Training

Saturday, November 21, 8:30 am-12:00 pm

Onondaga-Oswego ARC Chapter, 220 Herald Place, Syracuse

This FREE course provides an overview of the activities performed by the Mass Care group in support of a disaster relief operation. As the CNYMRC becomes more established, plans are being created to handle special needs shelters co-located with ARC mass care shelters. This course provides volunteers with the knowledge of what else will be happening in the same shelter. Call (315) 234-2247 by November 11 to register.

American Red Cross Psychological First Aid

Saturday, December 12, 8:30 am-12:30 pm

Onondaga-Oswego ARC Chapter, 220 Herald Place, Syracuse

This FREE course provides the framework for understanding the factors that affect stress responses in disaster relief workers and the clients they serve. In addition, it provides practical suggestions about what you can say and do as you practice the principles of psychological first aid. Call (315) 234-2247 by December 1 to register.