



# CNYMRC Times

Citizen Volunteers: Helping Our Communities, Ready to Respond

Volume 1, Issue 2

A Newsletter of the  
Central New York Regional Medical Reserve Corps

Summer 2009

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## 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.

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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](http://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](http://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

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