



Albany County Medical Reserve Corp Volunteer Newsletter

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The Albany County Department of Health's Medical Reserve Corp Volunteer Newsletter is designed to keep our volunteers informed about Albany County's emergency preparedness efforts, volunteer training opportunities, and pertinent emergency preparedness news.

Volunteer Notification Drills

Over the past two years we have conducted a number of volunteer notification drills utilizing the Albany County Community Emergency Support System (ACCESS), a sophisticated reverse 911 technology. The purpose of these drills has been to assess volunteers' ability to report to a "drill" emergency situation.

Our success with these drills has been mixed. According to feedback from our ACCESS drill evaluations, the majority of volunteers report that this is a good way to reach them. However, to date we have only tested home telephone numbers so our response rates have been low. During our March 2007 Volunteer Notification Drill, we reached 25% of our volunteers but found that in 10% of the calls, the call receiver hung up before completing the response process.

Though this process does have some limitations, it is still one important communication method that we will utilize in an emergency situation. We would like all of our volunteers (and their family members who may answer the phone) to fully understand and be comfortable with this process.

The computer generated call comes from the Albany County Sheriff's Department and should show up this way on your caller-id. The message will begin.... "There is an emergency message from the Albany County Department of Health. Please press 6 if you need to hear this message again or press 9 if you do not."

- Press 9 to continue on to hear the message.
- After pressing 9, a message asks "if an emergency occurred today, could you respond? press 6 for yes or press 9 for no".
- If you press 6 for yes, you are then asked to "key in" in minutes, the length of time until you can report. (Unless otherwise specified, the reporting location is the Albany County Department of Health at 175 Green St. in Albany.)
- If you press 9 for "no you cannot respond", you will hear a message notifying you that you can call 447-2057 for more information about this call.
- Volunteers who keyed in the minutes until they can respond will then be provided with the same message to call 447-2057 for more information about the call.

It is vital that you answer these calls if you are home. Please educate your household members to get you if they receive such a call. We will be continuing to conduct quarterly volunteer activation calls and hope to continue to improve our success rate. If you have not already provided your cell phone number to be included in these drills, please consider providing this information so that we have a better chance of reaching you in a true emergency. If you have any additional questions regarding these activation drills, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Dunkel at 447-4633

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For More Information:

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Medical Reserve Corp Brochure

We are excited to announce that the new Albany County Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) recruitment brochure is ready for distribution. Thank you to the volunteers who consented to having their photos in the brochure. We hope that many of you will take an active role in assisting us to recruit additional volunteers by distributing the MRC brochure at events or meetings where you feel it is appropriate. We have a small quantity of brochure holders available for displaying the MRC brochure in public locations. Please email or call me with the quantities you need. Potential volunteers with Internet access can now register online at www.albanycounty.com by clicking on the MRC logo.



Trainings

POD—A Point of Dispensing (POD) training will be held on Thursday, June 21st from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. If you are interested in registering, please contact Jill at 447-4633. This training will be offered again in the future for those volunteers who have not yet attended.

FIT-TESTING—Volunteer fit-testing and photos for identification badges of MRC volunteers will occur on Monday, June 25th and Thursday, June 28th. Limited appointment times are still available. Additional appointments will be available in the fall.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID—We are working with the Center for Disaster Medicine and Emergency Preparedness at the University of Rochester to bring in a speaker to provide a training on Psychological First Aid for our MRC volunteers. We anticipate offering this training in September. A save-the-date will be distributed as soon as a final date has been selected.

Online Training Opportunities

The University at Albany School of Public Health's Center for Public Health Preparedness offers a number of free online trainings in the area of Emergency Preparedness. You have the opportunity to complete the course over a 60 to 90 day timeframe. Course offerings include:

- Emergency Preparedness Training for Hospital Clinicians
- Personal Preparedness
- Preparedness & Community Response to Pandemics
- Terrorism, Preparedness & Public Health: An Introduction

Please visit <http://www.ualbanycphp.org/learning/default.cfm> to register for one of these free courses.

Other Albany County MRC News

Jill Dunkel will be going out on maternity leave on or about July 20, 2007. In her absence, please contact Charles Welge at 447-4693 or cwelge@albanycounty.com with questions. Jill will be returning on a very limited schedule beginning in mid-September.