



The Newsletter

Expansion News!

In March of 2006 a very small group of folks were very happy to learn that their application to become a Medical Reserve Corps was approved and so the Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps was born. The original plan was to get established in Hubbardston and slowly expand and invite other towns to join us. Within the very first year that plan was blown out of the water. Right from the beginning we learned to expect the unexpected. And although the journey may have been filled with twists and turns, the program has flourished and grown.

This year has brought another change

that has meant we need to make some definite changes to expand our program that will now include 18 communities (from our current 10 communities). We are gaining these communities because the Worcester MRC is breaking into smaller groups to try to better meet the needs of the communities of Worcester County.

How does this impact us? Where we have concentrated to bring small portable programs to smaller communities, we now have a program that has urban and rural communities. This means new possibilities, new opportunities and new realities.

Over the coming

year, we will be reviewing where we are now, where we want to go and hearing all suggestions and ideas from the membership, the Boards of Health, and the Emergency Managers. We need to build on the foundation that we have presently with new ways to outreach to communities large

and small in public health and in emergency response, to build the volunteer base, to add to the trainings we have started and to make the program more formal.

A lot of work ahead but already early meetings with a few of the towns joining the Wachusett MRC has been very enthusiastic!



Wachusett MRC to join MAResponds

Paperwork has been completed to allow Wachusett MRC to join MAResponds, probably in October when a new update is released. Dennis and Judie O'Donnell attended the training on August 22 to learn about the registration process, security issues, data usage and maintenance

of unit records. We both felt it was a very user friendly system for both the administrator and for the volunteer.

MAResponds is the Massachusetts DPH online registration system for volunteer that are members of the Medical Reserve

Corps, or some other medical group.

MAResponds is part of a nationwide effort to identify and credential volunteers so that when a need arises the volunteers can be mobilized quickly for an effective response.

Volunteers still

Cont. next page...

Inside this issue:

Map of the Expansion	2
Get Ready!	3
From Around the Nation	4
Announcements	

Special points of interest:

- *Expansion News!*
- *Get Ready Ideas for school and other groups*
- *Santa needs a flu shot too!*

Welcome to the Wachusett MRC...

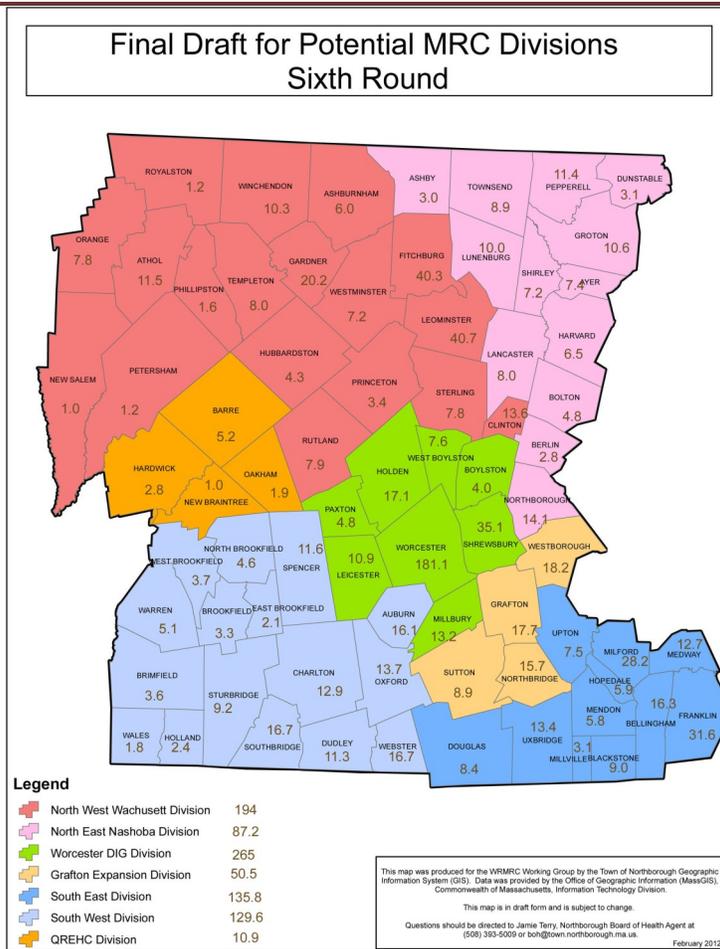
Presently the Wachusett MRC actively works with 10 communities. We have a Memorandum of Understanding agreements with the Board of Health and/or Emergency Management in the following communities:

Hubbardston, Rutland, Westminister, Petersham, Templeton, Baldwinville, Phillipston, Winchendon, Ashburnham, Gardner, and Princeton.

Our expansion will include the following additional communities:

Fitchburg, Leominster, Clinton, Sterling, Athol, Royalston, New Salem, and Orange.

We welcome these communities and look forward to working with them to fulfill the MRC mission to promote activities that will build healthy and resilient communities.



MA Responds continued...

may choose to remain local, or respond to regional, state or nation needs. All data is encrypted and only administrators designated by the state or MRC unit will be able to see the data. Only the local MRC can 'deploy' you meaning that you will continue to hear from Wachusett MRC as you do now for needs, projects and trainings.

Presently we have a database of close to 200 volunteers that are credentialed. We will download the basic information we have but it will require that you will need to re-sign a CORI (state is considered a new agency, thus the new CORI form) and then go into your file to

update information.

One of the new features that is suppose to come with the update in October is that you will be able to choose two MRC units as a member. So if you have a membership in Worcester MRC, you can still retain that membership as a second choice. Wachusett MRC would be your Primary choice. Or if you like to spend your summers in the Berkshires or on the Cape,

you can join and list the MRC near your summer residence as a second choice.

What is the advantage to join? Provides a database that can be used in incidents like Hurricane Katrina or Joplin, Missouri when a larger group of volunteers are needed. Provides for annual review automatically like current licensing. Gives you access over your information, to update and correct errors.

More to come as we get closer to October start date. For a Fact Sheet go to: www.maresponds.org/faq.php



Get Ready Day! September 18, 2012

http://www.getreadyforflu.org/new_pg_facts.htm

Make plans now for your Get Ready Day event! Set up a booth outside of a school cafeteria, make a presentation to a school group, mother's group or a senior group. All kinds of ideas on this website supported by the American Public Health Association. All materials are free and no copyright permissions needed. Some of the ideas are listed below:

Free materials on how to set up emergency supplies with lots of checklists....

Preparing for storms of all kinds....



How to get ready for winter storms

Many parts of the United States are ready and able to handle heavy snow storms. But in the past few years, some states that normally don't get very cold have been overwhelmed by winter snow. Whether you live somewhere that is used to winter in a sunny place that almost never sees snow, it's good to be ready just in case.

Before a winter storm

Getting ready for a winter storm can help you get ready for an emergency like stock of what you have in your home and make sure you have the following supplies: battery-powered radio and extra batteries, food that can be eaten without cooking, plenty of bottled water (at least one gallon per person per day), candles and matches, enough oil for your furnace for heat and a gas-powered heat source.

It's a good idea to get your car ready, too. Make sure you have antifreeze, a snow scraper, a flashlight, tow chains and a bag of salt. Keep the gas tank full. If you live in a rural area, it's also good to have a flare gun and distress flag, just in case. If you can, keep some extra food and water in your car in case you are stranded during a storm.

If someone in your home has special health needs, call your local fire department before a storm and let them know you may need assistance if you are stuck in your home.

SET YOUR CLOCKS CHECK YOUR STOCKS

Your emergency preparedness stockpile: What you need to know

Emergencies — such as tornadoes, floods, storms, earthquakes or even disease outbreaks — can happen unexpectedly. To help be without electricity, interruptions, even the water or phone service for short or awhile. In some cases, such as during a disease outbreak, you may be asked to stay home for some time. Think about having an emergency preparedness stockpile in your home.

What should I put in my emergency preparedness stockpile?

Every American should have at least a three-day supply of food and water stored in their home, with at least one gallon of water per person per day. If you have the space, experts recommend a week's supply of food and water. Choose foods that don't require refrigeration and are not high salt. Your stockpile should also contain supplies, a manual can opener, extra batteries and copies of important documents. Depending on your family needs, you may also need medical supplies, pet food, contact lenses or diapers.

It's best to choose for you to buy something for your stockpile at once, pick up one or two items every time you go to the grocery store. Check out or canned vegetables or bottles when there is a sale. Ask "local" stores and see how you can donate or use supplies, especially if you split a case with a friend, neighbor or relative, who can serve as your "designated buddy."

Check your expiration your stockpile, just if when you won't be tempted to "borrow" from it the next time you go to the store or need items for a recipe. Remember: Your stockpile is for emergencies!

How do I store my emergency preparedness stockpile?

Get Ready Stockpiling Tip

When it's time to change your stockpile, rotate your supplies for "first-in, first-out" (FIFO) storage. Use up your oldest supplies first, and replace them with new ones. Rotate your supplies together in a box or plastic bin that can be easily opened to protect contents from humidity or pests. It's also handy to keep all your supplies together in one place to make it easy to find. Label each bin with the date you rotated and make an easy storage container.

If you live in an apartment or small home and are short on space, be creative. Consider hanging a paper bin and use to store canned food. Rotate can make more space under the bed. Many people also have unused space behind or under the sofa. Have a contractor check out the space for the best way to store your supplies.

Other ideas:

Emergency preparedness exhibit booth

Create an emergency preparedness booth to exhibit important emergency preparedness material. Your booth does not have to be an elaborate construction, as a typical 10-foot table works adequately. The main goal is to provide useful information. Ensure that you have information on a variety of emergency situations and provide relevant resources, such as phone numbers for local fire and health departments.

You can set up your exhibit booth in a range of locations, such as:

- college student centers
- senior centers
- high schools
- office/apartment building lobbies
- grocery stores
- libraries
- health centers
- community service agencies

Work with churches or other faith-based organizations

Insert preparedness planning materials into your church or religious organization bulletin, or post information on a bulletin board. Ask the organization leader to make an announcement regarding the preparedness materials before service if appropriate. Work with members and host a preparedness event or talk after service (or an alternate convenient time). This venue is a great way to reach a lot of people.

Work with a local grocery store

You can promote preparedness and stockpiling to shoppers through displays or fliers in the grocery store. Work with the staff and create a list items for a preparedness kit and indicate the aisle where the product is located. Set up a table at the door showing the supplies needed for a kit. Ask the store to provide coupons for shoppers on preparedness items.

Work with local schools

Develop and conduct a classroom presentation on emergency preparedness. While preparedness is a serious subject, make the talk fun so students will be interested. Use games and other creative methods to keep their attention.

Materials for staying healthy and fit....

ARE YOU READY?

Wash up!

Germs are yucky! They make you feel icky and sick.

Germs live on your hands. You can get germs from other people.

aph.getready.org

Stories from Around the Nation...

Santa Claus Needs a Flu Shot, Too!

I have a story to share with you that occurred at our annual flu drill in Buck's County, PA at Neshaminy-Maple Point Middle School last year, 2011. We all know how important Santa Claus is



around the world but I want to tell you that he is human and he does exist. He also likes to stay healthy as he has a huge job to do on December 25th. I have volunteered for the Buck's County, PA Medical Reserve Corps for more than 5 years. Last fall while administering influenza vaccine to our

citizens I noticed a gentleman walk into the gym and get in line for his flu shot. I thought to myself and mentioned to my colleague "that man over there could be Santa Claus". He had a chest length bushy, snow white beard and white hair. He had a huge, pot belly too.

Lucky me, he approached my station and sat down. It was then that he introduced himself to me & told me that he was Santa Claus!!! He decided he better get his flu shot as he has so many children sitting on his lap giving him their toy list every Christmas season and he wanted to protect himself. My goodness how privileged I felt to be giving Santa Claus his flu shot. I was reassured by the thought that I was keeping him safe and well throughout influenza season so

that he could deliver his toys to all the children of the world. This never would have happened to me had I not volunteered with the MRC. Who else can claim that privilege?

I asked Santa to roll up his sleeve. I gave him the injection and he was on his way with a big "Ho-Ho-Ho". He didn't fly up the chimney because the reindeer were left at home at the north pole, Instead he walked out waving to all the children. After he left, a co-worker said he recognized him as the Santa Claus who worked at a local shopping mall. It is felt that this particular Santa is the real one. I believe.

Mary Pat Seibel, R.N.
MRC, Buck's County, PA



For The Weekly Herald/ DOUG RAMSAY

A participant from Everett, Washington, grimaces as she prepares to receive a whooping cough vaccination from Medical Reserve Corps nurse on July 28th during the Nubian Jam festival at Forest Park in Everett. She was getting the shot in preparation to see her niece who will be born this summer.

Washington state is part of a nationwide whooping cough epidemic, contributing more than one-sixth of the country's nearly 18,000 reported cases.

Stratford medical volunteers respond to Bridgeport fire

SATURDAY, AUG. 4, 3:30 p.m.: Stratford's Medical Reserve Corps has been sent to the scene of a massive fire at the former Remington Arms factory in Bridgeport. The MRC will help in



Firefighters battle the latest fire in the former Remington Arms factory Saturday, Aug. 4. (John KovachPhoto)

assessing firefighters who have been battling the blaze for some 3 hours in 90 degree heat with high humidity.

Medical Reserve Corps volunteers

served a similar role when fire struck an abandoned warehouse in Bridgeport June 21.

Volunteer Highlight

Judy Greengold joined the Alexandria Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in Virginia this past year shortly after relocating to the Washington, D.C. area from New York. She was looking for ways to contribute to her community when she learned about the MRC program. As an MRC volunteer, Judy has been trained and certified in First Aid, CPR, disaster preparedness, and crisis response. Her work with the MRC ties into her work as founder of Puppet Treehouse, a creative health education and outreach organization. She has utilized her puppets at MRC events to spread the word about public health and nutrition to children and their families.

Announcements...

Looking for volunteers for the following on-going activities:

- Planning on having a CPR and First Aid course on September 29th. May need some volunteers to be group leaders. Place to be announced but please call and leave your name so the right number of books can be ordered. Also let us know if you need a professional or community level card.
- Flu season is coming and it looks like we will be helping at some additional clinics this year. Watch your emails for time and dates.
- Looking for volunteers to do Blood Pressure Clinic every 3rd Monday at the Legion Hall in Baldwinville at 12:30pm.
- Also looking for volunteer to help set up a smoking cessation program at an elderly housing project. Give us a call if you can help us put this program together.
- We have been going to various Senior groups and presenting short 10-15 minute talk about putting together a go-kit. We have done this in an informal way talking with groups at Senior centers and at AARP meetings. We have given out more than 300 starter backpacks and have more requests.
- Looking for someone to put together a program on Cultural Diversity in Disasters. Have some materials to start. Hoping also to have a program on Animal Care in a Disaster. Want to help?
- There are also preliminary plans for a program on Special Needs and for a fun disaster exercise. Interested in working on working on training?
- We are presently revamping the MRC to be more formal in its structure. We have grown and matured as an organization and to move forward to sustainability and increasing partnerships, we must review and revise as needed. A draft business plan was presented at the April 26th meeting and includes some new positions. We will continue to refine this plan, and review our Bylaw and Standard Operation Plan for revisions. If you have a suggestion, idea, something you saw work well in another organization, a concern, or discussion point, please feel free to call or email us.
- Looking for a volunteer or two to help with recruitment. We have traditionally called or met

with people one on one to be able to explain the program and give people a chance to ask questions. An afternoon or two will help us to spread word to those who may not know about us.

- Watch your emails for opportunities to participate in various trainings or conferences. As we learn of different conferences, local, regional and national, we will let you know.
- If you haven't sent us your email address or your email address has changed, please do so. Also don't forget to check the website for updates.

Our email: wachusettmrc@juno.com

Our website: wachusettmrc.org

Telephone: 978-928-3834

Recent Activities...

Best Idea:

One of our volunteers put together a parent meeting for her neighborhood. As the children played, the parents got a chance to greet and meet each other, and learn about how to help their families be prepared for emergencies. The volunteer provided them with checklists and a couple of start up items. The program was well received and appreciated.

August 26: We had a table at Petersham Old Home Day from 12n to 3pm. We spoke with about 25 people handing out books, checklists for emergency preparedness, hand sanitizer, and refrigerator magnets with information on how to prevent the flu. We have been at this program several years now and getting more recognition, and we had a few interested in joining the MRC.

July 30: First BP clinic for Seniors at the Templeton Golden Agers meeting. 20 Seniors participated in clinic and the next one will be September. They opted to skip August in favor of the Barbecue Party.

July 5: Invited to speak at the Orange Senior Center about Emergency Preparedness. Charles Black presented a well received talk about emergency preparedness. We gave out 65 starter back packs to the seniors to take home and hopefully add some supplies for emergencies.

June 5: Debra Bachrach presented a program on Lyme Disease to the school children of K-6 in Petersham. We would like to see this program expand to other schools in the area.

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*Never doubt that a small group of
thoughtful, committed citizens can
change the world.*

*Indeed, it's the only thing that ever
has. Margaret Mead*

Blizzards and Ice Storms

Most of winter's weather phenomena -- ordinary or severe -- come in the form of snow or ice. Snow storms, blizzards, and ice storms are the three most common kinds of winter weather, and of the two, blizzards and ice storms are the most likely to be severe. Blizzards and ice storms shut down emergency services, interfere with travel and normal life for days after they have passed, until the deep snow has been properly cleared or the ice has melted.

Officially, a blizzard is a snowstorm with steady winds of 35 miles per hour or more, and enough blowing snow to reduce visibility to less than a quarter mile. If a snowstorm like this lasts less than three hours, it is an exceptionally heavy

squall. If it lasts 3 hours or more, then it is considered a blizzard by American meteorologists. Other countries have different criteria to determine if a snowstorm is actually a blizzard.



Ice storms occur when a layer of warm air is sandwiched between a cold storm aloft and cold air near the ground. Snow falling from the clouds melts into rain in the

warm air layer, then becomes supercooled in the layer of cold air -- meaning that it is below the freezing point of water (32 F) but is still liquid. A peculiarity of supercooled water is that as soon as it touches an object, it instantly freezes. Thus, when the rain touches the ground, trees, or power lines, it adheres to them as ice. The thickest ice accumulation known in the United States from a single storm is 8 inches. The ice is dense and heavy, and can easily snap weak branches or bring down entire trees. If the ice storm covers a large area -- and many of them do -- then thousands or even millions of people can lose their electric power and the cleanup and repair effort after the storm becomes colossal.