

Greene NY MRC Newsletter

JULY 2014

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JULY:

Disability
Awareness Day
July 13, 2014

AUGUST:

National
Immunization
Awareness
Month

SEPTEMBER:

National
Preparedness
Month

ORIENTATION DATES

Orientation will be held regularly for new members at Greene County Emergency Operations and Training Center at 25 Volunteer Dr., Cairo.

TBA

MY MRC EXPERIENCE

Being part of the Medical Reserve Corps in Greene County also provides you the opportunity to volunteer in other parts of New York State in the event of a disaster. After Hurricane Sandy, many downstate counties were devastated by the effects of flooding. Suffolk County deployed their own MRC volunteers first and found they needed additional help, which led the NYS coordinator to send out requests to other counties.

Along with other Serve NY volunteers, I was notified of the request for nurses to help staff a medical needs shelter in Suffolk County. Having experienced and worked through the devastation of Hurricane Irene first hand in Greene County, I was eager to help.

Along with other nurses from several upstate counties including University at Buffalo Nursing students, I travelled by bus to the John Jay Skilled Nursing facility in Yaphank, NY. We arrived after midnight and were housed in FEMA tents and slept on cots. The next day we were briefed about our roles, signed up for 12 hour shifts and got started setting up a medical needs shelter in the day rooms of the already overflowing nursing home. The staff had been working night and day caring for the overflow from the storm. My role was to triage the incoming patients from local emergency rooms and homes to see if they needed any medical care or could be referred to a Red Cross shelter. The deployment occurred a week into the disaster and by then, folks were tired of no electric, water and food. We assisted families with wheelchair and bed bound patients who could no longer be cared for at home. We received those with mental disabilities, dementia and blindness who could not be sheltered by the Red Cross. The day rooms were filled with cots and the MRC volunteers worked diligently to help the victims get bathed, dressed in clean clothes and receive hot meals. Medications were assessed and refilled, wounds were cared for, and the supportive caring nurses listened to the sad stories of those in their care.

Through the experience I made new friends and got to see firsthand how to set up a medical needs shelter. I was happy to be able to give back and found the experience to be tremendously rewarding.

Laura Churchill, MS, FNP-BC
Interim Director of Public Health
Greene County Public Health Department



OUR MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

Our National MRC application was approved in June 2014. Our unit is now listed on the National Medical Reserve Corps [website](#) with specific unit information posted. Current registered volunteers include:

- 5 Physicians
- 4 Physician Assistants
- 1 Nurse Practitioner
- 28 Nurses
- 1 Pharmacist
- 1 Veterinarian
- 14 Other Public Health/Medical
- 15 Non-Medical

We will periodically report unit activities, trainings, and events to share with the National MRC Network. This also provides our Regional Coordinator with information about what local activities are occurring in Greene County.



Pharmacy volunteers participate in the exercise

Become a member of the
GREENE NY MEDICAL
RESERVE CORPS:

[ServNY Registration](#)

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK:

[Facebook.com/GreeneNYHealth](https://www.facebook.com/GreeneNYHealth)

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER:

[Twitter.com/GreeneNYHealth](https://twitter.com/GreeneNYHealth)



MRC IN THE NEWS

Maryland Responds MRC Pharmacy Volunteers Play Critical Role in SNS Exercise

Nineteen Maryland Responds MRC pharmacy volunteers played a critical role in the success of the 2013 Maryland Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Operations exercise, Sept. 23-26, 2013. Objectives of this exercise were to receive orders from across the state to pick, package, and distribute medical material resources and countermeasures. A total of 108 partnering organizations were involved in the exercise, including 45 hospitals/acute care facilities, 24 local health departments, 15 state agencies, 12 state facilities, six law enforcement agencies, three military partners, and three federal agencies.

The pharmacy volunteers were key to the success of the receipt, stage, and store (RSS) operations and demonstrated commitment to their support role. They also used their previously prepared just-in-time training as a cornerstone of their engagement within the RSS incident command structure. The pharmacy volunteers performed assigned tasks without failure or challenge.

The pharmacy volunteer credentials were verified in real time, and one of the strengths of the exercise was the supportive role played by the Board of Pharmacy executive committee, commissioners, and the Board's emergency preparedness taskforce members. This involvement was noted in the after action report which stated, "This is the first time such a supportive and integrated role by a Maryland professional board has been documented and recognized. Certainly, this involvement and participation should be encouraged and continued."

Learn more about the role of pharmacists can play within public health and emergency response within the MRC:

[Pharmacists Bolster Local Health Department Efforts through the Medical Reserve Corps Building and Sustaining Partnerships between Pharmacies and Health Departments at State and Local Levels](#)

[Exercise Illustrates Role of Small, Independent Pharmacies in Emergency Response](#)

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

It's summer time, time for cookouts, swimming, golf, & whatever fun activity you like to do outside. Unfortunately it also means days with extreme heat and the potential for severe weather. The Center for Disease control (CDC) has safety tips on their website for extreme heat exposure & lightning safety, as well as information on other emergencies and natural disasters.

Some of the lightning safety tips include:

- "when thunder roars, go indoors"
- Avoid water
- If caught outside, crouch close to the ground

For more on lightning safety [click here](#)



The CDC has tips for heat exposure safety: "Your best defense against heat-related illness is prevention. Staying cool and making simple changes in your fluid intake, activities, and clothing during hot weather can help you remain safe and healthy." [Click here](#) for the CDC's Extreme Heat Prevention Guide.

Questions or Comments?

Please Contact:
W. Sean Holland
Emergency Preparedness
Coordinator, MRC Unit Coordinator
(518) 719 -3611
wholland@discovergreene.com

Greene NY

