

THE HAZARD

THE PIERCE COUNTY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1

December 2010

WELCOME to the first edition of “The Hazard” – the Pierce County Medical Reserve Corps monthly newsletter designed to keep you informed on the latest unit activity.

As an all hazards emergency response unit, the Pierce County MRC can supplement existing health care infrastructure during an emergency. Disasters may include flooding, earthquakes, or influenza pandemics. As a result, the name of the unit newsletter – “The Hazard” seemed appropriate.

In addition to emergency response, our unit can assist with a variety of health related community outreach projects. Looking forward to the coming year, it is my hope to recruit more members into our unit and create a training curriculum available to all members.

Stay safe through the holidays and look for the January edition of the newsletter

– **Jim Price, Unit Director**

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Pierce County MRC Mission

The mission of the Pierce County Medical Reserve Corps is to train and coordinate dedicated volunteers to improve the health, safety, preparedness, and emergency response capabilities in Pierce County.

First MRC Drill is a Success

Mary Tudor, Public Information Officer

MRC volunteers participated in a drill simulating a release of anthrax by dispensing over 1600 courses of mock prophylaxis medication to volunteers who came from populations as diverse as Russell investments and the homeless. The drill was conducted from 0700 hours to 0900 hours on October 14 at the Tacoma Dome.

“Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, we were successful in testing our capacity to respond to an epidemic,” said Jim Price, who heads the Leadership Council of the Pierce county MRC. “Our mandate is to dispense one-thousand courses in a single hour. Even with the exercise limitation, we

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DRILL

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successfully demonstrated that capability.”

“This was an exercise, with no infectious agent,” said Nigel Turner, an epidemiologist and Director of the Communicable Disease Division of the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD).

Volunteers practiced the tasks and procedures which would be implemented in the event of an epidemic, such as reviewing forms for medical conditions, educating “patients” on how to take the antibiotic, and describing symptoms to anticipate. M&M and Skittle candies were used as the two types of antibiotic medicine that would have been dispensed.

During an outbreak, or an incident where large numbers of people in Pierce County would need to receive prophylaxis medication, the MRC would work with Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department to set up “Points of Distribution” (PODs) throughout the county. The federal standard is to provide needed vaccine or medical treatment to all residents of the county within 48 hours.

In a concurrent activity, almost 500 also received flu shots from MRC volunteers. “We couldn’t have done it without MRC.”



Volunteers are not paid -- not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.

~ Author Unknown

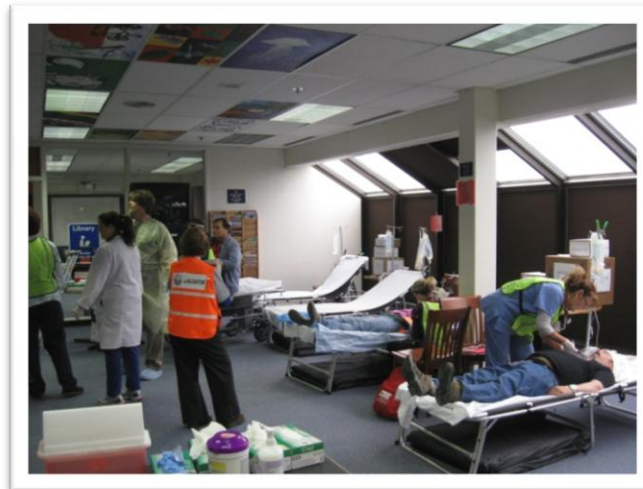


Pierce County MRC Goes to Valdez

Linda Adye-Whitish, Operations Section Chief

In late April 2010, three members of the Pierce County Medical Reserve Corps were invited by the Alaska Division of Homeland Security to attend their Alaska Shield Exercise (ASX) in Valdez, Alaska.

Jim Price and Shirley Carstens participated as exercise evaluators and Linda Adye-Whitish as the lead exercise moulage artist.



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VALDEZ

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The scenario, a devastating earthquake that crippled the State's communications and transportation infrastructure, was held in real-time with hands-on response by almost every governing agency in Alaska. Communities throughout the state were invited to participate at the level of response that was needed to test their local systems. The city of Valdez chose to be involved in all phases of the exercise with aid coming from local assets such as the Fire and Police Departments, Public Works, Red Cross, Providence Hospital and the city's emergency management team as well as the US Coast Guard, Army and Air National Guard, Homeland Security and evaluators/observers from as far away as Whitehorse, Canada and even a delegation from Mongolia.

Valdez is a city with a population of 4,500 and is well acquainted with the dangers of earthquakes. In 1964 most of Valdez was destroyed by a locally-generated 174 foot tsunami caused by an earthquake. The town was moved several miles to a more stable area but there is a strong belief in local preparedness and this was reflected in the level of participation seen during ASX 2010.

The first major community-involved portion came on April 28th when a scenario of a large tsunami overwhelmed large portions of the city. Forty citizen volunteers

were moulaged (made up with simulated injuries) and placed in teams of 4 on the beaches of Port Valdez, spread out over a 60 square mile area. In addition, 20 "swimmers" were dressed in thermal dry suits and, in teams of two, dropped into the waters of Prince William Sound to float while awaiting rescue. Over a four hour period, Air National Guard and Coast Guard assets conducted search and rescue operations to find, treat and evacuate all victims back to the city where they were triaged and treated by Valdez Fire Department personnel.



April 30th brought another earthquake to the local area with significant damage to the 11-bed Providence Valdez Medical Center requiring them to set up an Alternate Care Facility in the local high school library. Again, 30 local volunteers were made-up with realistic injuries and transported to the school where they were triaged and treated over a several hour period. Local medical staffs were augmented by Army National

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

12/1 – Richard Vollmuth

12/1 – Heidi Voepel

12/2 – Jessie Klauder

12/3 – Jennifer Watters

12/3 – Kathryn Harms

12/4 – Justin Voorhees

12/5 – Michael Taylor

12/6 – Kim Burkes

12/6 – Marie Plaut

12/7 – Sarah Reisenaur

12/7 – Amarpreet Singh

12/11 – Suzanne Payne

12/11 – Casey Clifford

12/14 – Tara Melborne

12/15 – Stephanie Melton

12/17 – Marta Larsen

12/18 – Al Littleraven

12/18 – Kevin Lee

12/18 – Ashley Cox

12/19 – Cindy Miron

12/20 – Christina Ford

12/23 – Linda Cline

12/24 – George Lapham

12/24 – Autumn Scott

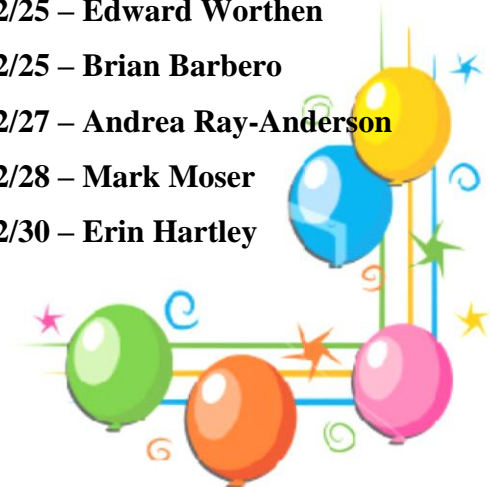
12/25 – Edward Worthen

12/25 – Brian Barbero

12/27 – Andrea Ray-Anderson

12/28 – Mark Moser

12/30 – Erin Hartley



VALDEZ

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Guard medical teams and emergency stocks of supplies and medical equipment were utilized to make the exercise as real as possible.

The “Grand Finale” was a Mass Casualty Incident on May 1st with over 60 victims spread throughout the city in burnt buildings, crushed trailers, damaged vehicles and city parks. Volunteers were instructed to call 911, report their situations and await rescue. All available rescue assets were utilized and response began with their calls for help and continued through rescue, pre-hospital treatment, transport in civilian or military rescue vehicles and treatment at the hospital.

The City of Valdez set an excellent example of both preparedness and dedication to testing their response capabilities that week. After each day’s activities there was an open Hotwash at the Emergency Operations Center allowing all exercise participants to be fully involved in the debrief process. This in turn granted each exercise player a chance take the lessons learned back to their own communities and enhance emergency preparedness there. The representatives from the PCMRC gained valuable insight into how best to aid our communities in preparing for possible disasters and also into staging a drill to test our own local response capabilities.



The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.

~ DeAnn Hollis



Salamander Badge Update

As many of you know, creation and distribution of the MRC badges has been an ongoing project for the last year. Fortunately, the end is in sight. The badges should be printed by the end of this month and ready for distribution in January. Due to the pricing of the badges, a badging procedure will be followed. The subsequent procedure was approved by the MRC Leadership Council.

Badging Procedure

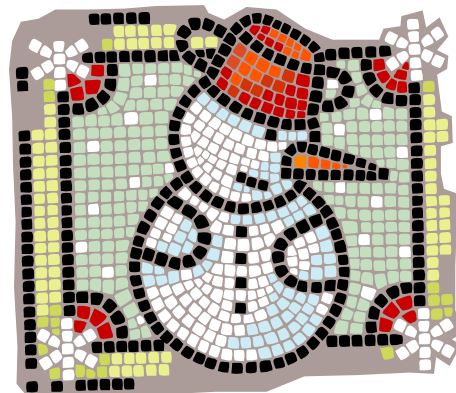
1. Members who complete the core competencies, provide health information, and meet the Level 1 training requirements will receive a Level 1 badge.
2. Members who complete the core competencies and choose to only meet the Level 2 requirements will receive a Level 2 badge.

Active Participation Levels:

Level 1	Active, enthusiastic, involved in community and emergency preparedness events; attend trainings and meetings.
Level 2	Completes the core competency requirements and involved only in a disaster.

Level 1 badges include all the necessary personal history, medical, and training information required for deployment *outside* of Pierce County. Level 2 badges enable the bearer to respond *within* the county limits. This badge does not require medical information; thus, it does not allow the carrier to leave the county in response to a state or international emergency, such as flooding in King County or the earthquake in Haiti.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Vi Vo at mrc@tpchd.org. Thank you all again for your patience.





Save the Dates!

General Membership Quarterly Meeting

Date: February 7th, 2011

Time: 5:30 – 7:30PM

Location: Evergreen State College – Tacoma
(1210 6th Ave, Tacoma 98405) in Room 204

Joeseppi’s Take Over Fundraiser

Date: January 11th, 2011

Time: 4:00 – 8:00PM

Location: 2207 N Pearl St., Tacoma 98406

Description: A night when the Medical Reserve Corps will take over the restaurant. In an effort to raise funds for our organization, we need support from all our members. So please plan to attend and invite your friends to come and eat some great spaghetti or other Italian food. The MRC will receive a percentage of profits for that evening; thus, the percentage of profits is based upon the number of people eating. The more attendees— the greater our percentage will be. We are also seeking donations of baskets filled with goodies for a silent auction. COME, bring your FRIENDS, and support your MRC unit!!!

HELP WANTED!
Volunteers are needed to fill subcommittee positions for planning, communication, and preparedness. If you are interested in being a part of a subcommittee and have not already let the MRC Coordinator know, please contact her at mrc@tpehd.org.



JUST ROUND THE CORNER ...

Regional Free Clinic

Jim Price, Unit Director

The Pierce County MRC is working with the Washington State association of Free Clinics to hold a free dental, medical and vision clinic in Pierce County.

The event will be conducted as a two day exercise validating how volunteers from around the state would be housed, fed, and utilized.

The event is being scheduled as a National Free clinic association sponsored activity and is expected to attract over 2000 poor and under-insured clients from around the state.

The specific date for the event will be determined early in January and a call made to other Washington State MRC Units to gauge interest shortly after that.

More to follow in the January edition of “The Hazard.”

Renewal of Nursing Licenses

Changes begin 1/1/11

The Washington State Nursing Commission adopted continuing competency requirements. The rules go into effect January 1, 2011. The rules require completion of 531 hours of active practice and 45 hours of nursing continuing education by 2014. See the new rules that are on the Nursing Commission website.

Many of you are retired nurses. What does this mean to you and your licensure? The requirements accrue over a three year period of time.

Completing the required number of volunteer hours breaks down to about 16 hours/month of volunteer time. Volunteering for MRC clinics can be counted. MRC has also has information about a free clinics in the county that can use assistance.

The continuing education hours requirement are also accrued over 3 years. The MRC membership meetings and trainings will count toward this requirement.

Additionally, excellent information can be found on the web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa/Professions/Nursing/continuecomp.htm>. This site includes sample forms, links to resources and frequently asked questions. It is worthwhile to read the information so that you can be prepared.

If you have further questions after reviewing the information on the website, please contact the MRC office at 253-798-3566.

Ice and Snow, Take It Slow!

Protect yourself and your passengers. Allow extra time to reach your destination during inclement weather.

- Drive for conditions – slower speeds, slower acceleration, slower steering, and slower braking in winter conditions.
- Use your headlights.
- Don't use cruise control.
- Four and all-wheel drive vehicles will not stop or steer better in icy conditions.
- Leave extra room between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. And remember, big trucks take longer to stop.
- Slow down when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges, or shady spots.
- Brush the snow off your vehicle, especially your lights, before you drive. It makes you more visible plus snow and ice flying off a vehicle can be dangerous to other drivers.



Safe Travels and Happy Holidays!

