

VERMONT

Highlights of State Council Activities

The Vermont Citizens Corps Program, housed in the state's Emergency Management Agency, continued with another successful year in program development and support for local communities. By the end of 2005, all 13 Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), serving as local Citizen Corps Councils, identified a Citizen Corps Chairperson and continued their work towards establishing volunteer programs that support their local community members and emergency management community.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program has grown to include active programs in 12 of the 13 LEPCs. CERT leadership from each of the local CERT programs continues to meet on a quarterly basis to continue the ongoing development and future direction for VTCERT. One goal in this development is the utilization of the Seven National Priorities and the 37 target capabilities under the National Preparedness Goal.

Vermont's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program continues to grow in the Southwestern part of the state. These volunteers collaborate with local medical centers on planning and preparedness activities. The state has also recently engaged in a partnership with Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and the State of Maine to build a tri-state Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS).

One local Citizen Corps Council has developed a partnership with an already established Neighborhood Watch program to continue and expand on the work that has already been established in the community.

Highlights of State Activities

Public Education and Outreach

Vermont's Citizen Corps volunteers support a variety of community activities around the state. The development of preparedness displays and educational packages were displayed and distributed to community members at local fairs, field days, festivals, National Night Out events and other community programs. Other Citizen Corps volunteers worked with their local emergency responders to continue outreach efforts by going door-to-door checking on residents who may be at risk during a variety of emergencies in the state. This included checking on special needs populations, such as the elderly and those with acute medical needs.

Training and Exercises

During 2005, eight local CERT classes were offered throughout the state with and over 135 citizens were trained in emergency response.

Many of the CERT programs are involved in their local LEPC exercise program and participate accordingly. The Vermont Emergency Management Agency also includes Citizen Corps volunteers in statewide exercises as evaluators or players.

Volunteer Programs and Support

Vermont Citizen Corps has worked closely with the state Emergency Management Agency to involve Citizen Corps volunteers in state and local response planning for shelter operations, and donations and volunteer management. In addition, Citizen Corps volunteers are now being included in performing damage assessments during emergencies.

Vermont Citizen Corps held its Citizen Corps Conference in October. This one day event provided Citizen Corps Councils and volunteers with information on existing public education programs within the state and information on various organizations. During the conference, volunteers gave testimonials about experiences and speakers from the National Weather Service and Safety Caps for a Safer Home presented on how their prospective programs could be tailored for local communities.

Support for Hurricane Katrina Response

Vermont's Citizen Corps volunteers assisted in a statewide donations effort called "Operation Special Delivery." Volunteers managed donations, organized, and assisted with the loading of 70 truck loads of donated goods. Additionally, they delivered donations to Gulfport, Mississippi using volunteer truck drivers from local companies and a state police escort.

National Preparedness Month

Vermont Citizen Corps recognized National Preparedness Month by developing and distributing the "Family Preparedness Workbook" through its Citizen Corps volunteers. This workbook provides the steps and basic tips families can follow to make their homes better prepared.