



FEMA

Citizen Corps July 2007 Newsletter



The View from HQ

Over the past several weeks, many states around the country have endured torrential rains, wild fires, and tornados. These natural disasters have displaced hundreds of people, bringing home the real and constant need to have a personal preparedness plan in place for any eventuality, and to work with others in your community to ensure that those who cannot help themselves receive the assistance they need. This is especially important when first responders are overwhelmed or unable to reach a disaster site right away. For those who are looking for resources to help with planning for the future, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers a number of free publications to help individuals better prepare for emergencies. The Ready Campaign (www.ready.gov) is another good source of basic information for seniors, businesses, youth, pets and families. Also in this month's news, National Preparedness Month 2007 was announced at the *2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness: Participation and Collaboration through Citizen Corps* in June. Look for more on these and other stories inside. As always, we look forward to feedback and good stories from our readers. Please see our editorial policy on submissions on the last page of this newsletter.

July 26, 2007: Anniversary of the Signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act

On July 26, 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#), guaranteeing equal opportunity for people with disabilities in public accommodations, commercial facilities, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications. Many people with disabilities are at greater risk during an emergency. Use this anniversary as an opportunity to organize activities to ensure that people in your community with disabilities are prepared with disaster supply kits, a family communication plan, working smoke detectors, and a way to be connected to others to help them during an incident. Also consider using this day to highlight examples of how people with disabilities can participate in Citizen Corps training and volunteer programs – include a recruitment drive specifically for people with disabilities. Invite local leaders, disabled members of your community, and other citizens to participate in a roundtable discussion about what steps can be taken to address the needs of this segment of your community. Invite local members of the media to participate.

By the Numbers:

Citizen Corps Councils:	2,196
CERT	2,699
Fire Corps	632
MRC	671
NWP	14,791
VIPS	1,558
Affiliates	25

Did you Know...

51.2 million, or 18 percent of the U.S. population, has some level of disability.

72 percent of people 80 and older have disabilities.

Source: U.S. Census http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/010102.html

Become a National Preparedness Month coalition member!

Coalition members agree to distribute emergency preparedness information and sponsor activities across the country that will promote emergency preparedness. Membership is open to all public and private sector organizations. Groups can register to become National Preparedness Month coalition members by visiting www.ready.gov and clicking on the National Preparedness Month banner

September is...
National Preparedness Month
 Get a Kit, Make a Plan,
 Be Informed and Get Involved

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Sponsors Fourth Annual National Preparedness Month

September 2007 Effort Addresses Emergency Preparedness for Families, Businesses and Communities

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security will sponsor the fourth annual National Preparedness Month this September, encouraging Americans to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and communities. This year's effort has a growing coalition of more than 625 national, regional, state, and local organizations pledging support. For the first time, National Preparedness Month will focus on multiple areas of emergency preparedness.

- o September 1-8: Back-to-School
- o September 9-15: Business preparedness
- o September 16-22: Multicultural preparedness
- o September 23-30: Home and family preparedness, including pets, older Americans and individuals with disabilities and special needs

Homeland Security Committee members U.S. Senators Joe Lieberman and Susan Collins and U.S. Representatives Bennie Thompson and Peter King are serving as honorary Congressional co-chairs of National Preparedness Month 2007. The *Ready* campaign and the Citizen Corps Program are working closely together to promote activities across the nation that will encourage individuals to have an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about the different threats that may affect them, as well as take steps to get trained and engaged in community preparedness and response efforts. Citizen Corps encourages its Councils and partners to start planning now and register their events on the Citizen Corps calendar: www.citizencorps.gov/citizenCorps/eventCalendarMap.do

Volunteers Honored at 2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness

Two President's Volunteers Service Awards were given to Citizen Corps volunteers at the *2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness: Participation and Collaboration through Citizen Corps* in June.

The Danville (VA) Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Team led by emergency manager Doug Young received a group award for the thousands of hours of volunteer service they have contributed over the past several years. In addition to Mr. Young, volunteers Jack Aaron and Al Smith were also present to receive the award on behalf of the team.

Michelle P Troup, the program manager for Union County (PA) Citizen Corps, received a President's Call to Service Award—the highest level offered—for contributing over 4,000 hours of volunteer service. She is commended by her state Citizen Corps Council for developing a variety of advanced training for citizens and keeping volunteers engaged through rodeos and refresher training.

Any individual, family, or group can receive Presidential recognition for volunteer hours earned over a 12-month period or over the course of a lifetime at home or abroad. To learn more about the award visit www.presidentialserviceawards.gov.

Hurricane Season is in Full Swing

Is your community part of the National Flood Insurance Program?

- Your home has a 26% chance of being damaged by a flood during the course of a 30-year mortgage, compared to a 9% chance of fire.
- Roughly 25% of all claims paid by the NFIP are for policies in low- to moderate-risk communities.
- Visit www.floodsmart.gov for information on flood insurance.

Preparedness Publications Available From FEMA

Disasters disrupt hundreds of thousands of lives every year. Each disaster has lasting effects, both to people and property. To help communities, families, and individuals get informed, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers free publications designed to provide assistance in planning and preparing for disasters.

The "Are You Ready?" guide provides a step-by-step approach to disaster preparedness by walking the reader through how to gain knowledge of local emergency plans, how to identify hazards that affect their area and instructing them on how to develop and maintain an emergency communications plan and building a disaster supplies kit.

Other preparedness publications offered by FEMA include:

- o Preparing for Disaster - FEMA 475
- o Helping Children Cope with Disaster - FEMA 478
- o Food and Water in an Emergency - FEMA 477
- o Preparing for Disaster for People with Disabilities and other Special Needs - FEMA 476
- o Disaster Preparedness Coloring Book (for ages 3-10) - FEMA 243E

To obtain these publications and many more, visit www.fema.gov, or call the FEMA Distribution Center at 1-800-480-2520. Also, you can request them by mail from:

Federal Emergency Management Agency
P.O. Box 2012
Jessup, MD 20794-2012

National Flood Insurance Program

Flooding can happen anywhere, and it is a common consequence of severe weather, snow melt, mud slides. Most insurance does not cover flood damage. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) was established to provide optional coverage for individuals in communities that participate in the program. Community participation is voluntary. Each identified flood-prone community must assess its flood hazard and determine whether flood insurance and floodplain management would benefit the community's residents and economy. It is important to get involved well before any potential flooding. In a community that chooses not to participate within one year after a flood hazard has been identified (and an NFIP map provided), flood insurance and Federal or Federal-related financial assistance is not available under the NFIP for acquisition or construction purposes in a Special Flood Hazard Area. Also, if a Presidentially-declared disaster occurs as a result of flooding in a non-participating community, no Federal financial assistance can be provided for the permanent repair or reconstruction of insurable buildings in these areas. If the community applies and is accepted into the NFIP within six months of a Presidential disaster declaration, these limitations on Federal disaster assistance are lifted. Learn more at: www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/community_participation.jsp



Program Partner Updates

National Volunteer Fire Council Calls for Citizen Corps and Fire Corps Authorization

National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) Chairman and La Farge, WI, Fire Department Chief Philip C. Stittleburg testified on June 13 before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response. Stittleburg's testimony focused on Fire Corps (www.firecorps.org), the newest of the five Citizen Corps programs focusing on the fire/EMS disciplines.

The testimony outlined Fire Corps' many benefits, emphasizing how it has greatly increased the ability of the nation's fire and emergency medical services to provide, maintain, and increase services to their communities. Stittleburg concluded his testimony by calling for Congress to pass an authorization for Citizen Corps that would include a sub-authorization for Fire Corps. Citizen Corps was created by the Administration and has been funded through appropriations, but has never been authorized. The NVFC believes that a sub-authorization for Fire Corps will allow it to retain its unique characteristics linking Citizen Corps efforts to the fire service.

Volunteers in Police Service turns Five!

VIPS Program celebrated its fifth anniversary on May 30, 2007.

Nancy Kolb, VIPS Program Manager, writes:

"It has been exciting to watch and experience the growth in law enforcement volunteer efforts in communities across the country over the last five years. The growth of the national VIPS Program is merely a reflection of those local efforts. We are truly grateful for the support from our partners and friends who have been advocates for law enforcement volunteers and volunteer programs."

To celebrate VIPS fifth anniversary, the program redesigned its website. The site includes new interactive features and a video celebrating the growth in law enforcement volunteer efforts. VIPS invites readers to visit the site (www.policevolunteers.org), watch the video (www.policevolunteers.org/resources/videos/anniversary/), and let them know what you think.



Affiliate Highlight

Pandemic Pandemonium

The Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross in Tallahassee, FL, recently facilitated a tabletop exercise with several of its partners, called "Pandemic Pandemonium - A Neighborhood Tabletop Exercise." The four-hour event brought neighborhood leaders together to work through how their neighborhood would plan and prepare for, respond to and recover from an Influenza Pandemic.

For additional information on the exercise please visit the following website: <http://redcross.tallytown.com/panflu/>. The exercise was funded through a grant from the state Citizen Corps program. For more information, please contact Chris Floyd, Chief Operations Officer, Capital Area Chapter, American Red Cross at: ds-severeweather@redcross.tallytown.com.

Citizen Corps Council News

Rowlett Citizen Corps Wins Award for Community Capacity Building

The Rowlett (TX) Citizen Corps Council (RCCC) received 24th Annual Governor's Volunteer Award for the Community Capacity Builder in the Public/Government category. The award recognizes an individual or group for increasing the capacity of an organization to serve others by working strategically to bring about sustainable change within an organization or community through an increase in service delivery, improvement of performance and impact of service.

Now in its fifth year, the RCCC and its affiliated programs continue to grow with over 150 members in the **CERT, Volunteers in Police (VIPS)** and **Fire Corps** programs. Almost 200 Rowlett citizens have been trained through CERT to date. The Rowlett Fire Corps provides rehabilitation and support services to Rowlett and Sachse Fire/Rescue and Police departments on long-duration incidents. VIPS volunteers support the Rowlett Police Department through activities such as performing vacation house watches.

Rowlett Police Chief Matt Walling praised the RCCC's contributions, saying "During tactical situations, the RCCC volunteers allow us to re-deploy police officers from traffic control duties to perform critical tasks. When a child is reported missing, they also quickly supplement our available manpower when time is of the essence."

In 2006, the Rowlett Citizen Corps Council also produced an award-winning Emergency Preparedness Guide that was mailed to each household and business in Rowlett. The resource guide prepares citizens for disasters and emergencies by providing detailed checklists and emergency preparedness information that can be easily accessed. For more information about RCCC, visit www.rowlettcitizencorps.org.

Connecticut Citizen Corps Assists with Regional Shelter Exercise

Contributed by William Austin

Connecticut's Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee held a full functional exercise over Memorial Day weekend to test the operation of an emergency mass care shelter for up to 500 people. In the scenario, flooding forced the evacuation of 10,000 residents from a nearby municipality. A regional shelter was opened at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 26th and operated until 1:30 p.m. the following day.

In addition to testing the operational use of the facility, participants gained experience in incident command. Operational periods of various lengths allowed multiple opportunities to fill in the various Incident Command System positions. Connecticut Citizen Corps Council units were responsible for several of the 11 mission objectives, including evacuee identification, communications, shelter support, and medical services.

The West Hartford Community Accountability and Identification team performed the shelter access and accountability function, processing 115 "evacuees." The Manchester Emergency Management Communication Team provided both voice and data transmission backup and maintained a link with the State Emergency Operation Center. **CERT** members from several other municipalities provided shelter support, and the Capitol Region **Medical Reserve Corps** provided medical support for the evacuees. Thirty "evacuees" slept in the shelter overnight, providing a realistic training opportunity for an extended period. The Connecticut Youth Health Service Corps also provided support for the operation.



Rowlett Citizen Corps, pictured from left to right: Leisa Peebles, RCCC Treasurer; Greg Peebles, RCCC Vice President; Larry Wright, City of Rowlett Fire Rescue Chief; Whitney Laning, RCCC President; Robert Lafaye, City of Rowlett Emergency Management Coordinator; Bobbi Laning, Rowlett CERT Member; Cindy Rushing, City of Rowlett Councilmember and CERT Member

Three-Month Outlook

Consider incorporating some of these themes into your community preparedness activities over the coming months.

July

- July 4, 2007: Independence Day
- July 26, 2007: Anniversary of the Signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act

August

- August 7, 2007: The 24th Annual National Night Out
- Heat Wave
- Water Conservation

September

- National Preparedness Month
- September 9, 2007: Grandparents Day and Healthy Aging Month
- September 11, 2007: Anniversary Attacks
- September 15-October 15, 2007: National Hispanic Heritage Month
- September 17, 2007: Citizenship Day
- September 23-29, 2007: Deaf Awareness Week

Editorial Policy

Citizen Corps welcomes your stories and best practices. If you would like to submit a story for consideration, please review our editorial policy.

- **Due Date:** All articles must be received by the 15th of the month to be considered for the next newsletter.
- **Length:** Articles should be between 50 – 150 words, or one to three paragraphs.
- **Format:** Submit text in Word 12pt Times New Roman, or paste directly into your email. Articles submitted as PDF will be not be used.
- **Previously Published Articles:** If you wish to submit a published article, you must obtain and include written permission from the publication, to comply with copyright laws.
- **Photos:** If submitting a photo, attach it to your email as a JPG or TIF file. Include the names of people in the photo and a description of what they are doing and why. NOTE: Photos are assumed to be approved for publication.
- **Complete Information:** Be sure to include complete and accurate information, including city and state, name of people or organizations involved, date of activity, contact information for author, and other relevant information.
- **Changes:** Citizen Corps retains the right to edit all stories for length, clarity, and accuracy.
- **Acceptance:** Submissions are selected based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to: activities of national interest, timeliness, space available, completeness of information, relevance, and other criteria.
- **Where to submit:** Please submit your articles to your regional program managers, and copy your state Citizen Corps program manager. (For a listing of state contacts, please visit: www.citizencorps.gov/citizenCorps/statepoc.do.)
 - o Regions 1, 2, and 3 (CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NJ, NH, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands): Angela Heim: angela.heim@dhs.gov
 - o Regions 4 and 7 (AL, CO, FL, GA, KY, MS, MT, NC, ND, SC, SD, TN, UT, WY): Stephanie Poore: Stephanie.poore@dhs.gov
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