



FEMA

Citizen Corps

May/June 2007 Newsletter



The View from HQ

Welcome to the May/June 2007 Citizen Corps Newsletter! In this edition, we will look at topics ranging from hurricane season to home safety, as well as a number of good stories from the field on ways that Citizen Corps Councils and partners have approached emergency preparedness for special needs. We also congratulate recent winners of the President's Volunteer Service Award and highlight some of the good work of our Program Partners and Affiliates. We love to hear from our readers. If you have a story to send in, please see our editorial policy at the end of the newsletter.

2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness: *Partnerships and Collaboration through Citizen Corps*

The 2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness: Partnerships and Collaboration through Citizen Corps opens on Sunday, June 10, and runs through June 13. Hosted by the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), up to 600 attendees will gather to share ideas and best practices on citizen preparedness that can be easily replicated across the country. Participants represent emergency management, fire and police services, public health and emergency medical services, Citizen Corps Councils and partners, non-governmental organizations, state and local elected officials, federal partners, private business, industry, and others with an interest in community preparedness. Keynote speakers include FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison, DHS Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Al Martinez-Fonts, Kathy Wills Wright, Special Assistant to the President and USA Freedom Corps Deputy Director, and Lynne Kidder, Business Executives for National Security Senior Vice President for Business Force.

Conference topics emphasize the importance of building partnerships to manage emergencies and sharing best practices on ways to improve community preparedness neighborhood by neighborhood. Breakout and plenary sessions will cover an array of topics, including best practices in community preparedness, updated information on national policies such as the National Incident Management Systems; partnering with the private sector to enhance preparedness and response; the role of volunteers in disaster response; reaching out to special needs populations, such as those with pets or mobility, language, or age-related concerns; funding; volunteer liability issues; new research on citizen preparedness; and other areas related to the many aspects of all-hazard preparedness, prevention, response, mitigation, and recovery.

The 2007 National Conference on Community Preparedness is funded in part by a cooperative agreement with the Department of Homeland Security. For more information, please visit the conference website www.iaem.com/NCCC2007.htm or contact IAEM at info@iaem.com.

BY THE NUMBERS:

Citizen Corps Councils:	2,196
CERT	2,667
Fire Corps	629
MRC	667
NWP	14,791
VIPS	1,556
Affiliates	25



Hurricane Season Starts June 1

The 2007 hurricane season is here, and forecasters say this hurricane season could be nearly as destructive as 2005, the worst on record. FEMA is reminding everyone to begin their emergency preparations now. For tips on hurricane preparedness, visit FEMA's Get Ready '07 hurricane preparedness website: www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/hu_season.shtm

Over 50 Minor League Baseball Teams to Promote Emergency Preparedness

This summer, Minor League Baseball teams nationwide are teaming up with the Department of Homeland Security's *Ready* Campaign for the fourth consecutive year to encourage Americans to prepare for emergencies. These teams are working with their Citizen Corps Councils and local Boy Scouts to encourage fans to prepare for emergencies, including natural disasters and terrorist attacks. Citizen Corps members and the Scouts will distribute *Ready* brochures and air public service announcements on coreboards during *Ready* Nights. Scouts will earn credits toward an Emergency Preparedness merit badge and a Good Turn for America Award. For more information contact ready@dhs.gov.



JUNE IS HOME SAFETY MONTH!

Take a Hands-On Approach to Home Safety

Submitted by Patricia Adkins, COO, Home Safety Council, a Citizen Corps Affiliate

If you ask most Americans where they feel safest, most will say their homes. Of course, our homes are our havens. They are also where accidents occur, resulting in nearly 21 million medical visits each year. Each day in homes across America, 55 people die and another 58,000 people are injured and need medical care. By installing the right safety products and doing some simple planning, you can make your home a safer place. Here are a few actions you can take today to prevent accidents at home.

FALLS

Falls are the leading cause of emergency room visits among children and are the leading cause of injury and deaths among older adults.

- Install grab bars in the tub and shower.
- Put bright lights over stairs and steps and on landings.
- Have handrails on both sides of the stairs and steps.
- Use a ladder for climbing instead of a stool or furniture.
- Use baby gates at the top and bottom of the stairs, if babies or toddlers live in or visit your home.

POISONING

One out of four people dies from poisoning at home every year. Be smart about where and how to store poisons, especially in homes where children live or visit.

- Lock poisons, cleaners, medications and all dangerous items in a place where children can't reach them.
- Keep all cleaners in their original containers. Do not mix them together.
- Use medications carefully. Follow the directions. Use child resistant lids.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors near sleeping areas.
- Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 if someone is poisoned. This number will connect you to emergency help in your area.

FIRES AND BURNS

Smoke alarms can cut your family's risk of dying in a home fire almost in half. Protect your loved ones from fires and burns in the home.

- Have working smoke alarms and hold fire drills. If you build a new home, install fire sprinklers.
- Stay by the stove when cooking, especially when you are frying food.
- Keep space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn. Turn them off when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- If you smoke, smoke outside. Use deep ashtrays and put water in them before you empty them. Lock matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Only light candles when an adult is in the room. Blow the candle out if you leave the room or go to sleep.

(continued on page 3)

Free weekly safety tip for your website!

Promote safety on your website. The National Safety Council offers you the opportunity to add a free weekly safety tip to your website. Log on to www.ncpc.org for more information.

Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities

Visit the National Organization on Disability website for emergency preparedness tips for people with disabilities and older Americans.

www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&PageID=11

...Take a Hands-On Approach to Home Safety (cont'd from p.2)

PREVENT CHOKING AND SUFFOCATION

Half of children who die before age one die from choking or suffocation. Little things can be dangerous in little hands.

- Things that can fit through a toilet paper tube can cause a young child to choke. Keep coins, latex balloons, and hard round foods, such as peanuts and hard candy, out of children's reach.
- Place children on their backs in bed. Don't put pillows, comforters, or toys in cribs.
- Clip the loops in window cords and place them up high where children can't get them.
- Read the labels on all toys, especially if they have small parts. Be sure that your child is old enough to play with them.
- Tell children to sit down when they eat and to take small bites.

WATER SAFETY

Children can drown in as little as an inch of water in just a few minutes.

- Stay within an arm's length of children in and around water. This includes the bathtub, toilet, pools and spas – even buckets of water.
- Put a high fence all the way around your pool or spa. Always keep the gate closed and locked.
- Empty large buckets and wading pools after using them. Keep them upside down when you are not using them.
- Make sure your children always swim with a grown-up. No child or adult should swim alone.
- Keep your hot water at or below 120°F degrees to prevent burns.

Visit the Home Safety Resource Center at www.homesafetycouncil.org to view and download free information, including posters, brochures, safety checklists and additional tips to help safeguard your family.

Call for Entries: 2007 NOD Celebrates 25 Years with New National Partnership Awards

The National Organization of Disability (NOD), a member of the National Citizen Corps Council, has announced a new special awards competition. The awards, sponsored by Prudential Financial, Inc., to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the founding of NOD. Deadline: August 31, 2007. For more information, please visit <http://www.nod.org>.

Since 1982, NOD has played a leading role in the disability rights movement and the empowerment of our nation's largest minority – 54 million men, women and children with disabilities.

Nearly 1,500 radio volunteers served along the Gulf Coast in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma.

Affiliate Spotlight: American Radio Relay League

Radio operators come from all walks of life - rock stars, engineers, lawyers, doctors, pilots, judges, computer programmers, teachers and perhaps someone in your neighborhood. On June 23 – 24, the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) will hold its annual Field Day contest for amateur radio operators and invites the community to join them. Visit the AARRL website to find a Field Day location in your area:

www.arrl.org.

Founded in 1914, ARRL represents more than 650,000 FCC-licensed radio volunteers nationwide. One of the primary FCC mandates for amateur radio is to provide emergency communications during disasters when other communications' systems are destroyed or damaged. Radio volunteers can use a wide variety of methods to send emergency messages, from traditional Morse Code to digital methods that include email, the internet and even television images, all on emergency power. Radio volunteers use their own equipment and their own time at no cost to provide a totally interoperable emergency communication service—the only fail-safe communications service in the world.

The ARRL website at www.arrl.org contains information on every aspect of amateur radio, including public service and emergency communications, building antennas, international expeditions, the history of amateur radio, rules and regulations, wireless technology education and even bouncing signals off the moon and the tails of comets.

From the Field

New Jersey CERT Responds to Nor'Easter

During the April 2007 Nor'Easter, 13 of New Jersey's 21 counties received Presidential Disaster Declarations. CERT teams across New Jersey responded in a variety of response and recovery roles:

Response Support

- Staffing emergency operations centers
- Shelter operations
- Loading, unloading and distributing goods and services
- Traffic control and staffing closed roadway barricades
- Distributing information flyers to victims
- Mercer County CERT flood response trailer deployed to Princeton to assist

Recovery

- Assisting FEMA and New Jersey Office of Emergency Management with community relations operations
- Helping clean-up efforts
- Distributing preparedness materials
- Staffing disaster recovery centers

Congratulations to New Jersey's CERT teams for their prompt, organized efforts.



Orange County, FL, CERT volunteers test their skills at a May 6, 2007, drill in Orlando.



March 2007 flooding in Oakdale, PA



Oakdale, PA, CERT at the ready during recent floods

From the Field (cont'd)

Orange County, Florida, CERT Drill

Seventy-six members from various Orange County neighborhood CERTs combined into five working groups of 15 to 16 people to maintain span of control as they practiced fire suppression, triage, rescue extractions and first aid to 23 moulaged actors. Orange County CERT volunteers met early on a Sunday morning in the Orange County Emergency Operations Center and deployed to the mock disaster scene. The mock scenario was conducted in an abandoned neighborhood that is being demolished for new dormitories. Two basic lessons learned during the drill were “be ready for anything and communicate continuously with each other for resources and updates.”

Submitted by Orange County CERT www.orangecountyfl.net/cms/default.htm

Oakdale, PA, CERT Responds to Flooding

Pennsylvania is a flood-prone state, and the majority of its first responder forces are volunteers who are unavailable during the day due to full-time jobs. This makes CERT training extremely valuable for local communities. On March 15, 2007, Oakdale Borough in Allegheny County found out just how valuable these citizen volunteers are during times of crisis.

At 8:05 a.m., Bob Kolesky, Oakdale Borough’s Emergency Management Coordinator and a CERT member, was notified by the local police department that the rain was causing concerns in the borough for high water levels. Kolesky visually confirmed that water levels were at flood stage in the area and immediately went to the command center to notify the CERT team. Within 20 minutes, the CERT began to notify residents and businesses in the area that the water was at flood stage and an evacuation might become necessary.

As the rain continued to fall, the team maintained its vigil checking on the water levels and keeping the Allegheny County 911 Center up to date on the latest conditions. In addition, they assisted Kolesky with placing Northwest EMS, the American Red Cross, Animal Rescue and the Western Pennsylvania Honor Guard on standby to help with evacuation, housing and animal control if the need arose. The team also kept constant contact with the Oakdale Kids Corner Day Care Center and Oakdale Community Center to reassure them that the situation was under control. By noon of the same day, the water level had dropped eight inches and the flood possibility had lessened to the point that the command center ceased its operations. While the danger had passed for the moment, the incident proved that the Oakdale CERT is ready to go in an emergency and demonstrated the value of having trained, organized volunteers to support our first responders.

TEEN CERT: Harris County (TX) Students Gather to Practice Emergency Response Skills

On May 12, students from 10 high schools in greater Harris County participated in a hands-on drill that tested emergency preparedness learned throughout the semester. The emergency training assists teens in handling disaster situations that can happen during the school day such as acts of aggression and natural disasters. Drill activities included fire suppression, search and rescue, cribbing to lift objects off trapped victims, and medical triage assistance.

A partnership between the Center for Safe and Secure Schools at the Harris County Department of Education and the Harris County Citizen Corps has trained students at 19 schools this spring, with 1,256 students trained since the program's inception. In addition to CERT fundamentals, the program also educates students about teen violence, cues for detecting aggression and how to report it.

Classroom sessions are partially funded through grants from The Allstate Foundation and Texas Center for Service Learning and are supported by the County's Center for Safe and Secure Schools.

Program Partner Highlights

The Bergen County (NJ) Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) participated in an Emergency Preparedness Exercise to test the Department of Health Services' Modified Point of Distribution (POD) Plan. The goal of the exercise was to test whether the POD clinic model would allow for the distribution of medication to 2,000 people per hour. It also focused on the communication issues involved in opening and running this type of POD clinic. Initial evaluations indicate that the exercise was a positive step in the ongoing strengthening of Bergen County's emergency response and preparedness capability for any potential hazard. Over 200 healthcare workers and volunteers participated, including representatives from the Department of Health Services, 20 municipalities and agencies, eight local health jurisdictions, the Medical Reserve Corps, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) and professionals from around the state.

Volunteers from the Northeast Missouri MRC were called on to support a search and rescue operation in a remote area in Adair County. While the MRC is chiefly a medical unit that would be activated in a mass casualty-type situation, the unit has sponsored two search and rescue classes in the past for volunteers interested in search and rescue. This training has given interested volunteers an opportunity to branch out and develop additional skills.



Harris County, TX,
May 12, 2007 Teen CERT
drill

Congratulations President's Volunteer Service Award Winners!

Fairfax County (VA)
Volunteers in Police Service
members Tracey Ryan, John
Bauer, and Donna Spiewak
were awarded the President's
Volunteer Service Award on
April 20, 2007. Attorney
General Alberto R. Gonzales
presented the award.

[www.policevolunteers.org/
pdf/4%2026%2007%
20DOJ%20Press%
20Release%20Final.pdf](http://www.policevolunteers.org/pdf/4%2026%2007%20DOJ%20Press%20Release%20Final.pdf)

Don't Forget to include Special Needs in Your Hurricane Season Plans

The U.S. Census estimates that 34.9 million people live in the coastal portion of states threatened by Atlantic hurricanes (North Carolina to Texas.) Twelve percent of the nation's population lived in these areas.

Source: U.S. Census

Good Idea

Search and Rescue Program for Special Needs Population

In western Pennsylvania, the Search and Rescue Development Center works with Project Lifesaver and CERT to design and implement programs for special needs populations. Project Lifesaver issues radio frequency transmitters to people with Autism, Alzheimer's, Downs Syndrome and other disabilities, who could wander away and become lost.

The program offers electronic search specialist training and certification, which is accredited for continuing education hours through the state Department of Health. Project Lifesaver has implemented the "Take Me Home" volunteer registration database, which is available to first responders and contains important information on individuals with special needs so they can be identified in an emergency or disaster.

Project Lifesaver also uses the Special Population Planner (SPP), which is the first GIS program of its kind, developed by Argonne National Laboratory and donated to Project Lifesaver to assist with their work. The SPP allows users to visualize emergency planning for the special need population by entering the data and providing threat scenarios that can be created in layers, along with escape routes, shelter locations and other safety measures that will provide the special need population with emergency planning equal to or greater than the typical population. Trainings are ongoing and a "Condition Red" program has been added to the local CERT curriculum.

Submitted by Cynthia A Garfold, Executive Director, Western PA Search and Rescue Development Center. For more information, visit <http://www.wpsardc.org> or contact Cynthia at cgarfold@wpsardc.org

Reaching Vulnerable Populations in Maryland

Maryland Citizen Corps is working with the Maryland State Commissions to help state residents become safer, stronger and better prepared for disasters of all kinds. Recent outreach has been focused on vulnerable populations, including residents who use English as a second language or those with limited English proficiency. Maryland Citizen Corps is working closely with the Asian Commission, the Hispanic Commission, the American Indian Commission and the Women's Commission to reach all of their respective constituents. A "Preparing Diverse Communities for Emergencies/Disasters" conference will take place June 6th, and another conference is being planned for July.

Three-Month Outlook

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

June

- June 1, 2007: Hurricane Season Begins
- National Safety Month – National Safety Council
- Home Safety Month – Home Safety Council
- June 11-17, 2007: National Men's Health Week
- June 14, 2007: Flag Day
- June 23-24, 2007: ARRL Field Day

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
- Crime Prevention

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 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.)
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