

THE CORPS

Official Newsletter for the Maryland Responds Medical Reserve Corps

As the year draws to a close, we reflect with gratitude on the incredible contributions you have made. Through your volunteering, training, and unwavering support of public health initiatives, you have helped strengthen communities across Maryland. Your dedication is the foundation of our mission to build resilience and promote well-being. As we prepare for the year ahead, we look forward to continuing our work together to create safer, healthier communities. May this holiday season bring you peace, joy, and a sense of fulfillment for all you've accomplished.

From all of us at the Maryland Responds Medical Reserve Corps, warm wishes to you and your loved ones for a safe and happy holiday season.

Happy
Holidays



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JOYFUL NEW YEAR

Montgomery County Annual Meeting and Active Assailant Training

On October 10th, the Montgomery County MRC held its Annual Meeting, bringing together volunteers for an evening of learning, reflection, and celebration. The event featured an active assailant training session, a review of the past year's achievements, and discussions on future plans. The meeting concluded with a special awards ceremony honoring volunteers who provided exceptional service to the MRC and the Montgomery County community. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to the event's success!



Point of Dispensing Drill



Photos Courtesy of Notre Dame of Maryland University

On October 8th, twelve members from the Board of Pharmacy Emergency Preparedness Task Force (EPTF) conducted a Point of Dispensing (POD) Drill for approximately 140 students at the Notre Dame of Maryland University School of Pharmacy. As in drills conducted previously, the scenario employed by the EPTF at Notre Dame Drill involved the need to rapidly treat the public after the release of aerosolized anthrax by terrorists. This year's drill, organized by EPTF member Larry Hogue, once again demonstrated the improved speed and accuracy by employing QR codes and Mobile Technology to electronically complete the required Medication Screening Form. EPTF members worked closely with Notre Dame faculty, who would need to take the operational lead if an actual POD activation were to occur, to familiarize them with POD concepts, infrastructure and procedures. The drill was judged a success thanks to Notre Dame Dean Matthew Shimoda for his continuing support, to Kim Eshleman and Joe White from the Baltimore City Health Department for their help and especially to Thomas Franklin from the Howard County Health Department who was instrumental in creating the app that was accessed on the "patients" mobile devices.

Maryland Animal Response Team: Maryland State Fair

Submitted by Karen Clark

Members of the Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (VMRC) and State Animal Response Team (SART) supported the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Animal Health Program at the Maryland State Fair. Volunteers ensured that all livestock, petting zoo, and equine animals met health requirements by verifying necessary documentation, vaccinations, and conducting physical health checks to confirm the animals were healthy and free of zoonotic diseases.



Calvert County's Potassium Iodide Distribution



Submitted by Sarah Chesnut

On Saturday, December 7th, the Calvert County Health Department's Public Health Emergency Planning team hosted a successful Potassium Iodide (KI) distribution event. Partnering with the Solomon's Volunteer Rescue Squad and Fire Department, the event was held at their facility, strategically located near numerous homes within the Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant.

A special thanks to our dedicated Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers—Suzanne Benedict, Bill Smith, and Janet Barnes—for their consistent support, as well as Casey Ketcham, one of our newest volunteers, for joining us. Together, we distributed KI to 250 residents, ensuring the event's success. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this important effort!

Unit Administrator Spotlight



Jack Orris started as the Wicomico County Public Health Emergency Preparedness planner in January of 2022--so 'he's new(er)'. Since then the Emergency Preparedness program has transitioned into a new local health department division, reviewed and edited all emergency policies-many of which had not been touched since before COVID, engaged more with the county Local Emergency Planning Committee re-established healthy professional relationships with nursing homes/assisted living facilities and has been continuously working to improve the MRC volunteer unit in Wicomico County. Obtaining outreach supplies and contacting volunteers has been an ongoing endeavor and currently, with the help of a John Hopkins University volunteer, 2025 is hopefully shaping to be an active MRC unit year with increased local health department exercises and drill opportunities using an updated and accurate volunteer base.

Cold Weather Preparedness

Cold Weather Health Risks: What You Need to Know

Cold weather can pose significant health dangers, including hypothermia, frostbite, and in severe cases, even death. Activities such as shoveling or exercising in cold conditions can exacerbate these risks. Here's what you need to know:

High-Risk Factors:

Cold-related illnesses can occur even in mild temperatures. Factors such as wind, humidity, or inadequate home heating can increase susceptibility. Individuals at higher risk include:

- Young children and elderly adults
- People with certain medical conditions, including:
 - Psoriasis
 - Underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism)
 - Adrenal problems
- Alcohol users
- Those who are physically unfit or on medications that impair judgment
- Individuals who over-exert themselves or sweat excessively while outdoors



By being aware of these risks and taking precautions, you can protect yourself and others during cold weather.

Signs of Hypothermia:

Be alert to the following signs of hypothermia, a dangerous drop in body temperature:

- Shivering
- Pale, cold skin
- Fatigue or confusion
- Difficulty walking or talking
- Increased breathing, heart rate, and blood pressure

What to do in case of Hypothermia:

- Seek medical help as soon as possible.
- Warm the affected areas using warm (not hot) water.
- Take shelter and remove any wet clothing.
- Dress warmly and gradually re-warm the body.

Signs of Frostbite:

- Redness or discoloration of the skin
- Numbness
- Frozen, pale skin that feels firm or waxy (blisters may or may not be present)

What to do in case of Frostbite:

- Seek medical help immediately.
- Warm the affected area using warm (not hot) water.
- Move to a sheltered area and remove any wet clothing.
- Dress warmly and focus on rewarming the entire body.
- Elevate the affected area.

What **NOT** to do:

- Do not rub the affected tissue, as this can cause further damage.

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