

THE CORPS

Official Newsletter for the Maryland Responds Medical Reserve Corps

As we enter the holiday season, Maryland Responds MRC would like to extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for a safe, joyful, and prepared holiday season.

'Tis the season for festivities and celebrations, a time that not only brings joy but also prompts reflection on the significance of preparedness for the safety and well-being of our communities. As we unite to revel in the holiday spirit, it is imperative to stay vigilant and prepared for potential emergencies. Let's join forces to ensure that this holiday season becomes memorable for all the right reasons.

Winter 2023

We are pleased to present the Winter Edition of "The Corps" - Maryland Responds MRC Newsletter! Our team has curated many informative updates for you to enjoy. You will find winter safety tips, program recaps, upcoming trainings, and more. We also spotlight the indispensable contributions of our unit administrators and volunteers, who play a vital role in our organization. We hope you find this edition informative and enjoyable!

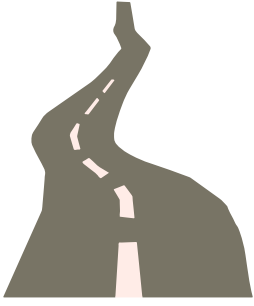


It's okay
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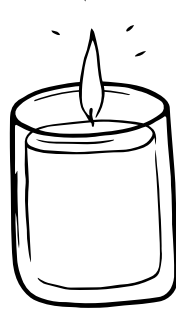
988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

The Maryland Responds Medical Reserve Corps team wants to extend a heartfelt message to its volunteers during this holiday season. We understand that the holidays can be challenging, and it is okay not to feel merry and bright during this time of year. Remember, you are not alone, and there is no shame in asking for help. Our organization encourages you to seek support without hesitation if you need it. You matter, and your mental and emotional well-being are essential to us. Find more information [**HERE.**](#)

Holiday Safety Tips



During and after a winter storm, avoid traveling on the roads for safety.



Ensure candles are kept at least 12 inches away from anything flammable.



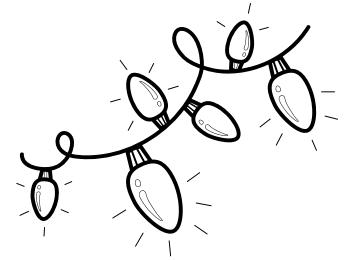
Stay vigilant while cooking and keep a close watch on food.



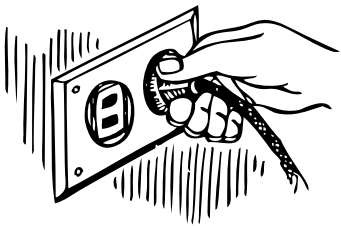
Keep your holiday tree well-watered to prevent it from drying out.



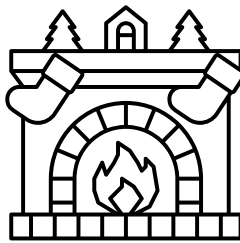
Prioritize secure online shopping practices for a joyful holiday experience.



Regularly inspect holiday lights for any signs of damage like frayed wires, bare spots, or broken sockets.



Adhere to safe practices when connecting holiday lights, avoiding overloading outlets.

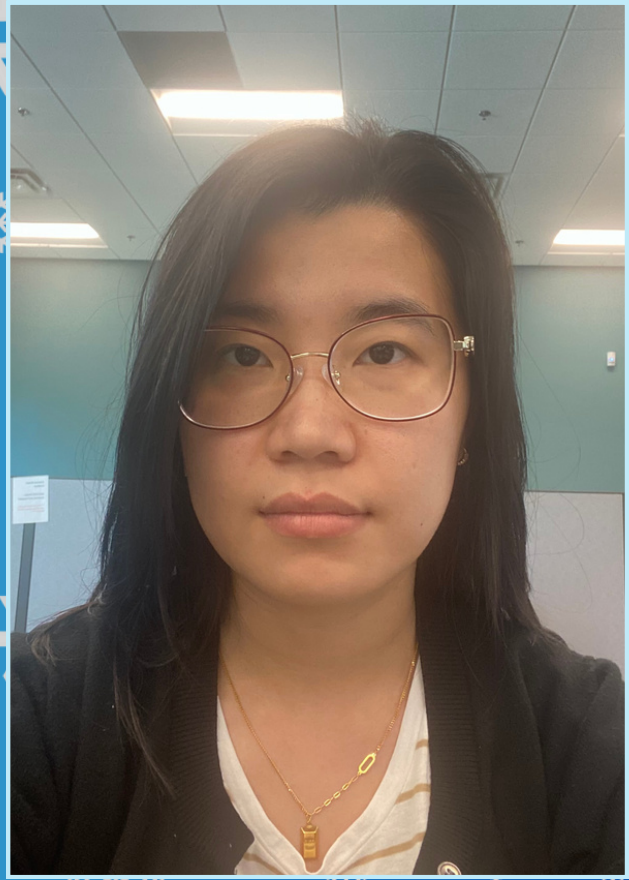


Avoid putting wrapping paper in a fireplace as it can create sparks and potential explosive buildup.



For adult gatherings during the holidays, appoint and reward a designated driver to ensure safe travel for all.

Unit Administrator Spotlight



Albby Chen started working as a Maryland Responds Data Specialist in September 2023. She graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park, with a Bachelor's degree in Public Health Science. Albby had experience working in clinical administration, grant administration, and business management before working for Maryland Responds. Outside work, she enjoys watching Esports and Chinese/Korean Dramas and practicing her guitar.

Unit Administrator Spotlight



Jeremy Costin, the MRC Coordinator for Montgomery County since July 2022, transitioned the MRC's focus from COVID-19 to broader non-emergency programs. With expertise in Public Health and Economics, he revamped the training program, adding courses like shelter response, bleeding control, Narcan distribution, and CPR, benefiting 600+ volunteers. In November 2023, a significant milestone was achieved with a 150-person MRC training day. Montgomery County MRC now trains volunteers to teach CPR, bleeding control, and stroke prevention courses. He seamlessly integrated the MRC into the county's mass care response, supporting multiple shelters and reception centers. Collaborating with health department partners, he created diverse volunteer opportunities, including aiding Flu/COVID-19 vaccination clinics, assembling Narcan Kits, and supporting HIV prevention events. Jeremy Costin eagerly anticipates further growth and success for the MRC unit as it continues to expand its mission.

Mental Health First Aid Training

We are delighted to announce an exclusive opportunity for your participation in virtual Mental Health First Aid courses, hosted by Maryland Responds Medical Reserve Corps in collaboration with the Mental Health Association of Maryland.

Course Dates:

Saturday, January 27th (FILLED)

Saturday, February 24th

Saturday, March 23rd

Saturday, April 27th

Saturday, May 25th

The course begins promptly at 10:00 am and ends at approximately 5:00 pm. It includes two 15-minute breaks and one 45-minute pause for lunch.

Registration Details:

Be sure to keep an eye on your inbox! An email with the sign-up link will be sent out one month prior to the session. Please note that registration operates on a first-come, first-served basis, and only the first 30 volunteers will secure coveted spots. Additionally, a waitlist will be created for each class.

Inquiries Welcome:

If you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact mdresponds.health@maryland.gov.



Point of Dispensing Drill

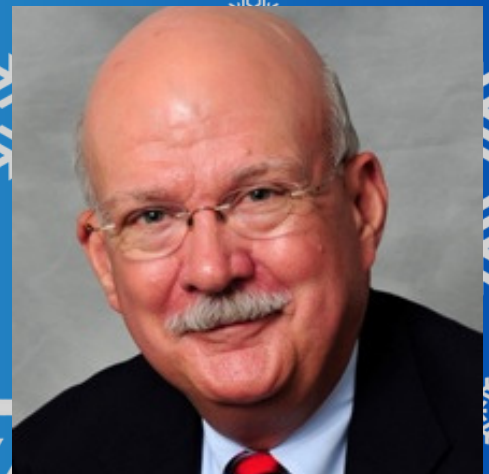


Notre Dame of Maryland University recently hosted a Point of Dispensing (POD) Drill organized by the Maryland Board of Pharmacy Emergency Preparedness Task Force.

This exercise was aimed at simulating a POD site where medications would be distributed in the event of an anthrax attack. The drill was a success and drew the attention of representatives from the Maryland Department of Health- Maryland Responds Medical Reserves Corps, who were there to recruit pharmacy and nursing students as MRC volunteers. A special shoutout to Arnold Honkofsky for capturing some amazing moments from the event!

“The motto for the Board of Pharmacy Emergency Preparedness Taskforce is Semper Paratus (Always Prepared) and that certainly was in evidence when they conducted a Point of Dispensing (POD) exercise. Despite its being held in a new venue, involving many more students than in the past, having faculty participate for the first time and involving students from two different health professions, the event was executed well. This drill was particularly noteworthy because QR codes and Mobile Technology were used for the first time at a Maryland School of Pharmacy for completing the required Medication Screening Form. This technology has the potential to provide faster processing times and more accurate results when compared to the paper screening forms utilized in the past. Approximately 140 student pharmacists and student nurses took part in the exercise and EPTF members worked closely with participating Notre Dame faculty to assist them in being able to independently manage closed POD operations in the future.”

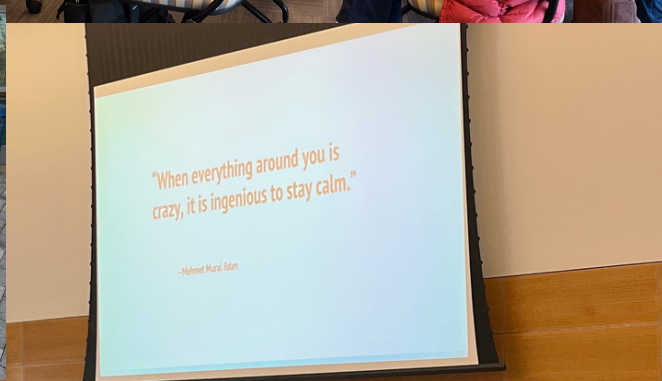
G. Lawrence Hogue, a distinguished member of the Board of Pharmacy Emergency Preparedness Taskforce and the key organizer of the Notre Dame POD drill, graciously shared his valuable insights.



MRC Training Day

Contributed by Jeremy Costin, Montgomery County MRC Unit Administrator

The Montgomery County MRC successfully hosted its inaugural MRC Training Day on Saturday, November 4th! More than 130 MRC volunteers from various regions attended the event held at Montgomery College Germantown. The training sessions covered an array of topics, such as managing mental health during a crisis, identifying stroke symptoms, honing preparedness skills, incident command system (ICS), epidemiology fundamentals, and emergency preparedness. Attendees also had the opportunity to interact with local MRC coordinators, learn about the ongoing regional collaboration, and discuss the Montgomery County unit's triumphs and future plans. The event culminated with the recognition of several volunteers for their remarkable contributions to the unit.



Super Saturday



Contributed by Kathleen Long, Baltimore County MRC Unit Administrator

Super Saturday is a highly anticipated annual event that provides free flu vaccines to Baltimore County residents of all ages. It offers a valuable service to the community and presents an excellent opportunity to train staff members and volunteers in POD (Point of Dispensing) operations. This year, volunteers took on essential roles such as Injectors, Fillers, Ushers, Runners, and Registration, utilizing an electronic system to streamline appointments and document vaccination. The event was a resounding success, with 574 flu vaccine doses administered during the 2023 event. We cannot thank the MRC volunteers from the Baltimore County Unit enough for their enthusiastic, flexible, and personable service. Their time and effort is truly appreciated!

There were 10 total MRC volunteers who helped at the event:

- Pikesville Middle School site: Tom Ritter, Florence Amah, and Amy Ingraham
- Randallstown Community Center site: Sahar Hassanain, DeNita Morrison
- Hereford Middle School site: Jim Anzalone, Lisa Summerlin
- Drumcastle Government Center site: Syed Shaikh, Mary Hinton, Cristin Bailey



Tri-County CPR/AED Training



Contributed by Sarah Chesnut, Calvert County MRC Unit Administrator

On Tuesday, October 3rd, a group of dedicated Maryland Responds volunteers from St. Mary's, Charles, and Calvert counties convened at the Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department for a CPR/AED (Automated External Defibrillator) training. The event was a testament to the power of collaboration and community, as volunteers from all three counties came together to ensure that Maryland is equipped to handle any emergency.

M&T Bank Stadium Exercise

On Wednesday, December 6, 2023, the Baltimore Ravens, Maryland Stadium Authority, and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) teamed up with first responders and law enforcement for a six-hour Full-Scale Exercise (FSE).

The goal was to test how well everyone could respond to hypothetical security incidents at M&T Bank Stadium and refine plans, procedures, and public messaging. 37 volunteers, alongside MRC Unit and State Coordinators, played crucial roles as actors to simulate a lifelike emergency scenario. Participants were instructed to portray distress, fear, and frantic behavior, creating a realistic environment. Simulated elements such as smoke, gunshots, and moulage victims added to the authenticity of the exercise. You can find more information [HERE](#).

The Medical Reserve Corps was not able to capture images during the event, and the photographs below were taken by both the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Baltimore Ravens.



Volunteer Spotlight



John Ojeifo is an exceptional Prince George's County volunteer who has dedicated his time and energy to serving his community. His passion for community service is highly admired and appreciated by all who know him. John has volunteered in numerous initiatives throughout the county, including providing valuable health information to residents during the annual county fair. As a retired physician, John's knowledge and experience are invaluable, and his cheerful demeanor and infectious smile make him a beloved figure in the community.



Dena Saunders is a dedicated Montgomery County MRC volunteer. She has contributed to the unit in many different activations, including Vital Records assistance, Narcan Kit Assembly, Vaccination clinic support, and Montgomery County MRC recruitment events. Dena has also trained with the MRC to become a CPR instructor and will hopefully begin to teach classes for the unit starting in 2024. Dena always ensures that everyone feels welcome, included, and well-fed.



Arnold (Arnie) Honkofsky is an exceptional member of the Baltimore County MRC and the Board of Pharmacy Emergency Preparedness Taskforce (BOP EPTF) who has been volunteering with MRC since 2009. He has a remarkable passion for MRC and is always eager to lend a helping hand. When not volunteering, Arnie is busy honing his photography skills. He even volunteered to be the primary photographer for the Notre Dame pod drill. His stunning photographs were later used in the newsletter. Arnie's dedication to MRC and willingness to assist whenever possible make him a valuable asset to the community.

Volunteer Spotlight



Steven (Steve) Kaufman is a dedicated Montgomery County MRC volunteer. Steve has responded to all four emergency shelter requests sent out to the Montgomery County MRC over the past year and is always ready to help when called on. Whenever called up, Steve is always willing to do whatever is needed for the smooth and effective running of an emergency shelter or cooling center. Steve has also trained with the MRC to become a CPR instructor and will hopefully begin to teach classes for the unit starting in 2024. Steve is an invaluable member of the Montgomery County MRC.



Mark Bradley as a standout volunteer in the Anne Arundel County MRC. Mark's unwavering dedication and team spirit make him a valuable asset to our team. He actively participates in almost every MRC event, bringing a positive attitude and a strong commitment to volunteering. Mark's contribution to our unit is truly invaluable, and we are grateful for his continued support.

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mdresponds.health@maryland.gov



MARYLAND RESPONDS MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

