



Jackson County MRC



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Region II Strategic
National Stockpile
Workgroup

Boone County

Cabell-Huntington

Jackson County

Lincoln County

Logan County

Mason County

Mingo County

Putnam County

Wayne County

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WVREDI

Volunteer Liability

Threat

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WV REDI Purpose and Importance

The federally required ESAR-VHP (Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals) WV REDI (**WV Responder Emergency Deployment Information**) system was developed in collaboration with Collaborative Fusion, Inc and the Division for Threat Preparedness.

WV REDI is a multipurpose system that provides a database that can be developed prior to an event. It is a means by which WV license verification can occur. Currently WV REDI is linked to the following WV state licensing boards: Medical, Pharmacy, Registered Nurses, and Licensed Practical Nurses. It is also linked with the federal DEA licensing board, the American Osteopathic Association, and the American Board of Medical Specialties.

Some ways that information in WV REDI is protected are by:

- encrypted transfer and storage of data
- firewall protection
- permission-based administrator accounts

The importance of this system cannot be over-emphasized. It provides counties, regions, and the state with a database of trained health and medical volunteers for emergency response when time may be critical. Through WV REDI volunteers can be identified, credentialed, invited, deployed, and tracked. The system also allows Local Health Departments to manage their own volunteers. If needed, volunteers can be requested from across regions or across the state. Additional ways the system is valuable are that it provides support through health and medical volunteers for state response efforts. It also can promote support, via those volunteers, within their jurisdictions, to other Healthcare Organizations such as hospitals, clinics, Point Of Dispensing operations, etc.

Anyone who has volunteered to serve for Jackson County has been entered into WVREDI. Your username and password will be mailed to you soon. If you have questions, please contact Wendy or Tena at (304)372-2634.

WVREDI IS FOR EVERYONE!!!





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Fact Sheet Public Health Emergency Law and Volunteer Liability

Question: *If a person volunteers to help the Jackson County Health Department in a public health emergency, is that person protected from liability?*

Answer: **YES. The liability insurance policies maintained by the health department cover both the employees and any VOLUNTEERS working under the direction of the health department. Volunteers are covered just like employees for their "good faith" efforts to help.**

Question: *Is there immunity from liability for volunteers participating in disaster preparedness or response under West Virginia law?*

Answer: **YES. West Virginia Code 15-5-11 says that a "duly qualified emergency service worker" gets the same immunities and privileges as state or local agency workers. In this section of the code the term "duly qualified emergency service worker" is defined as: "Any duly qualified full or part-time paid, volunteer or auxiliary employee of this state, ...or political subdivision ...performing emergency services...subject to the order or control...of the state or any political subdivision.." "Emergency Services" are defined to include "health and medical services." The applicable code states: "Neither the state nor any political subdivision.....nor, except in cases of willful misconduct, any duly qualified emergency service worker complying with or reasonably attempting to comply with this article.....,shall be liable for the death of or injury to any person or for damage to any property as a result of such activity." In sum, if you are deployed by a state or local government entity, (i.e., LHD, BPH, EMA, etc.) as part of a disaster response, including preparation for and carrying out of all emergency functions, then you are a "duly qualified emergency service worker" and should be provided immunity. "Disaster" also includes the imminent threat of disaster as defined in the code. While no law can prevent someone from filing a lawsuit, statutory immunity from liability is a very strong defense. In addition, WVDHHR is not aware of any WV lawsuits ever filed against volunteers in the context of offering health and medical assistance to an emergency response.**

Question: *Is there any federal law on this subject?*

Answer: **YES. The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 was passed "to provide certain protections to volunteers, nonprofit organizations, and governmental entities in lawsuits based on the activities of volunteers." The act contains a section titled: "Limitation on Liability for Volunteers", which says, in a nutshell, that if a volunteer is acting within the scope of their responsibilities, if they have the appropriate license or certification and if they were not acting in a willfully criminal, negligent or reckless manner, then they "shall not be liable for harm caused by an act or omission....on behalf of the organization or entity.." in this case the Local Health Department.**



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Threat Preparedness 101

Threat Preparedness is a broad topic. This issue will address home preparedness. You can prepare your home for many unforeseen issues just by following these simple instructions. They including having a **Disaster Supply Kit**. Disasters can happen anytime and anywhere. A highway spill of hazardous materials could cause instant evacuation. A winter storm could confine your family at home. An earthquake, flood, tornado, or any other disaster could cut off basic services—gas, water, electricity, and telephones—for days. Your family will cope best by preparing for disaster before it strikes. One way to prepare is by assembling a Disaster Supplies Kit. There are six basics you should stock in your home:

Water: allow one gallon per person per day

Food: ready-to-eat; canned juices, milk, and soup; high energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix; food for infants; comfort/stress foods such as cookies, candy, instant coffee, and tea bags

First aid supplies: sterile bandages, tape, sterile roller bandages, scissors, moistened towelettes, antiseptic, thermometer, soap, latex gloves

Clothing and bedding: sturdy shoes or work boots, rain gear, blankets/sleeping bags, thermal underwear

Tools and emergency supplies: mess kit, battery operated radio with extra batteries, flashlight, non-electric can opener, pliers, tape, matches in a waterproof container, signal flare, shut-off wrench to turn off household gas and water, toilet paper, feminine supplies, personal hygiene items, plastic garbage bags (for personal sanitation uses), plastic bucket with tight lid, household chlorine bleach

Special items: baby- formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk, medication; adults: daily medications, insulin, denture needs, extra glasses, contact supplies; games and books, important documents in a waterproof container including wills, insurance policies, deeds, stocks, passports, bank accounts, credit card numbers, inventory lists of valuable household goods, family records, important telephone numbers.

Keep the items that you may need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container such as a trash can, camping backpack, or duffle bag. After your supplies are collected, the next action that you should take would be to prepare your family.

Family Plan: Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere- at work, school, or in the car. How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe? Disaster can strike quickly and without warning. Families can cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Development of a "Family Disaster Plan" will help you know what to do to best protect your family. It is your responsibility. The following steps will assist you in forming a plan.

Find out what disasters could affect your family. Ask your local emergency services what type of disasters are most likely to happen. Learn your community's warning signals. Find out how to help the elderly or disabled if needed. Find out about disaster plans for your workplace, your children's school or daycare and other places your family spends time.



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Create a disaster Plan. Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain all possible dangers. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team. Pick two places to meet: One right outside your home in case of fire, and one outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number. Discuss what to do in an emergency.

Complete this checklist

- Post emergency telephone numbers by the phone
- Teach children how and when to call 911
- Show family how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity
- Check insurance coverage
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher and show them where it's kept
- Install smoke detectors
- Stock emergency supplies
- Learn CPR and First-Aid
- Determine best escape routes
- Find safe spots in your home for each possible disaster

Practice and Maintain your Plan. Quiz your children every six months so they remember what to do. Conduct fire drills and emergency drills. Replace stored water every three months and food every six months. Test and recharge your fire extinguisher according to instruction. Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.

Shelter in Place

Shelter in Place is one of the basic instructions you may receive from public safety officials during a chemical or weapons of mass destruction emergency in your community. Shelter in place is used across the country as a protective action for the public. Sheltering in place offers you and your family immediate protection for a short time in your home. If you are told to shelter in place, take your children and pets indoors **immediately**. The following general information is a guide on how you should act before, during, and after an emergency. The situation in your area may involve unique circumstances. Your local emergency planning committee or office of emergency services can provide you with details.

How Do I Shelter in Place?

- Go inside immediately and bring pets indoors with you.
- Close and lock all doors and windows, making sure that they are tightly shut.
- Shut off all fan devices, ventilation systems, and any system that circulates air.
- Close the damper to your wood stove or fireplace making sure that you extinguish the fire first.
- Go to the room that you have selected to shelter in place. If possible, this should be a small room with few or no windows and doors. It should be located near the center of the building.
- Seal this room off quickly using duct tape and plastic sheeting to seal the windows, doors, and any type of vents coming into the room.
- Use wet towels to seal the gaps between the floor and the doors.



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If necessary, use wet washcloths to cover your nose and mouth. The objective is to keep outside air which may be contaminated from coming into the room.

Monitor your battery powered television or radio for emergency messages or instructions.

Do not make unnecessary phone calls. Do not call 911 for information.

Stay inside your shelter in place until you receive the all clear signal. This will be announced on the radio and television.

After the all clear signal, open all windows and doors and go outside until the building has been well ventilated.

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We would like to introduce our **TEAM**.
Jackson County Health Department Threat Preparedness Team

Threat Preparedness Lead:

Wendy Casto

Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator:

Tena Casto

Equipment Coordinator

Wendy Casto

Epidemiology Response Lead:

Stephanie DeWees, RN

Risk Communication Designee:

Dr. I. John Snyder

Health Officer:

Dr. I John Snyder

Volunteer Coordinator

Wendy Casto

Information for this newsletter was submitted by Pamela Barley, Lincoln County Health Department; Amanda Davis, Mingo County Health Department; Alicia Landers, RN, Fayette County Health Department; Sebra Jenkins, RN, WVDHHR, Division of Threat Preparedness; and WVDHHR Bureau for Public Health.

Volunteers play a vital role in making the Local Health Departments a success in regards to Emergency Preparedness

Recruit a Friend!



If you know someone who may be interested in volunteering, have them complete and return this form:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip code: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Work phone: _____ Email: _____

Return form to: _____

Jackson County MRC
Wendy M. Casto, Director
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Ripley, West Virginia 25271



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Announcements

Do not forget upcoming trainings for one nursing CEU per class. Anyone is welcome to attend. Classes will be held at the health department. Please call to register!

September 15, 2008

1 pm SNS 101

2 pm Personal Preparedness

November 10, 2008

1 pm Epi Investigation

2 pm Hepatitis C

Mark Your Calendar ~ Saturday, September 27, 2008

"We Prepare Because We Care" Day

Noon—6:00 p.m.

Jackson County Health Department and the Medical Reserve Corp will be hosting the county preparedness day activities in Riverfront Park in Ravenswood. The Mayor of Ravenswood will also be hosting a concert in the part that evening. All emergency service departments in the county and the state will be asked to display preparedness equipment that their agency has received for the citizens of our community. The Jackson County MRC Unit will have a food stand, prepare medical power of attorney/living wills, family preparedness planning education, vial of life kits, and much, much more. In order to make this event successful, we need your help! If you are available to assistance, please call Wendy at (304)372-2634!

Food Handler Class for Volunteers

The Health Department will be hosting a Food Handler Class FREE for our volunteers!!! In early September we will be hosting a class for those MRC members wishing to volunteer in food preparation (i.e. the hot dog stand on preparedness day). The class will last about one hour and participants will receive a food handler card good for one year. This card cannot be utilized for employment, only volunteer activity and the class is only open to MRC volunteers. Call today to sign up!

Volunteer Day

We have vial of life kits to assemble, important document folders to create, family plan notebooks to assemble, promotional items to be labeled, model building to assemble and paint, and many, many more things to do to prepare for September. On Thursday, August 28, we are asking available volunteers to report to the Health Department to assist with these tasks between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided! If you have questions or are available to assist, please contact Wendy or Tena at (304)372-2634! If you can even spare an hour that would be great! Hope to see you then.