

Okaloosa-Walton Medical Reserve

**Volunteers Strengthening Our Community's
Emergency Preparedness and Response**

Okaloosa-Walton MRC Newsletter



Fourth Quarter, Page 1

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- The "Chick" Disease
- Hurricane Tips & Tricks
- Pet Preparedness
- FL1-DMAT Guest Speaker
- New Notification System
- New Member Welcome

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Upcoming Events

- Semi-Annual Meeting
July 17th 6pm-7:30pm
- National Night Out
August 6th 6pm-9pm
- OWMRC Movie Night
"Outbreak"
September 18th, 6pm-7:30pm

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Volunteers Help Defeat Hurricane Hagrid!

On June 13th FDOH—Okaloosa conducted a full-scale exercise that required all of the agency's disaster response teams to activate. The exercise scenario brought a Category 3 hurricane, Hurricane Hagrid, to Destin. Staff performed their assigned roles and responded to a series of injects that required them to think fast and problem solve on their feet throughout the day. OWMRC volunteers participated as well! Pictured right is Chelsea Murphy and her dog Boyd. Boyd helped our staff exercise the Employee Pet Shelter. Chelsea then went over to the Special Needs Shelter and played a special needs client. The exercise was a great success and many lessons were learned that will help improve future public health disaster response plans.



Did you know that FDOH—Okaloosa has several disaster response teams (DRTs) ready to respond in the event of a public health emergency? DRTs practice and exercise their skills during trainings, drills, and exercises throughout the year. Since many OWMRC volunteers have specialized medical skills and licensures, the OWMRC Operations and Management Plan calls for OWMRC volunteers to be utilized in the Special Needs Shelter during emergencies. There are roles for non-medically licensed volunteers as well.

The **Special Needs Shelter (SpNS) Team** operates the Special Needs Shelter established during emergency evacuations to offer basic necessities for persons with special needs, such as those with medical dependence on electricity or oxygen, or who need assistance with activities of daily living or medication administration. It is appropriate for those persons with minor health/medical conditions who require professional observation, assessment, or maintenance but do not require hospitalization or a medical institution. Though the team includes licensed medical professionals and support personnel, caregivers must accompany clients with special needs.

The **Department Control Center (DCC)** provides central point of communication for all FDOH – Okaloosa staff in the event of an incident. They ensure that all staff check in with a status after hurricane landfall. They also call employees to update them on changes to work times and locations.

The **Emergency Support Function 8 (Health & Medical) Team** provides a coordinated response for the protection of Okaloosa County's public health, emergency medical care, and fatality management needs in an emergency situation; provides direct assistance in identifying and meeting public health and medical needs of victims of an emergency or disaster situation.

The **Environmental Health Strike Teams** work with ESF 8 and are responsible for the assessment of water laboratories, mosquito control, sanitation, and mass care facilities. They also actively conduct disease surveillance, monitor sewage overflow and issue boil water statements as necessary.



The **Epidemiology Strike Teams** work during public health emergencies to conduct disease surveillance investigations in the affected population. They may also conduct follow-up visits with clients who are under self-isolation or quarantine due to the public health emergency.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

A Brief History of Bioterrorism

700 BC

Assyrians poisoned wells with rye ergot.

1700s

British soldiers gave blankets previously used by smallpox patients to American Indians

1940s

The Chinese dropped ceramic containers holding plague-infected fleas on Manchuria

1943-45

Germans used anthrax on US soldier's horses and mules.

1984

Rajneeshee cult members sprayed salmonella on salad bars in Oregon sickening more than 700 people

2001

Letters containing anthrax spores were mailed to locations throughout the US.

Source: <http://omarsid.myweb.uga.edu>



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The "Chick Disease"...What is Chikungunya?

This difficult to pronounce virus is transmitted to people by mosquitos and summer is the time to be concerned about protecting yourself and your family from this and several other mosquito borne diseases that can make you extremely sick. There is no vaccine to prevent against chikungunya. However, you and others can prevent infection by avoiding mosquitos, wearing repellents, and wearing protective clothing when outdoors.



Information on Chikungunya from the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention

- Chikungunya virus is transmitted to people through mosquito bites. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on a person already infected with the virus. Infected mosquitoes can then spread the virus to other people through bites.
- Chikungunya virus is most often spread to people by *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. These are the same mosquitoes that transmit dengue virus. They bite mostly during the daytime.
- Most people infected with chikungunya virus will develop some symptoms.
- Symptoms usually begin 3–7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.
- The most common symptoms are fever and joint pain.
- Other symptoms may include headache, muscle pain, joint swelling, or rash.

Hurricane Season Tips & Tricks

Know Your Zone

- Follow instructions on the attached document to see in which storm surge zone your house resides. (Walton & Okaloosa residents)
- Check http://www.co.okaloosa.fl.us/dept_ps_weather_surge_maps.html (Okaloosa residents) to see what evacuation zone you live in.

Stay Informed

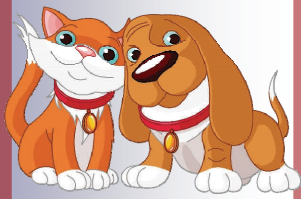
- **Register for our new notification system**, Everbridge ServFL, to receive updates from OWMRC Team Leaders regarding trainings, meetings, and emergency activations ([Click here](#) to email Katie if you have not created a user name and password)
- Monitor Okaloosa/Walton County Emergency Management via their website or social media for up-to-date information during emergencies
- Ensure you have a battery powered weather radio
- Visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/preparedness-and-response/documents/prepareguide-eng.pdf> to print your copy of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Guide
- Register for Code Red (iPhone and android apps) to receive emergency alerts for your location area

Before the Storm

- Check your emergency kit to ensure items are not expired and all necessary supplies are packed. See a complete list of what should be in your pack at: <http://www.ready.gov/basic-disaster-supplies-kit>
- Discuss your evacuation plans with your family
- Ensure your home is hardened to potential storm damage
- Check to make sure your flood insurance policy is up-to-date



Pet Preparedness in the Park



Pets and Salmonella

Salmonella is most commonly transmitted through contaminated food.

Salmonella is also one of many zoonotic pathogens that can be spread between people and their pets.

Many *Salmonella* infections occur in people who have contact with certain types of animals: reptiles, such as turtles, snakes, or lizards; amphibians, especially frogs; poultry, including chicks, chickens, and ducklings; and rodents, such as hamsters.

Salmonella infections most commonly cause acute gastroenteritis with fever, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, vomiting, and often bloody stools.

Source:
www.medscape.com



Research shows a successful gateway to engaging community members in preparedness activities is through pet-focused preparedness activities. This was the foundation on which “Pet Preparedness in the Park” was built. The OWMRC and FDOH—Okaloosa conducted their first joint community outreach event focusing on pet preparedness on May 17, 2014 at Liza Jackson Park. “Pet Preparedness in the Park” included scheduled information sessions complimented by several learning stations with presentation boards and pamphlets. People and pets were invited to attend, learn, and mingle.

Informational sessions included:

- Pet First Aid
- Pet Disaster Preparedness
- Dog Park Etiquette
- 5,2,1,0 - a Healthy Okaloosa Initiative
- Preventing the Spread of Communicable Diseases
- Pet CPR (presented by the Red Cross)

Other partners included:

- Panhandle Animal Welfare, conducting low-cost micro-chipping
- 3 Dogs and a Chick Bakery

Dr. Laurel Tovrea, DVM administered low-cost microchips provided by PAWS and Aimee Shaffer of Aimee’s Animal Magnetism acted as the Master of Ceremonies for the event.



Photos: (Left) Kasia Knaus listens to speakers about Pet Disaster Preparedness. (Right) Dr. Marie Gray presents on Preventing the Spread of Zoonotic Diseases.

Just over 30 pets and their owners visited the event. We hope to host “Pet Preparedness in the Park” annually and increase community participation.

Special thanks to the many OWMRC volunteers that worked the event and to all of our Pet Preparedness in the Park partners!



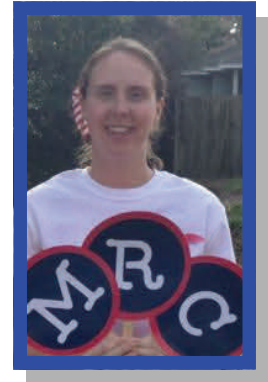


Okaloosa-Walton Medical Reserve Corps



Farewell to our OWMRC Team Leader

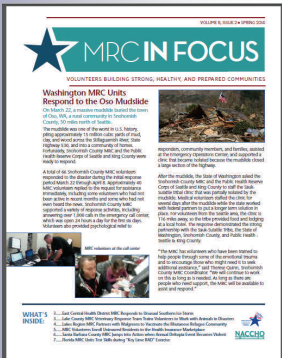
Beginning July 7th, Ashley Rendon will no longer be the Team Leader for the OWMRC. She has accepted a new position with FDOH—Okaloosa in Epidemiology. Previous Team Leader Katie Holbrook will be taking the lead until Ashley's position is filled. To contact Katie, email her at Katie.holbrook@flhealth.gov or 850-833-9240 ext. 2149.



We wish Ashley the best of luck in her new position!

MRC In Focus

MRC In Focus is a print newsletter published by the Division of Civilian Volunteers



It serves as a conduit for information about what the MRC is doing at the national, state, and local levels.

To view MRC In Focus, visit: <https://www.medicalreservetcops.gov/pageViewFldr/NewsEvents/>

New Everbridge SERVFL Notification

The Florida Department of Health and Medical Reserve Corps have implemented a new employee and volunteer notification system. This system, called Everbridge SERVFL, will be the way Okaloosa-Walton Medical Reserve Corps volunteers are alerted to trainings, meetings, and activations in the event of a public health emergency. Many long time volunteers will remember the old SERVFL system that tracked volunteer training certificates and personal information. This new system does not function like the old SERVFL. It is strictly a notification system. It does allow users to provide feedback such as whether or not they will attend an event or hours of availability in the instance of an activation.

How to register: You should have already received an email requesting you to register as a user. The link in that email is only good for 72 hours. (This is a system generated rule and we are not able to change it locally.) If you were not able to register within 72 hours of receiving the email, please contact Katie via email so she can resend the link.

Setting your preferences: Once registered, please ensure your contact information is updated. You should then be given the option to change the order of preference for the contact methods listed in your profile (i.e.: you prefer the system text your cell instead of emailing you). You must provide a minimum of three contact methods to be given the option to change your order of preference. Should you need assistance with this, please contact Katie Holbrook at Katie.holbrook@flhealth.gov.



Welcome New Members!

Corey Cummings

Amy Martinez Lozano

Peter McDeavitt

Steven Rendon

Shayna McKenna

Ester Molder



Board of Advisors

THE GUIDING LIGHT



Those Shoes are a Disaster...

What to Wear for an Activation

Flip flops? Sling back kitten heels? While comfortable and cute, opened-toed shoes are a disaster no-no. When responding to a public health emergency, OWMRC volunteers should be sure to wear sturdy, cushioned, closed-toed shoes.



Be sure to wear comfortable clothing that protects you from the elements. This will depend on the time of year and your assigned response location. If you are responding to work in the Special Needs Shelter, you may not need long-sleeves, but at an outdoor drive-thru Point of Dispensing (POD) you will want a layer to protect you from the sun.

OWMRC volunteers activated for a public health emergency will be provided an OWMRC t-shirt, if they do not already have one, to ensure proper field identification. Volunteers are also required to wear a badge created at the time of check-in.