VOL. 15 • SUMMER 2026

VERMONT MRC QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Your latest news from the Vermont Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

ARE CLIMATE DISASTERS THE NEW NORMAL?

Dee Myrvang, RAMRC Unit Coordinator

Climate change and climate disasters seem to be happening more frequently. Hot days and heat waves are happening every year and lasting longer. Many places are experiencing wildfires and poor air quality. Vermonters are less accustomed to heat and less prepared than most, with insufficient cooling options for many. Vermont has experienced 19 confirmed billion-dollar weather/climate disasters since 1980, with winter storms, tropical cyclones, and severe storms being the costliest. These extreme weather events are impacting on our health.

September is celebrated as National Preparedness Month, a time when the preparedness of individuals and communities is a focus for many devoted to public safety and public health.

IN THIS ISSUE:

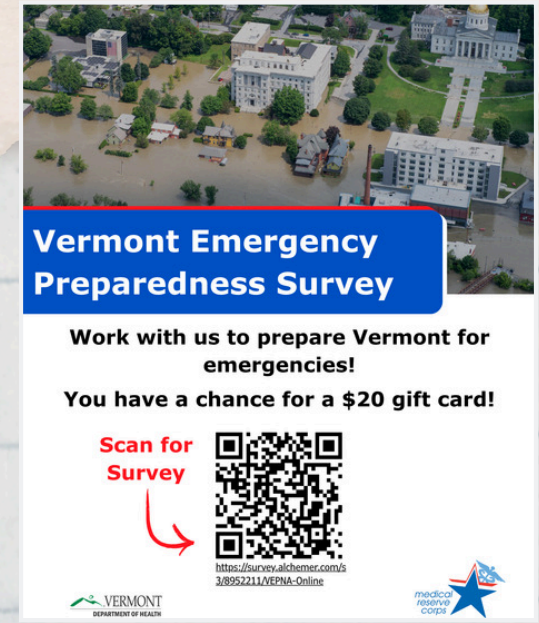
Are Disasters the New Normal?	**1**
Announcements	**2**
Cornerstone LMS Is Live	**3**
Burlington Airport Exercise	**4**
Where is the MRC?	**5**
Member Spotlight	**6**
Unit Activities	**7 -8**
Statewide Trainings	**9**
Flyers/ Resources	**10-12**

The good news is Vermonters are an independent group of people who value self-reliance and preparation. There is alot communities and community members can do to address the health impacts of climate change. Everyone should have a Go-Bag packed and ready to roll when the time comes. Everyone should work with their neighbors and communities to create plans and actions that take into account those with access and functional needs or who may need a little extra help. Everyone can look out for their neighbors and make sure they have a way to cool down or power for their medical equipment in case of an emergency.

Towns can open community shelters or resiliency hubs for those who need assistance in extreme weather. Many towns send alerts to residents and advertise where residents can cool down, both inside and outside, at no cost to them. Other communities are finding ways to support Community Resiliency Centers, where residents can find assistance and resources. Health professionals can engage their clients and patients to find the best ways they can prepare and keep themselves safe.

Announcements

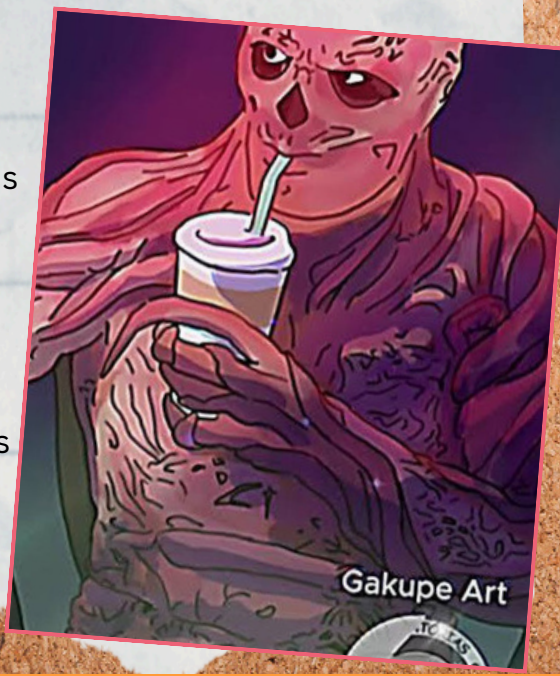
THE VEPNA IS ON!



What is a VEPNA? you may ask. If you're a sci-fi fan, your mind may conjure up images of Vecna, the ultimate evil bad guy from Netflix's Stranger Things. But no, our VEPNA works for good, not evil. As it says in our public-facing messaging:

The Department of Health and MRC are conducting a survey on emergency preparedness across Vermont to gain a better understanding of our community and state preparedness for emergencies. Your input will help us focus our training and education efforts on each community's needs. Please support our effort by taking the survey today. Help us spread the word by sharing it with your contacts to strengthen our collective preparedness.

So, how does MRC 'spread the word?' We have a number of tabling events and preparedness activities going on during September for National Preparedness Month. If you volunteer for an event, chances are you'll be helping administer the VEPNA via tablet or paper form. Or, use the handy dandy QR code above to take the survey yourself. Better yet, use the full-sized flyer at the end of the newsletter and post it to social media, send it to organizations with which you're affiliated, print it out and tack it up it at your library, corner cafe, food shelf, daycare, senior center or grocery store. Everyone who participates in person gets a $5 Dunkin gift card, and everyone who completes it online is eligible for a $20 Dunkin raffle. Help us boost the VEPNA to over a thousand responses this month so MRC can better target our preparedness outreach to the needs of Vermonters.



Note to self: Vecna likes Dunkin, too!

Cornerstone Learning Management System is Going LIVE!

It took an extra three months, but we are here! All MRC volunteers will be emailed a user name and password for Cornerstone LMS,commonly known as LINC, by the end of this week. Check your email, and if you can't find it, check in with Heather Rigney or your Unit Coordinator for your login information. Usernames are a 7 digit code starting with EU for 'External User' followed by a five-digit student ID.

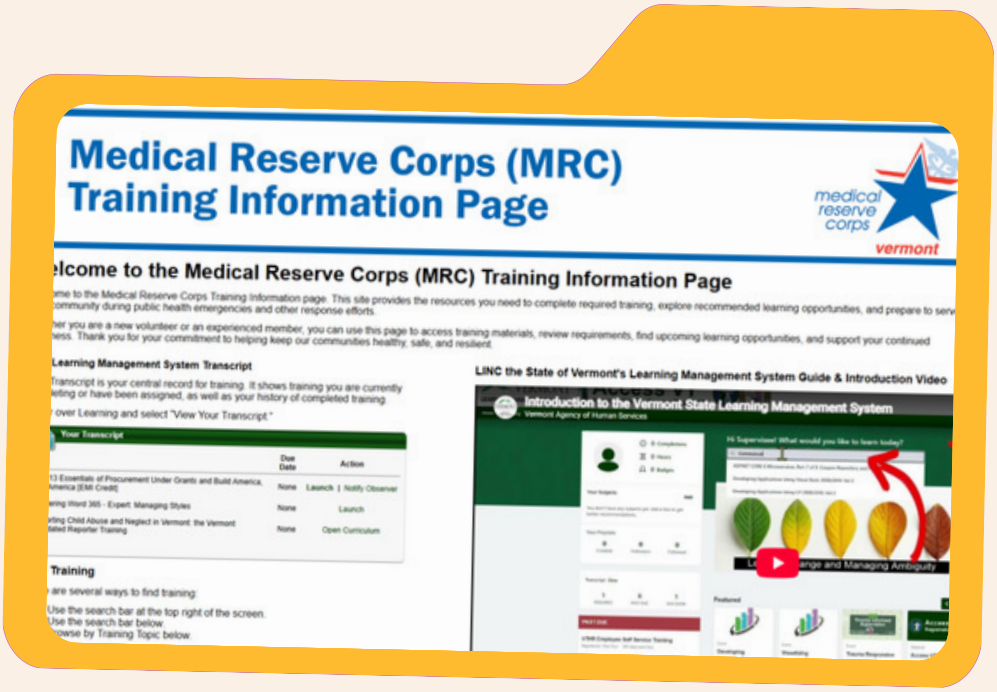
What you'll see when you log in is an MRC-specific Dashboard, shown below, a listing of classes you have been assigned, if any, and a way to request new classes, look at your transcript, and see live teaching events that apply to you.

Starting October 1, we will begin assigning any outstanding trainings MRC volunteers need.

All volunteers are required to take HIPAA annually. To get everyone on the same schedule, all volunteers will be assigned HIPAA with a 30 day due date. If your transcript is missing any of the following MRC Basic classes (Orientation, Bloodborne Pathogens, ICS Overview or Personal Preparedness) you will also be assigned those.

Volunteers who have the Basic trainings done will be assigned Active trainings. These make MRC members deployment ready and are strongly encouraged for volunteers who wish to do more than non-emergency missions for MRC.

Please note: If you are a state employee and also an MRC member, LINC requires that we only list one account, so MRC trainings will be merged with your regular employee transcript. You will not get a separate username or see the MRC Dashboard on login, but will still be able to access everything MRC-related.



BURLINGTON AIRPORT MCI EXERCISE



Eight MRC volunteers assisted the Office of Chief Medical Examiner by setting up a family interview location and interviewing actors simulating family and friends of deceased airline passengers.



Interviewes are asked questions regarding identifying characteristics that help response agencies reunited them with lost loved ones. Volunteers work as interviewer and scribe pairs.



Players in the exercise reveive briefings by staff and emergency planners regarding safety, security, scope of exercise and duties to be performed.



WHERE IS THE MRC?



LET US EAT LETTUCE!

MRC volunteer Sue Ouimet delivers lettuce from the RAMRC Community Garden to Kelly Major at Rutland Neighbors' food pantry. A bountiful harvest planted and maintained by volunteers fights food insecurity in the area.

The RAMRC community garden now has two locations and continues to expand.



A TABLE FOR FIVE

Staff and volunteers of Northwestern VT MRC get in on the action meeting face-to-face with their community. A chance to hang out in the lovely summer sun at Lake Champain for the Cardia Champ Challenge may have also contributed. Left to right, Alicia Guilford, Amands Stevens, August Toynton, Wally Good, Natalie Good.



GOOD ENERGY

HVAC employees at Fred's Energy get some positive energy and safety training from our own Becky Petelle. Learning Stop the Bleed keeps workers in high-risk industries safe.



FARM TO FONDO?

A new event for MRC. What's not to love about a 60 mile bike tour in scenic Grand Isle? MRC had a first aid presence (light blue tent on the left) at the finish line, and AuxComm volunteers provided mobile comms along the route.



PROUD TO BE MRC

Our MRC is proud to be supporters of health promotion among our LGTBQIA population at Rutland Pride . After all, queer health is public health! Left to right, Dee Myrvang, Debbie Boyce, and Melanie Sands.

MRC MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

Every quarter, we will be recognizing and celebrating MRC volunteer(s) who have gone above and beyond to serve their communities. Sound like a volunteer you know?
Submit a nomination to MRC@vermont.gov

NATALIE GOOD, NORTHWESTERN VT MRC

"Natalie has been supporting health screenings, foot clinics and first aid stations for years. She sits on our advisory board, and attended our most recent advisory board meeting as a valued member. She is present and friendly and dedicated. I just adore her! ."

-Amanda Stevens, Unit Coordinator



Natalie, and husband Wally, volunteering together at a St Albans health screening.

How long have you been volunteering with the MRC? What drew you to volunteer?

I started volunteering with the MRC in 2017 after retiring in June of that year. I was a school librarian. That makes nine years. My friend Helen Short invited me and my husband to join. I am not a medical professional, but Helen assured me that clerical help is very important. There is some statistic about how many clerical people it takes to support one medical person....(We looked it up. 0.75-1.6 to support a nurse, and 3-5 to support a doctor. Sounds like an excellent reason to recruit more non-clinical folks like Natalie to aid all our high-maintenance medical types!)

What has been your favorite MRC experience(s)?

I enjoy getting together with the whole unit and learning a new skill or just having a potluck together.

What's your favorite fall activity?

My birthday and anniversary are both in October. I like hiking and looking at the foliage in the fall.

Anything else you wish we'd asked?

Nope!

UNIT ACTIVITIES AROUND THE STATE

UPPER VALLEY MRC

UVMRC, as a key member of Riverside Emergency Preparedness Alliance, conducted REPA's Personal Emergency Preparedness and plan orientation in August, which concluded the REPA Project. We taught STB at Rochester Library as part of the Rochester Library Preparedness Series. We also taught STB during the Summer Weather Preparedness Series offered through White River Valley Ambulance. We provided first aid tent support during the Tunbridge Scenic Circuit Dog Show.During the June storm outbreak, we also sent one volunteer to assist at an emergency shelter in Haverhill, NH.

NORTHWESTERN VT MRC

Our new Unit Coordinator Amanda Stevens started in June. We taught a number of STB classes throughout summer, including at Champlain Valley Expo (Essex Jct) to motorcycle group, and a public STB in Milton. Amanda and August taught 120 Shelburne school district staff STB and 30 Franklin School District staff STB, we attended a safety fair at Med Associates for 50 employees to review STB and push VEPNA survey. The MRC provided First Aid and communications at the Fondo bike tour in South Hero, and first aid at Cardiac Champ Challenge fundraiser for NMC hospital in July. We attended the Drug Abuse Addiction Summit, National Night Out Swanton, the Age Well Fair and handed out over 20 red go bags and even more folders. In August, we taught CPR class to BAART St Albans staff. Our MRC volunteers also did multiple foot and health screening clinics in St Albans and Swanton.

MRC OF THE NORTHEAST KINGDOM

Over the past few months, NEK MRC has been at many events, including the Human Library project, which provides learning opportunities and companionship, Paperwork Night (where we check our member's training and credentials and provide assistance), a bunch of tabling at Pride Fest, the Block Party, Final Fridays, Groton Town Day, Lunch Box, and Kayak ,Days to name a few!

MRC OF SOUTHWESTERN VT

SWMRC did a calldown drill related to the regional POD exercise where we tested our unit responsiveness at the beginning of the summer. We participated in the Rural Area Medical clinic in Bennington to help underserved people in the county. We held out first Advisory Council meeting in a number of months to regroup and plan a number of fall events. We also tabled at the Arlington Farmer's Market where we promoted Be Bright at Night, general preparedness info, and conducted VEPNA surveys.

Rutland-Addison MRC

We have been very busy the last three months. We started with CPR Instructor Training for 5 MRC members and 2 community members, then participated in Rutland Pride Festival in June with Brandon Carnival, Addison Field and Farm Days and the Vermont State Fair where we deployed our MRC Misting Tent. RAMRC did tabling on ticks and extreme heat prevention tips. We also launched our MRC Castleton Garden Group that is feeding community members with food insecurity.

CENTRAL VERMONT MRC

CVMRC has distributed Be Bright at Night materials during the July 4 holiday and at two WIC events in Barre. We have also taught two STB classes and promoted Med Go Bags through various local organizations.

LAMOILLE VALLEY MRC

LVMRC has done three tabling events with First Aid stations, one Emergency Med go bag session for seniors and has worked with district 4 EMS to establish a Med Go bag distribution via Stowe Fire Department. We also did Stop the Bleed at DBI, a local business, and Hazen Union High School, for staff and students.Our AuxComm volunteers have also been hard at work advising Copley Hospital on modifications to equipment.

SOUTHEASTERN MRC

SEMRC welcomed back our former Unit Coordinator on a part time basis to help organize fall activities. We met with key community partners to organize some collaboration on our community's mobile medical clinic. We also did a unit-wide calldown drill to test our preparedness for a mass prophylaxis clinic.

MRC Statewide Training

Auxiliary Communications Orientation

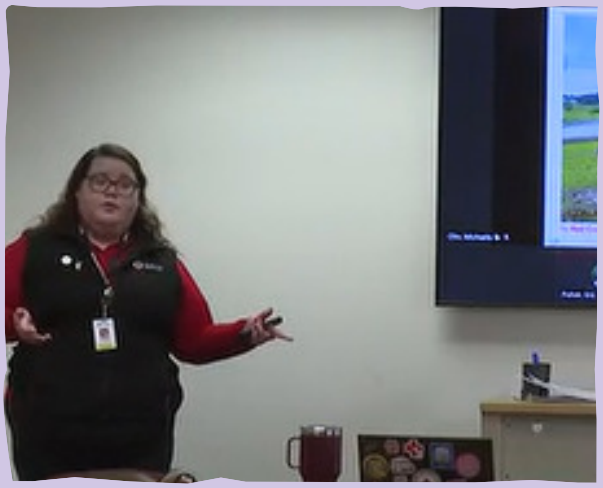


Are you MRC AuxComm or do you hold an amateur radio license and want to join? Learn more about the work we do and complete some of your Basic MRC requirements:

- October 10, Bennington District Office 9am-1pm
- November 14, St Johnsbury District Office, Noon-4pm

Email John at jzcolt@gmail.com for details

Sheltering Classes



Join MRC and American Red Cross for a sheltering deep dive. Includes Everyone is Welcome (disability access), Be Red Cross Ready (personal preparedness) and Shelter Fundamentals (basic shelter disaster operations.) All are foundational for working in emergency shelters.

- September 26, Noon-4, Newport, NH
- November 16, 4-6:30pm Bennington, VT
- November 17, 4-6:30pm Springfield, VT

Registration info on attached flyers.

Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference

Coming up quick! September 23-24, 2026, Burke Mountain Resort. Registration https://forms.office.com/g/1UMDbhjAih

This year's conference will bring together emergency management professionals, first responders, and stakeholders from across Vermont to discuss critical preparedness strategies, share best practices, and strengthen our collaborative response capabilities.



Vermont Emergency Preparedness Survey

Work with us to prepare Vermont for emergencies!

You have a chance for a $20 gift card!

Scan for Survey

https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8952211/VEPNA-Online

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Visit healthvermont.gov

medical reserve corps

Visit oncallforvt.org

Red Cross Shelter Fundamentals Training

4 hour, in-person class presented by the American Red Cross.



➤ **This basic level course introduces the roles and responsibilities for opening, operating and closing a shelter during a disaster**

➤**The course focuses on what new shelter workers need to know to work in a shelter.**

➤**The purpose of the course is to prepare participants for the roles and responsibilities they may perform at an emergency shelter.**

Registration required:

Please use the QR code or link below to register.

Register Here!

Join Us!

Saturday, September 26th
12pm-4pm

Newport Senior Center:
76 South Main Street,
Newport, NH 03773

This course is recommended for anyone who may assist with staffing an emergency shelter, Red Cross operated or otherwise, should one be opened in their community.

This may include:

- **Town officials**
- **MRC/CERT Volunteers**
- **Community Members**
- **Public Health professionals**
- **Any others with a role in emergency sheltering!**

medical reserve corps

Contact sara.m.schleef@hitchcock.org with any questions.
Participation at each session is capped at 20 attendees.

Be Red Cross Ready

Everyone is Welcome & Shelter Fundamentals

This three-course combination teaches users the basics of setting up, safely working in and demobilizing an emergency shelter built on the Red Cross model, and how to work with clients with varying needs.

November 16, 4-6:30 | 324 Main Street, Bennington VT

November 17, 4-6:30 | 100 Mineral Street, Springfield VT

Be Red Cross Ready Preparedness Essentials and Red Cross Shelter Fundamentals Training

For questions about these classes, contact Lyndsey Morin, American Red Cross lyndsey.morin@redcross.org

American Red Cross

Sponsored by the Vermont Medical Reserve Corps

medical reserve corps vermont