



# Tristate Medical Reserve Corps

*Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy and Prepared Communities*

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## September 2016: National Preparedness Month

September is recognized as **National Preparedness Month** which serves as a reminder that we all must take action to prepare, now and throughout the year, for the types of emergencies that could affect us where we live, work, and visit. Due to the success of last year's theme, "Don't Wait. Communicate. Make Your Emergency Plan Today", FEMA will be continuing that theme again this year. As is the tradition, each week of National Preparedness Month has a designated theme:

**Week 1- Preparing Family and Friends:** *Make an emergency plan for your family* ([www.ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan)).



**Week 2- Preparing Through Service:** *Honor 9/11 by getting involved in your community* ([www.ready.gov/volunteer](http://www.ready.gov/volunteer))

**Week 3- Individual Preparedness:** *Take individual steps to prepare for a disaster like downloading the FEMA app* ([www.fema.gov/mobile-app](http://www.fema.gov/mobile-app)).

**Week 4- Lead-Up to National PrepareAthon! Day, September 30th:** *Be counted and register your preparedness action (s) at* [www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare). Increase your preparedness through action! There are 10 ways to participate in America's PrepareAthon!

1. Sign up for local alerts and warnings.
2. Create and test emergency communication plans.
3. Assemble/Update emergency supplies.
4. Conduct a drill to practice emergency plans.
5. Participate in a preparedness training.
6. Collect/Safeguard critical documents.
7. Document property and obtain appropriate insurance for relevant hazards.
8. Make property improvements to reduce potential damage.
9. Conduct an exercise to review/improve your plan.
10. Plan with neighbors.

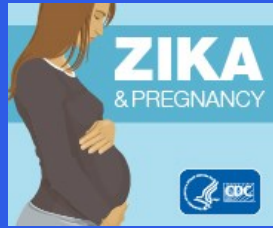
## Healthcare Preparedness Spotlight

The Southwest Ohio region will be conducting a bi-annual deployment and set-up exercise of a portion of the Alternative Care Center (ACC) this fall. The ACC is a 210 bed mobile tent hospital which could be used in a variety of disaster operations. MRC volunteers are essential to the set-up and operation of this asset.

The exercise will be conducted at McCullough-Hyde Memorial Hospital in Oxford, Ohio on **September 16th**. Please stay tuned to your email for more information. You may volunteer for this exercise by contacting Robin Thomas at the following email:

[rthomas@healthcollab.org](mailto:rthomas@healthcollab.org)





*Zika primarily spreads through infected mosquitoes. You can also get Zika through sex. Visit [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika) for more information.*

## Zika Update

The Florida Department of Health has identified two areas of Miami-Dade County where Zika is being spread by mosquitoes. CDC has issued "[Advice for People Living in or Traveling to South Florida](#)".

It is recommended that all pregnant women in the United States should be assessed for possible Zika virus exposure and signs or symptoms of Zika during each prenatal care visit.

Pregnant women who **live in or frequently travel** to these areas should be tested in the first and second trimester of pregnancy.

There are 16,832 total cases of Zika in the United States and its territories, only 35 of those cases were locally acquired mosquito-borne cases in the continental U.S. (as of 8/31/16). Data from the U.S. Zika Pregnancy Registry show that there are 1,595 pregnant wom-

en with any laboratory evidence of possible Zika infection in the U.S. and its territories (as of 8/25/16).

Visit CDC's [Zika Prevention](#) page for information on what you can do to protect yourself and others.



## Public Health Preparedness News



*Strategic National Stockpile Push Package*

CDC's [Cities Readiness Initiative](#) (CRI) is a federally funded program designed to enhance preparedness in the nation's largest population centers where more than 50% of the U.S. population resides. Cincinnati is one of the 72 cities included in this Initiative. As a recipient of the CRI grant funding, Cincinnati

Health Department supports regional CRI planning efforts with other CRI jurisdictions in the region including those in Brown, Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren counties. Operational Readiness Review assessments are conducted every two years with a Technical Assistance year in between to support im-

provements in planning efforts and operational readiness. The primary goal of the CRI grant is to help jurisdictions prepare to receive, distribute, and dispense medical assets from CDC's [Strategic National Stockpile](#) to their entire identified population within 48 hours of the decision to do so.



*The use of competencies can allow for greater consistency in knowledge and skills of MRC members.*

## MRC Core Competencies

As stated in our Summer Newsletter, new MRC Core Competencies were released in 2015. These are minimum competencies that all MRC volunteers should be able to demonstrate. Competency 2.0 requires the volunteer to

*"demonstrate knowledge*

*of one's expected role(s) in organizational and community response plans activated during a disaster or public health emergency."* Some online courses that will assist the volunteer in achieving this competency include:

- [IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command](#)

- [Public Health and the Incident Command System](#)

For healthcare professionals, consider:

- [Surge Capacity for Disasters](#)

If not already done, please create an account on MRC TRAIN to begin your training!  
[www.mrc.train.org](http://www.mrc.train.org)

# Flu Near You

How do you detect disease outbreaks in real time? While important systems exist for reporting and tracking disease, they're not perfect, missing those who don't go to the doctor, and a bit slow because it takes time for reports to be collected and sent to health departments.

*Flu Near You* is a community health project for North America.

*Flu Near You* was created by epidemiologists at Harvard, Boston Children's Hospital and

the Skoll Global Threats Fund and relies on voluntary participation from the general public, asking you to take a few seconds each week to report if you or your family members have been healthy or sick. This data is used to inform public health officials of real-time, anonymous information that could help prevent the next pandemic.



### How does it work?

Thousands of individuals submit weekly health reports to benefit their community. It's the power of the crowd! Take just a few seconds to report how you've been feeling. Reports are collected and mapped so that you know when the flu is around.

Of course the single best way to prevent the flu is to get the flu vaccine each season.

**Join the 60,000+ Flu Trackers reporting their symptoms. Help fight disease now by signing up on the *Flu Near You* website at**

<https://flunearyou.org/>

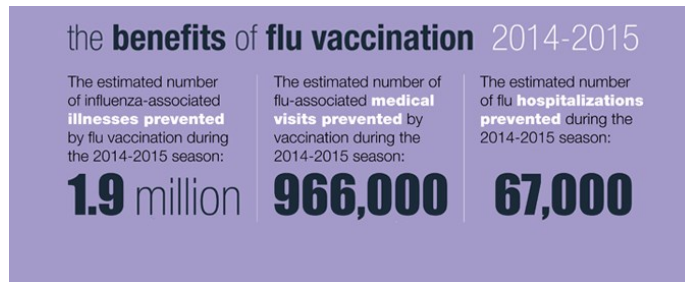
*“For more tips on preparing for this year's flu season visit CDC's [Influenza webpage](#).*

## Flu Season Preparedness

Influenza activity often begins increasing in October. **CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months and older** by the end of October, if possible. The importance of receiving the flu vaccine cannot be overstated. **The single best way to prevent the flu is by getting the flu vaccine each year.** CDC also recommends everyday preventive actions, like staying away from people who are sick,

covering coughs and sneezes and frequent handwashing to help slow the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses, like flu. Serious outcomes

of flu infection can result in hospitalization or death. Visit [CDC's Flu Vaccine Finder](#) and enter your zip code to find a location near you to get vaccinated!



## TMRC Facebook Page

Tristate Medical Reserve Corps has a group Facebook page available to members.

This group forum is a great way to stay on top of current events and communicate with fellow volunteers.

Members can share information about upcoming preparedness events, response partner activities, educational opportunities, national preparedness news and of course post photos or other graphics and videos.

**Please join our [TMRC Facebook](#) page to receive daily posts and preparedness tips during National Preparedness Month!**

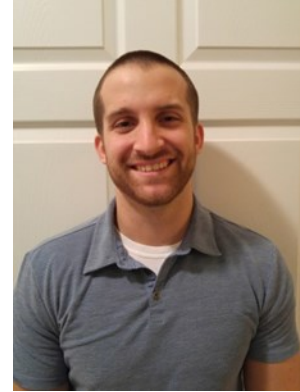




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## **MRC COORDINATOR SPOTLIGHT: Jake Collins, MPH**

Jake serves as the new Emergency Preparedness and MRC Coordinator for the Butler County Health Department. Jake graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree (2011) and a Master's in Public Health (2013) from the University of Toledo. Previously, Jake worked as a Health Educator at the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department for over a year. Although new to emergency preparedness, Jake is excited to build upon the local and regional emergency planning efforts already in place which includes recruiting and working with the volunteers in the Medical Reserve Corps as well as other community response partners.



Butler County  
MRC Coordinator  
(513) 887-5238  
collinsj@butlercountyohio.org



## **Hamilton County/Cincinnati MRC Leadership Group**

This past July, 35 motivated volunteers from the Cincinnati/Hamilton County (CHC) MRC Unit came together to establish the CHC MRC Leadership Team. Meeting monthly, the Leadership Team come together to discuss emergency planning topics such as training, team activities, response strategies and much more for the CHC MRC Unit. Many of the current team members participated in the previous leadership group and have upwards of 10+ years experience with the MRC. Guided by their MRC Unit Coordinator, Jen-

ny Pilecki (Hamilton County Public Health), the team is currently working on a project to construct various volunteer emergency preparedness and response "pathways". Eventually each of the 1,000+ MRC

volunteers within the CHC MRC Unit will be organized into one or more of these pathways depending upon areas of interest and/or area of expertise. The goal of the restructuring is to develop a more effective and coordinated volunteer response during a real emergency. **If you are a resident of Cincinnati and/or Hamilton County and are interested in learning more, please feel free to reach out to the CHC MRC Unit Coordinator at [jenny.pilecki@hamilton-co.org](mailto:jenny.pilecki@hamilton-co.org).**



PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.