Santa Barbara County Highlights Medical Reserve Corps Opportunities During Emergency Medical Services Week

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is asking individuals with medical expertise to volunteer in the Medical Reserve Corps. The Medical Reserve Corps consists of licensed medical professionals who are willing to volunteer and serve as emergency medical workers in a disaster or emergency.

Medical Reserve Corps volunteers may be doctors or nurses, veterinarians, dentists, social workers, pharmacists, chaplains, paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians. The Medical Reserve Corps volunteers would be called upon when regular emergency medical response systems are overwhelmed, such as during natural disasters or other major emergencies. With the creation of a local Medical Reserve Corps, Santa Barbara County residents will be able to count on a group of volunteers to supplement emergency medical workers in the event of a public health emergency or disaster.

The Medical Reserve Corps program was created after President Bush’s 2002 State of the Union Address in which he asked all Americans to volunteer in support of their country. Currently there are 37 Medical Reserve Corps registered in California and 657 nationwide.

An important part of the Public Health Department’s responsibility is preparing for disasters. The Emergency Medical Services Agency within the department is overseeing the Medical Reserve Corps program. The Board of Supervisors declared May 20-26 as Emergency Medical Services Week to recognize and honor all Emergency Medical Services responders who provide services to our communities every day.

Qualified individuals are asked to consider volunteering as a way to help your community in time of need. For information on the Medical Reserve Corps please go to www.sbcphd.org/ems/mrc or call John Eaglesham at 805-681-5394.

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