

Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department



Public Health Emergency Preparedness Informer

Contact Susan McNabb, Volunteer Coordinator at 209-8068 or e-mail at susanm@mail.hamiltontn.gov Summer 2008

Volunteers Assist With Hamilton County Emergency Notification Drill

Emergency Preparedness Volunteers assisted with testing the Hamilton County's Rapid Public Notification System (a.k.a. Reverse 9-1-1) on April 29th, 2008. The Local Emergency Planning Committee held a graded exercise (not a real event) with Chattanooga fire, police and emergency medical personnel responding to a simulated event on Annicola Highway.

The scenario was a hazardous chemical leak which required the evacuation of residents within a one and one-half mile radius of the "leak". Hamilton County's Rapid Notification System was activated to alert residents of the exercise. Five hundred calls went out with a recorded message which stated, "This is a test. The Local Emergency Planning committee of Hamilton County is conducting a test of the public notification system. This is only a test. To acknowledge that you have received this test, press 1 now. If you have questions about this call, press 3 now to be connected with a live operator. This is only a test".

The Health Department used

14 Emergency Preparedness Volunteers to staff the Health Department's Phone Hotline and answer the questions of residents who pressed "3". Volunteers received "Just in Time Training" before the exercise began and were prepared to answer questions about the received message and the purpose of the exercise.

Records indicated that of the 500 calls that went out: 177 people answered their phone, 102 calls reached an answering machine, 109 calls were network errors, 49 calls received busy signals, 14 calls reached fax machines and 49 calls were not answered.

Once calls to the Hotline stopped coming in, the volunteers called the 177 residents who answered their phones during the test and asked them survey questions to determine if the recorded message was clear and informative. The Health Department's survey results conducted by the Volunteers clearly showed that 85% of the test population understood that it was a test, almost 45% were aware of the test before it began, and 96% said that the

Rapid Notification System was a good way to notify them.

How Does Reverse 9-1-1 Work?

Upon request from a responding agency, Hamilton County Emergency Services Communications will begin creating a message and programming it for activation of the Rapid Public Notification System (a.k.a. Reverse 9-1-1) while simultaneously requesting activation authority from Hamilton County Emergency Services Command Staff. Once activation has been authorized, the message will be set to broadcast immediately. Following programming and scheduling of the Reverse 9-1-1 message, the radio and TV stations will broadcast the message via the Emergency Alerting System as an additional means of notifying the public of an emergency situation.

If the notification system were not available during a real emergency, officials would go door to door to notify residents.

County Fair Volunteers Needed

The Hamilton County Fair will be held September 27th and 28th this year. Each year, the Fair utilizes over 400 volunteers.

The County Fair depends greatly on its force of community volunteers. With an average of 50,000 fairgoers over the two day period, having volunteers is critical to the overall success of the event.

Volunteers typically man our Coke wagons, help in the ticket

booths, work in information tents, assist passengers at the shuttle train depots and many more important tasks. Generally, volunteer duties are divided into 3 hour shifts.

Advantages for volunteering:

- **Special parking privileges at the Fair Site, and you can bring passengers with you**
- **No \$5.00 shuttle fee**
- **Free Coke products with ID badge**
- **Browse through Fair Grounds before or after shift**

The County Fair celebrates our community's heritage through the arts, crafts, music, food and blue ribbon awards. The Fair has become

one of our community's most popular annual festivals and is reminiscent of the "old" days when the local fair was the highlight of the late summer harvest. A wide variety of entertainment is available both days of the Fair

Please check your calendars for September 27th and 28th and plan to be available for a fun and rewarding volunteer experience. Contact Susan McNabb at 209-8068 or send an e-mail to susanm@mail.hamiltontn.gov.

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| • Volunteers Assist With Drill | 1 |
| • County Fair Volunteers Needed | 1 |
| • July is National UV Month | 2 |
| • Training Opportunities | 2 |
| • Information Update | 2 |

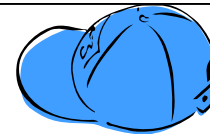
Visit us on the web at health.hamiltontn.org



CHCHD Public Health Emergency Preparedness Informer

Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department
 Office of Emergency Preparedness and Planning
 921 East Third Street
 Chattanooga, TN 37403-2165

July is National UV Month



Recent studies have shown that prolonged exposure to the sun's invisible, high energy ultraviolet rays without protection may cause eye conditions that can lead to vision loss, such as cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. During the summer months the level of ultraviolet radiation is three times greater than in the winter.

Sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat are the best defense system for your eyes against sunlight and harmful UV rays. To be effective, both must be worn every time you're outside for prolonged periods of time, even when it's overcast. But what type of sunglasses should you buy? The most important thing is to purchase sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of UV-A and UV-B rays. Don't be misled by the color of the lens or the price tag dangling from the frame.

The ability to block UV light is not dependent on the darkness of the lens. UV protection can come from adding chemicals to the lens material during manufacturing or from a chemical coating applied to the lens surface. And as for the cost, many \$10 sunglasses provide equal or greater protection than a \$100 pair.

Source: *2008 National Health Observances*, National Health Information Center, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C."

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department will host volunteer training sessions in the upcoming months on the topics listed below. As a part of the Medical Reserve Corps Program and part of the Surgeon General's Community Initiatives, we not only respond to a public health emergency, but we are also a part of the community education plan.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PRESENTER</u>
September 9, 2008	5:30 p.m.— 6:30 p.m. (Light Dinner Provided)	Health Department	Seasonal Influenza/ Pandemic Influenza	Susan McNabb MRC Volunteer Coordinator
November 11, 2008	5:30 p.m.— 7:00 p.m. (Light Dinner Provided)	Health Department	Incident Command System 100 & 700 National Incident Management System	Susan McNabb MRC Volunteer Coordinator

Please RSVP (so we will have a head count for space and food) to Susan McNabb, 209-8068 or e-mail at susanm@mail.hamiltontn.gov.

Park in the garage behind the Health Department building and follow the signs once you exit the elevator on the first floor. Bring your parking ticket with you to be stamped for \$1.00 parking.

Volunteer Information Update

If you have moved, changed telephone numbers, or are no longer interested in being a volunteer, please complete the form below and return to the address at the top of this page or e-mail Susan McNabb at susanm@mail.hamiltontn.gov.

Name _____ Home Phone _____ Cell _____ Work Phone _____

Home Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Work Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Email _____

_____ I am unable to be a volunteer at this time. Please remove my name from the active volunteer list.