

VERMONT MRC QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



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

STAYING ENGAGED

Heather Rigney, MRC State Coordinator

Thank you to all 29 respondents who took time to fill out the member engagement survey. It's not too late to participate, and we've included other ways to access the survey. A larger report will accompany the next newsletter, but for now, some interesting results we want to share include:

- Email is overwhelmingly everyone's favorite way to receive communications.
- Most of you wanted to hear from us only once every few weeks unless there was an emergency.
- A handful said that notice for trainings would be great 6-8 weeks in advance. A statewide MRC training calendar in the works will hopefully make that achievable next year.
- Hybrid learning beat out in-person and virtual. Folks like choice.

Most telling were our questions on connectedness and value. While many were very happy with the opportunities and participation level they had, there was a theme across questions of members feeling disconnected, whether it was lack of engagement since COVID, a new focus on virtual meetings that took them away from seeing peers at meetings or trainings, or the lack of understanding of how they fit in to various priorities of the MRC program.

Recommendations members suggested included more one-time opportunities for people who could not commit to long-term projects, more impactful projects with tangible results that can be shared with the unit, more social gatherings, and more medical missions.

Members sincerely cared about building up their MRC unit in their community. Many said that they felt people in their community did not know about MRC and they really wanted to see more focused advertising and recruitment to promote our work and recruit new members. I LOVE this, because this directly involves our volunteers sharing their work and bringing information about the MRC to others in their social networks. Look for more info on recruitment this spring.

More surprising-only half our respondents have received a formal Orientation. In response, we've scheduled-you guessed it-another Orientation, listed on the Upcoming Trainings page. We are also working with Units to offer in-person Orientations locally throughout the year.

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ENGAGEMENT SURVEY QR ABOVE.

DIRECT LINK: [HTTPS://BIT.LY/4FZCJ2U](https://bit.ly/4fzCj2U)

EMAIL HEATHER FOR A PAPER COPY AT HEATHER.RIGNEY@VERMONT.GOV

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

A Who's Who on Unit Coordinators



WE HEARD YOUR VOICE

Many of you answered last quarter's engagement survey and said you did not know how to reach your Unit Coordinator(s) for Vermont MRC. See below for a listing of Units and the fearless leaders who make your Units run like buttah, as they say here in the Northeast.

Central Vermont MRC

Diana Chace
diana.chace@vermont.gov

Lamoille Valley MRC

Matt Ward
matthew.s.ward@vermont.gov
Karl Stein
karl.stein@partner.vermont.gov

MRC of Southwestern Vermont

Dee Myrvang
diana.myrvang@vermont.gov
Martha Cornwell
martha.cornwell@partner.vermont.gov

Northeast Kingdom MRC

Becky Petelle
rebecca.petelle@vermont.gov
Helen Wilson
helen.wilson@partner.vermont.gov





Left to right, Nancy, Karl, Dee, Becky, Helen, Martha, Eric, Jacquie, Misha, Matt, August, Moriah, Wanda and Heather. Shown below, Diana and Pamela.

Northwest Vermont MRC

Jacquie Kelley
 jacqueline.kelley@vermont.gov
 August Toynton
 august.toynton@vermont.gov



Rutland-Addison MRC

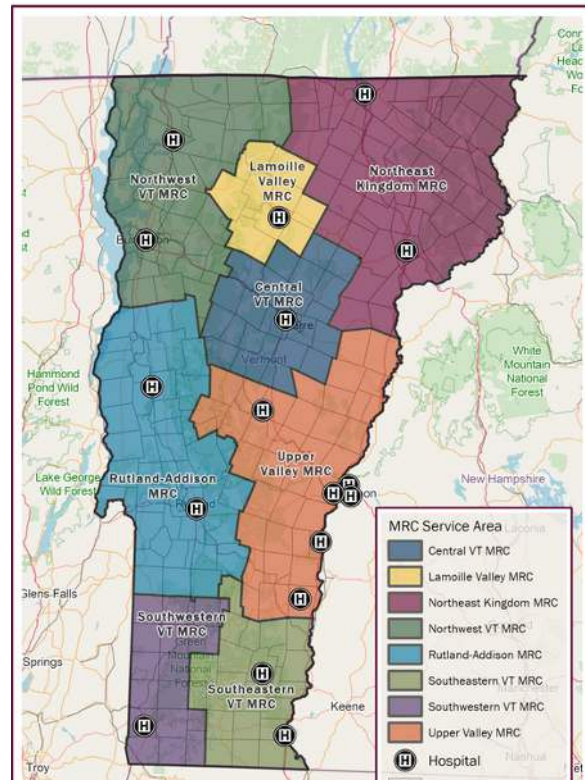
Eric Pulver
 eric.pulver@vermont.gov
 Beate Ankjaer-Jensen
 beate.ankjaer-jensen@vermont.gov

Southeast Vermont MRC

Pamela Corbett
 pamela.corbett@vermont.gov
 Wanda Walkowiak
 wanda.walkowiak@partner.vermont.gov

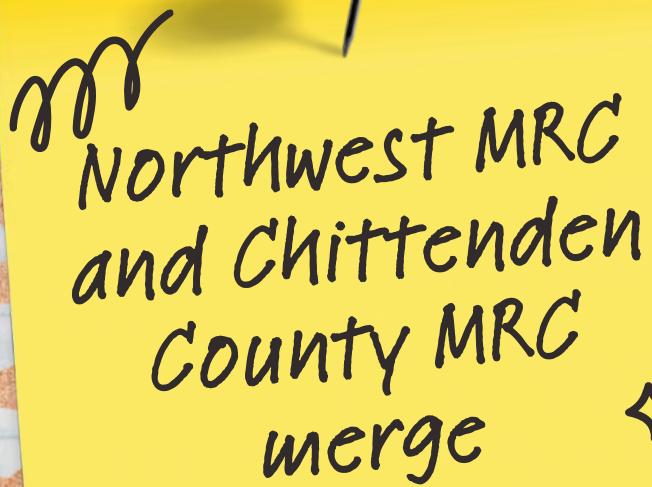
Upper Valley MRC

Misha McNabb
 misha.mcnabb@vermont.gov
 Moriah Keat
 moriah.keat@vermont.gov
 Nancy Kreis
 nancy.e.kreis@partner.vermont.gov



Which Unit are you? Find your Unit and service area on our updated Unit Map.

Announcements

 Northwest MRC
and Chittenden
County MRC
merge

Vermont's Medical Reserve Corps program is excited to announce the merger of two of its northern MRC units into one entity. Chittenden County Medical Reserve Corps, which serves the Burlington metro area, has officially joined the ranks of Northwest Medical Reserve Corps, which served Franklin and Grand Isle counties. Acknowledgement of the merger request was provided this week by the National Medical Reserve Corps Office, which falls under the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response. This formalizes a process where both individual units had been jointly coordinating activities and trainings between members for several months.

In addition to the advantage of greater pooling of human and material resources to cover a diverse service area with many needs, the merger solves an administrative gap left by the resignation of Chittenden County MRC's Fiscal Agent in 2023. The combined Northwest MRC unit will jointly be managed under the Northwest Regional Planning Commission's umbrella as Fiscal Agent. The merged unit will be working in the coming weeks to assemble an Advisory Board representative of their new identity and combined service area, and to align documents and processes.

The new Northwest MRC will have a combined 223 volunteers and fall under the joint oversight of Unit Coordinators Jacqueline Kelley and August Toynton, who are the Emergency Preparedness Specialists in the St Albans, and Burlington, District Offices, respectively.

Announcements



Remembering
Dr. Jack
Schonberg

Upper Valley MRC wishes to share the sad news that Jack Schonberg passed away this month. Jack was a founding member of Upper Valley MRC's Advisory Board from shortly after the unit's inception in 2011 up until he resigned his Board membership in 2019. Jack's extensive experience as a member of the American Red Cross when charting out the path of UVMRC was instrumental to their success. Jack always leaned on his connections in the community to strengthen the work of the MRC, and his leadership and dedication will be greatly missed. Please keep his wife Cynthia and his extended family in your thoughts.



At the annual meeting of the Public Health Council of the Upper Valley, MRC Unit Coordinator Misha McNabb was on hand to receive an award on behalf of UVMRC for Public Health Champion of the Year. Only two community organizations or individuals receives this award yearly, based on how their service enriches public health within the Upper Valley region.

An excerpt from the nomination is below:

"From Tropical Storm Irene to the COVID pandemic to the recent devastating flooding, the UVMRC has supplemented our regional emergency response capacity, ensuring that residents get the care they need to maintain health and recover....the UVMRC builds resilience in our communities to buffer the effects of the health threats we all face."

UVMRC Receives Award from Public Health Council



Brett Mayfield, UVMRC member and Board President of the PHC, presents Misha McNabb with the PHC Champion award.

Nominate a fellow MRC member for an award at the 2025 Vermont MRC Summit!

<http://bit.ly/4fzAdJt>

Or request a paper nomination form at mrc@vermont.gov

Where's the MRC?



Southeast Medical Reserve Corps volunteers work alongside area dentists to conduct an oral health pop-up clinic in the Brattleboro area.

Rutland-Addison MRC teaches Be Bright at Night to students at Ferrisburgh Elementary.



Lamoille Valley MRC hosts a Family Assistance Center training with the OCME's office in Morrisville, top left. CVMRC, LVMRC and NEKMRC run a joint training day in Hardwick, VT, top right. SWMRC hosts a STB skills day for Southern VT University, inset.



UNIT ACTIVITIES AROUND THE STATE

MRC OF SOUTHWESTERN VT

Stop the Bleed is ramping-up for another year of trainings. We also worked with Vermont State University to train the incoming nurses in preparedness, STB and Narcan administration.

MRC OF THE NORTHEAST KINGDOM

Central VT, NEK & Lamoille County came together in Hardwick for a day of group training. We started off with a speaker on de-escalation. Even though some of us heard talks on this subject earlier this year it was very nice to know other ways to deescalate. The speaker pulled from his vast experience often in mental health providing more ways to calm a scenario down. In the afternoon ICS & PODs were played with. After a while these 2 subjects can get old so they helped us act out & identify some of the leaders in ICS then we set up PODs critiquing how each stop functioned & if it could be improved. We also participated in a hospital drill for an active shooter, which was very interesting!

SOUTHEASTERN MRC

Members participated in an Oral Health Clinic, which provided free oral health care to 40 of our community members; We collaborated with the Town of Brattleboro on three sessions of Verbal De-escalation with former DMH Commissioner Mourning Fox; We distributed gun locks at the Mt. Snow Wildlife Festival and at Weight Stations; We distributed Covid Test Kits at VeggieVanGo.

Northwest MRC

Northwest Vermont MRC, amidst a merge with Chittenden County MRC, recently held a statewide MRC cold weather preparedness training, supported a Safe Harbor vaccine clinic, a vaccine clinic at the Janet S. Munt Family Room for New Americans, several Stop the Bleed courses, a Youth Mental Health First Aid course, and a Disability, Access, and Functional Needs (DAFN) Assistance Training course. NWVT MRC did all this on top of its regularly scheduled wellness clinics at Martha's Kitchen and its work with SASH footcare.

UPPER VALLEY MRC

UVMRC hosted a UV MRC Volunteer Appreciation Event in September. We conducted a Be Bright at Night Event at the Chester, VT Library. Volunteers assisted at Oxbow/Bradford Respiratory vaccine clinic. Volunteers conducted a STB Class for Chimney Savers in Randolph, VT, Personal Emergency Preparedness Training at Chester, VT & Springfield, VT Libraries and UVMRC member Bill Stearns taught Incident Response: Simple Introductions To Radios to MRC Volunteers virtually to VT and NH MRC and CERT volunteers. Lastly, we were accepted into the PHC Hall of Fame with a Public Health Champion Award!

LAMOILLE VALLEY MRC

A number of volunteers participated in a total of 13 different equity/vaccine clinics, although two volunteers carried the show. Thank you Marjorie Kelso and Melissa Rose for collectively taking on 10 of 14 clinics, and to Drew Fried, Elke Pinn, Cajsa Shumacher and Karl Stein for making the remaining clinics possible. LVMRC hosted a pan-Northern MRC training in Hardwick with 10 MRC participants from combined units.

CENTRAL VERMONT MRC

CVMRC did tabling at the Rainbow Harvest Fest on the Statehouse Lawn, provided a virtual POD overview training, and participated in the MRC training day with NEK and Lamoille units, covering de-escalation, ICS, and POD set-up.

RUTLAND-ADDISON MRC

RAMRC has conducted STB with Rutland City school nurses, while working on Strategy Outcomes. Be Bright at Night presentations were done at six elementary schools in Addison County. STB training was completed for all of the school nurses in Addison County.

Be Bright at Night

Turns One Year Old!

November marks the first year of completion for our statewide Be Bright at Night campaign.

Be Bright at Night (BBN) is embedded in Watch for Me VT, a joint collaboration between Vermont Department of Health and the Agency of Transportation, with a focus on safe nighttime behaviors that reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities on roadways during darker months.

<https://safeststreets.vermont.gov/be-bright-night>



Year 1 Report

Read the full Year 1 report complete with a list of BBN initiatives and data surrounding education and reflector distribution.

New Materials

BBN has expanded its educational materials to include video resources and educational curricula for elementary age children. Most BBN materials have also been translated into our major non-English language groups in Vermont.

Join Us!

If safety education intrigues you, we're looking for volunteers who can meet with schools, community partners and priority populations at risk to deliver short presentations. Talk to your Unit Coordinator about becoming a BBN educator.

Did you know?

Be Bright at Night has been presented to diverse audiences in and beyond the MRC on three occasions?

- Poster Presentation at NACCHO MRC National Summit, May, 2024
- ASPR MRC Office Hours, September, 2024
- New England Rural Health Association Conference, November, 2024



In addition, three states have requested use of our materials!

MRC Statewide Coordinator Heather Rigney and VDH Injury Prevention Manager Stephanie Busch co-presenting at the NERHA Conference.

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 Heather.Rigney@vermont.gov

ALICE BURT, NORTHEAST KINGDOM MRC

“Alice is one of our most frequent volunteers. She is very quiet, but always pleasant & isn't opposed to driving down to the southern Northeast Kingdom to help us out. She is one of our most dependable volunteers and a willing worker. This on top of working her job.”

Helen Wilson, NWMRC Co-Coordinator

“Alice Burt has been an amazing volunteer for the NEK MRC since 2019. She is always there to help when we ask for volunteers. Alice helped during COVID-19 response at our local hospital and during vaccine clinics in Newport and St. Johnsbury. She vaccinated so many people! Alice has volunteered over 200 hours of time to the NEK MRC. She has

a wonderful, dry sense of humor and is a very dedicated person.

Normally, Alice works at a nursing home on the night shift, so we are always amazed at her ability to volunteer! She is such a wonderful person and great MRC volunteer!”

-Becky Petelle, NEKMRC Co-Coordinator



Alice with unit leadership and husband Ray at the MRC Summit in 2023.

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

I have been with MRC for 5 years. I saw an ad, not sure where, and decided that I had the skills to offer the Unit, and saw an opportunity that my husband Ray could offer non-clinical skills to work along with me.

What has been your favorite MRC experience(s)?

We enjoy working along with the state of Vermont in public health settings and have gained a new appreciation for this field. One of my favorite experiences was the COVID clinics. I still can hear the thank yous from the general public at the testing sites as well as the vaccination clinics. Other activities I have enjoyed include the recent active shooter drill. Overall though, any activity that supports community health, whether it be as simple as a Be Bright campaign or Tabling at a health fair to get out the MRC name is also a fun time.

What's your favorite fall activity?

My favorite fall activity is driving around enjoying the vibrant fall colors of Vermont. It never gets old!

UPCOMING STATEWIDE TRAININGS

AMERICAN RED CROSS SHELTER FUNDAMENTALS DECEMBER 3, 2024, 10:00AM-2:00PM

Sally Fox Conference Center- 280 State Drive Waterbury, Vt
05676
How to Register: <https://forms.office.com/g/q8XcrsYHRc>

QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER (QPR) TRAINING FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION DECEMBER 4, 5:45-7:45PM

VDH St. Johnsbury District Office
107 Eastern Avenue (behind the Catamount
Arts Building)

RSVP Becky Petelle to register
rebecca.petelle@vermont.gov

Attendance cost is paid by NEKMRC

MY HEALTHY VT TRAINING JANUARY 7, 5:30-6PM (VIRTUAL)

MyHealthyVt offers six free, evidence-based workshops to help people manage, prevent, or delay chronic conditions. These include Diabetes (prevention and self-management), High Blood Pressure, Chronic Pain, Chronic Disease, and Quit Smoking.
[Home - MyHealthyVT](#)

Please join us for an overview of these workshops, as well as information on becoming a trained facilitator!

Email Heather to RSVP for a formal calendar invite: heather.rigney@vermont.gov

Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)
[Join the meeting now](#)
Meeting ID: 234 074 759 950
Passcode: JZ9Xi27R

NEW/PROSPECTIVE MEMBER ORIENTATION DECEMBER 19, 6-7PM (VIRTUAL)

Learn more about the MRC program, its history, its national mission, and how we do MRC here in VT. This orientation is ideal for new and prospective members.

Email Heather to RSVP for a formal calendar invite: heather.rigney@vermont.gov

Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)
[Join the meeting now](#)
Meeting ID: 217 035 749 794
Passcode: PN3tV6yG