



Health Tribune

Thinking about your health in Portage County
Provided by the Portage County Health Department

July 2010

Volume 2, Issue 6

Did you know...?

The Portage County Health Department combined efforts with Kent City and Ravenna City Health Departments during the H1N1 response. They were recognized for playing a vital role in their county wide response during the H1N1 pandemic.

Questions about disaster preparedness answered by Kim Villers, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the Portage County Health Department

Question: Why is public health involved in disaster preparedness?

Answer: After the September 11, 2001 attacks and the anthrax and smallpox scares that followed, it was evident that public health departments needed to make improvements to be ready to respond to any disaster. The federal government made grant monies available to each state and county, with requirements for all-hazard planning and working with community partners.

Question: What made the Portage County H1N1 response so successful?

Answer: Because of the grant funding, Portage County Local Health Departments had been able to develop written emergency response plans, acquire and upgrade equipment and supplies, and establish a volunteer Medical Reserve Corps Unit. The community benefited from the valuable partnership between Public Health and the local Emergency Management Agency, the Red Cross, Robinson Memorial Hospital, Schools, Universities, County Commissioners, Police and Fire Departments, Mental Health and Recovery Board, and Local Businesses. Through these cooperative working partnerships, we were able to get up-to-date information out to the public and provide needed services such as vaccination clinics.

Question: What other types of emergencies has the Portage County Health Department responded to?

Answer: Portage County Local Health Departments have worked together to respond to a large Norovirus outbreak, a Hepatitis A event, a Salmonella outbreak, and mercury spills. H1N1 influenza was our biggest response to date. We continue to be involved in local drills and exercises with other partners and counties to test our plans.

July is Bioterrorism Education and Awareness month

Family Readiness

There are a few things a family can do to prepare for a disaster. Develop a disaster plan together as a family:

- Create an emergency communication plan
- Establish a meeting place
- Assemble an emergency preparedness kit
 - Bottled drinking water; one gallon per day per person-recommended three days worth
 - Canned or sealed packaged foods
 - First aid kit, including special prescriptions
 - Battery powered radio and flashlights, with extra batteries
 - Blanket for each person
 - Extra set of keys, a credit card, cash
 - Toilet paper and paper towel

Additional information is available at www.redcross.org



The Ohio Medical Reserve Corps is made up of medical and non-medical trained volunteers willing to help in their communities during any disaster.

In 2006, Portage County Health Department became an official unit for MRC volunteers. PCHD is proud to report that they have over 200 MRC volunteers registered.

To become a MRC volunteer, register at

<http://www.serveohio.org/>

Questions or Comments? Contact Us!

449 S. Meridian Street
Ravenna, Ohio 44266
Phone: (330) 296-9919

Email: pchd@portageco.com

<http://www.co.portage.oh.us/healthdepartment.htm>