

## Medical Reserve Corps

The Medical Reserves Corps (MRC) began in January of 2002 when all Americans were asked to offer meaningful volunteer service in their communities, in whatever ways they could. It is a specialized component of Citizen Corps, a national network of volunteers dedicated to ensuring hometown security. Citizen Corps, along with AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Peace Corps are part of the President's USA Freedom Corps, which promotes volunteerism and service nationwide.

MRC units are community-based and function as a way to locally organize and utilize volunteers who want to donate their time and expertise to prepare for and respond to emergencies and promote healthy living throughout the year. MRC volunteers supplement existing emergency and public health resources.

The Natick MRC was formed to promote public health and safety across the region, in three key areas:

1. Public Health Emergencies – events that threaten public health, such as disease outbreak or toxic chemical release.
2. Mass Casualty Incidents – disasters that causes injury or threats to large numbers of people. These can include a building collapse, fire, storm, flood, or other event that displaces groups of residents that must be moved to emergency shelters.
3. Community Service Activities – opportunities to foster the well-being of local residents; such as health fairs, blood pressure clinics, or training programs.

The Natick MRC was created by the Board of Health (BOH) in 2006. The Director of the Natick Board of Health is responsible for all aspects of the unit. The Director determines when the unit will be deployed, and which activities warrant involvement by members. Members of the community with various backgrounds were appointed by the BOH to serve on the MRC Executive Committee to provide leadership and decision-making for MRC operations and activities.

The first MRC Executive Committee Meeting was held on August 3, 2006. To date there have been 35 Executive Committee meetings.

### Major Activities

- Sought and received legal standing for MRC under Board of Health
- Board of Health made official member appointments to MRC Executive Committee
- Sought and received volunteer liability ruling
- Selected and acquired a Database software for MRC
- Identified MRC volunteer ID badge system and held photo ID badge preparation for volunteers
- Selected HHAN (Health & Homeland Alert Network) as the MRC volunteer call-up system
- Created and received approval of MRC operating guidelines
- Identified need for MRC Web page on the town website
- Created system to list training courses offered by many sources
- Participated in Massachusetts MRC Best Practices Conference
- Provided volunteers for various town clinics
- Fostered volunteer recruitment and training through participation in Natick Days, local television Town Crier show, news letters, and other means
- Supported the Region 4A efforts to standardize procedures, training opportunities
- Forming a committee to develop a pet sheltering plan to be included in the overall Natick emergency plan
- The Natick MRC has 102 volunteers registered as of October 2008

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Charles H. Ross - Vice Chairperson  
Tara McGrath - Recording Secretary

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