



Region 6 Healthcare Preparedness Newsletter

June 2007

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West Nile Virus is Here - Avoid Mosquito Bites

Originally released by Public Health – Seattle & King County on May 31, 2007

KING COUNTY, WA – With mosquito season just around the corner, it's time to start thinking about West Nile virus. In late 2006, West Nile virus killed birds and a horse in King County and made three people ill elsewhere in Washington. In 2007, there is a possibility that the virus may cause many more illnesses in our area.

"West Nile virus tends to cause the greatest number of illnesses in the first few years it is in an area before leveling off," said Dr. David Fleming, Director and Health Officer for Public Health – Seattle & King County. "Now is the time to eliminate mosquito habitat from your property and take all appropriate precautions to avoid being bitten by a mosquito."

In 2006, six of the 13 birds tested positive for West Nile in the entire state of Washington were from King County. Eighty-eight birds were tested in King County in the 2006 mosquito season. The infected animals indicate that the West Nile virus is circulating in mosquitoes and birds in King County, and could infect people this summer and fall.

Thousands of people in the United States each year are infected with West Nile virus, which is caused by the bite of an infected mosquito. The virus causes no symptoms in most instances. In about 20% of infections the person experiences mild-to-severe flu-like symptoms. In a small number of cases, West Nile virus can cause neuroinvasive disease, other serious illnesses, and death. People over 50 and particularly older adults over 70 are at higher risk for severe illness and death. There is no vaccine for people.

Protect yourself from mosquitoes by eliminating their breeding habitat:

The mosquito that is most likely to infect King County residents with West Nile virus is *Culex pipiens*, or the northern house mosquito. *Culex pipiens* prefers to lay eggs in small amounts of standing water commonly found around houses in buckets, wheelbarrows, clogged drains and discarded tires. Removing this habitat will reduce the number of mosquitoes near people's homes.

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Tips for reducing habitat and preparing the home:

- Tip out barrels, buckets and wheelbarrows
- Tip out containers such as toys, cans or plant saucers
- Empty children's wading pools when not in use
- Change water in birdbaths and animal troughs at least once a week
- Get rid of used tires
- Clean garden ponds
- Recycle old bottles, buckets and cans
- Clean leaf-clogged gutters
- Empty water from flower pot dishes
- Dump water off of tarps and plastic sheeting
- Repair leaky outdoor faucets
- Cover rain barrels with mosquito screens
- Repair ripped windows and door screens and make sure they fit tight
- Consider adding a screen door to doors that often are left open
- Help elderly neighbors with these actions

Tips to avoid getting bitten when mosquitoes are out – often at dawn and dusk:

- Wear long sleeve shirts and long pants.
- Consider using an insect repellent. The CDC recommends repellents containing the chemical N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide (DEET), which is known to be very effective and safe for use with children and adults. It is important to read the label and follow the instructions on the label carefully.
- Long lasting and effective alternatives to products containing DEET are available. Insect repellents containing picaridin may be a good choice for some individuals.

Dead birds:

The public is requested to report dead birds to Public Health so that the location of dead birds can be recorded. A small number will be tested for West Nile. A spike in bird deaths may indicate the areas of the county where the virus is most active. Call 206-205-4394 to report a dead bird or report online at www.metrokc.gov/health/westnile/deadbird.htm

West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne virus that is spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. A mosquito becomes infected by biting an infected bird that carries the virus. West Nile virus is not spread by person-to-person contact, nor is it transmitted directly from birds or other animals to people. Mosquito season, when West Nile virus is of most concern, runs from spring through late fall.

More information:

- Learn more by calling the West Nile Virus hotline at 206-205-3883 or visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/westnile>
- Report a dead bird: 206-205-4394 or www.metrokc.gov/health/westnile/deadbird.htm
- State Department of Health <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WNV/WNV.html>

Liability Protection for Registered Emergency Volunteers

Legislation passed by the 2007 Washington Legislature and signed by Governor Gregoire improves liability protection for volunteer emergency volunteers. The legislation – HB 1073 – provides immunity from liability for civil damages resulting from the acts or omissions of volunteers during an emergency. This volunteer program is called the Emergency Worker Program, and administrative rules are contained in chapter 118-04 of the Washington Administrative Code. To be covered, a volunteer must be registered with the Washington State Military Department or a local emergency management organization.



The immunity from liability extends to:

- The volunteer worker;
- The volunteer's supervisor or employer;
- Any facility or their officers or employees;
- The owner of property where the act or omission may have occurred;
- The state or local governmental entity; and
- Any local entity that registered the volunteer.

The immunity covers acts of a medical volunteer that are:

- Without compensation or the expectation of compensation;
- Within the scope of the volunteer's assigned duties; and
- Under the direction of a local emergency management agency or the Military Department.

New - Hospital Influenza Pandemic Planning Checklist

Planning for pandemic influenza is critical for ensuring a sustainable healthcare response. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with input from other Federal partners, have developed this checklist to help hospitals assess and improve their preparedness for responding to pandemic influenza. Because of differences among hospitals (e.g., characteristics of the patient population, size of the hospital/community, scope of services), each hospital will need to adapt this checklist to meet its unique needs and circumstances.

The hospital planning checklist has been updated. It is available at: <http://pandemicflu.gov/plan/healthcare/hospitalchecklist.html>

OSHA Issues Pandemic Flu Preparedness Guidance for Healthcare

From AHA News.com

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration released pandemic flu preparedness guidance for health care workers and employers. Although OSHA issued general guidance for workplaces in February, the new guidance focuses specifically on health care workers and their



Upcoming Meetings

- Task Force on Critical Care Surge Capacity
June 14, 2007 10.00-11.30am
- Pharmaceutical Task Force: June 14, 2007
3.00 – 5.00 pm
- Health Insurers Meeting
June 19, 2007 9.00-10.30 am
- RMRC Incident Management Software Demonstrations: June 26, 2007 1.30-3.30pm June 27, 2007 8.30-10.30am
- Region 6 Hospital Emergency Preparedness Committee: June 28, 2007
7.30 – 10.00 AM

employers. It is consistent with all previous pandemic preparedness guidance issued by OSHA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Department of Health and Human Services, the agency said.

OSHA states explicitly that the document is intended to be advisory, not a standard or regulation, and therefore it creates no new legal obligations. On the other hand, the document reiterates that current OSHA regulations require that healthcare institutions protect their employees from recognized hazards and that this document is "intended to assist employers in providing a safe ...workplace."

The 104-page document addresses flu diagnosis and treatment, infection control, health care worker vaccination, personal protective equipment, preparedness planning, and OSHA standards.

Follow the link below to view the new guidance standards:
(http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA_pandemic_health.pdf)

Special Populations - Tips for First Responders, Second Edition

Center for Development and Disability – U. of New Mexico

Tips For First Responders is an 11-page, color-coded, laminated 4.5 x 5.5-inch field guide that offers information on how to assist persons with a wide range of disabilities. These tip sheets provide information about many types of disabilities you can use during emergencies as well as routine encounters. They are not meant to be comprehensive, but contain specific information that you can read quickly either before or while you are actually responding to an incident.

Special Populations covered in the guide include: Seniors, People with Service Animals, People with Mobility Challenges, People with Mental Illness, Blind or Visually Impaired People, Deaf or Hard of Hearing People, People with Autism, People with Multiple Chemical Sensitivities and People with Cognitive Disabilities. Two new disabilities have been added: autism and multiple chemical sensitivities, and the original tips have been revised.

For more information or to order a guide, visit:
<http://cdd.unm.edu/products/TipsForFirstResponders.htm>

King County Healthcare Coalition



The King County Healthcare Coalition is a network of healthcare organizations and providers that are committed to strengthening the Healthcare System for emergencies. The following workgroups currently meet as part of the King County Healthcare Coalition to address Preparedness issues in the healthcare community.

Workgroup & Committee Updates

Outlined below are current updates for some of the King County Healthcare Coalition committees and workgroups. Please consult the Healthcare Coalition website for additional information.

Committee/Workgroup	Staff
Healthcare Coalition Development	Cynthia Dold, 206-205-0456 Cynthia.dold@metrokc.gov
Healthcare Coalition Administrative Staff	Lydia Ortega, 206-296-5079 Lydia.ortega@metrokc.gov
Ambulatory Care Committee	Aimee Welch, 206-205-4145 aimee.welch@metrokc.gov
Alternate Care Facilities	Tony Cebollero, 206-205-8621 Anthony.Cebollero@metrokc.gov
Critical Care Workgroup	Lewis Rubinson, MD, 206-205-5091 lewis.rubinson@metrokc.gov
Hospital Emergency Prep Committee	Danica Mann, 206-947-5565 Danica.mann@overlakehospital.org
Infectious Disease Workgroup	Jeff Duchin, MD, 206-296-4814 Jeff.Duchin@metrokc.gov
Legal Workgroup	Amy Eiden, 206-206-8969 Amy.Eiden@metrokc.gov
Long Term Care & Home Health Planning	Carlos Dominguez 206-205-8185 Carlos.Dominguez@metrokc.gov
Medical Director's Committee	Jeff Duchin, MD, 206-296-4814 Jeff.Duchin@metrokc.gov
Mental Health Planning	Michelle McDaniel, 206-205-5389 Michelle.McDaniel@metrokc.gov
Puget Sound Call Center Coordination	Joe Cropley, 206-517-2383 cropley@wapc.org
Regional Medical Resource Center	Allison Schletzbaum, 206-731-6213 aschletz@u.washington.edu

The Healthcare Coalition meeting calendar for 2007 is also available on the website: <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/hccoalition/2007-calendar.pdf>

Ambulatory Care Preparedness Work Group (ACPWG)

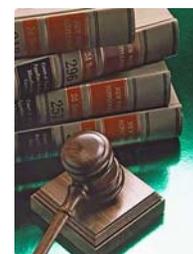
- The Ambulatory Care Response Plan is in review with several Coalition staff members.
- Aimee Welch is exploring the applicability of the "Omnibus Legal and Financial Agreement" relating to the Regional Disaster Plan to Ambulatory Care Providers. She is also working with Public Health staff to develop strategies for antiviral distribution to ambulatory care providers.
- There will be a statewide emergency preparedness conference for Community Health Clinics "Taking the Next Steps in Emergency Preparedness" July 18-19 in Wenatchee.

Hospital Emergency Preparedness Committee

- The hospitals, along with other Healthcare Coalition Partners, participated in a regional exercise on May 30. The scenario was based on an earthquake. Many hospitals practiced evacuation and all practiced using alternate modes of communication. Many lessons were captured by all, including: Better triaging of messages is needed when using HAM radio as the primary mode of communication; Improved communication and notification to local EOCs of hospital and RMRC EOC activations; Further clarification around role of RMRC in support of hospital control for patient movement requests, such as evacuation; and Improved definition of items to include in "status reports" for the healthcare sector.
- A draft after action report will be available at the June Region 6 Hospital Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting.

Legal Work Group

- The workgroup is documenting state laws that could affect deployment of personnel during an emergency, including laws that provide certain protections for volunteers during an emergency and laws about licensing of health care professionals.
- Additionally, the workgroup will continue to participate in a state legal readiness workgroup that is supporting the Washington Department of Health's preparation of a comprehensive guide to legal readiness for a health emergency.



Mental Health Planning

- Planning is underway to hold a 3-day disaster mental health training for mental health and spiritual care professionals who work in Healthcare settings. The training is scheduled for early 2008.
- Days one and two will provide an overview of how disasters strike, the psychological, psychosocial and psycho spiritual impact they have on individuals and communities, and the role of mental health and spiritual care personnel in healthcare settings in disaster planning, response and recovery. Day three will be a train-the-trainer session with the goal of delivering this curriculum to healthcare workers across the Region.



Regional Medical Resource Center

- The May 30th exercise highlighted many planning items that the RMRC can address in the coming months. The primary items highlighted included refining processes for resource request tracking and the need for refined job action sheets to accompany the RMRC response structure.
- First drafts of select RMRC protocols were distributed to the Healthcare Coalition Coordinating Group for editing.
- Operational Planning for the ImageTrend Software package has begun and will continue throughout the summer. Kickoff meetings for the software project will occur in late June.



Training Opportunities

Note: The following list of available training opportunities are provided for your interest. Making each opportunity known as available is not necessarily an endorsement as to the value of each training.

Disaster First Aid Training

June 2nd, 2007

8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Location: Warren G. Magnuson Park, 7400 Sand Point Way NE

It is extremely important to be able to take care of yourself and others after a disaster. This 8-hour class includes a certified First Aid/CPR course. In addition, you will learn techniques dealing with multiple injuries resulting from a major disaster where 9-1-1 is overwhelmed and unavailable. Download the registration form or call 206-233-7123 or email snap@seattle.gov for more information.

Earthquake Retrofit for Your House

June 21, 2007

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Location: Neighborhood Academy Safeco's Jackson Street Center Above Walgreen/Starbucks Shopping Plaza. Parking lot -entrance is between 23rd and 24th on S. Main St.

You've heard the predictions, seen the fault line maps and even felt the earth shake in February 2001. Now it's time to ask yourself if your house can withstand another significant earthquake. Each time an earthquake hits, it weakens your house's structure, so past performance is no guarantee of future stability. Learn how to evaluate your home to determine if it requires earthquake retrofitting. Retrofitting methods and tools will be presented along with information on the City of Seattle code and permit requirements. TO REGISTER call Safeco' Neighborhood Academy at 206-545-6111. This training is FREE.

For retrofitting information and other classes, call 1-(877)-2-BOLT-IT at the Seattle Office of Emergency Management

Shipping Infectious Substances

June 29, 2007

1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Location: Mount Vernon

Cost: \$95.00

For more information, or to register visit:

http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/Training/training_course_descriptions_SKL.htm#Shipping_Handling_Infectious_Substances

ICS Training

Zone 1 – ICS 300*

June 13-14, 2007 – North Shore Utility/Bothell, Contact: Dave Van Valkenburg dave.vanvalkenburg@ci.bothell.wa.us

June 27-28, 2007 – City of Shoreline, Contact: Gail Marsh gmarsh@ci.shoreline.wa.us

July 25-26, 2007 – City of North Bend, Contact: Ron Garrow rorg@ci.north-bend.wa.us

September 13-14, 2007 – Woodinville Fire, Station 31, Contact: Chief Bob Whipple bwhipple@wflsd.org



Legend:

* Indicates course is eligible for reimbursement through HRSA/ASPR funding

** Indicates course is eligible for reimbursement through Homeland Security funding.

For questions regarding the reimbursement processes, please contact Danica Mann at Danica.mann@overlakehospital.org

Zone 1 – ICS 400*

June 20-21, 2007 – North Shore Utility/Bothell, Contact: Dave Van Valkenburg dave.vanvalkenburg@ci.bothell.wa.us

September 19-20, 2007 – Woodinville Fire, Station 31, Contact; Chief Bob Whipple bwhipple@wflsd.org

Zone 5 – ICS 300*

August 13-14, 2007 – Seattle Police Department Training Unit Grant Tietje grant.tietje@seattle.gov

September 10-11, 2007 – Seattle Police Department Training Unit Grant Tietje grant.tietje@seattle.gov

Zone 5 – ICS 400*

August 15-16, 2007 – Seattle Police Department Training Unit Grant Tietje grant.tietje@seattle.gov

ERTI Decontamination Train the Trainer*

August 28-30, 2007
Presented by: WSHA

Cost: No Cost

To Register: Contact Peggi Shapiro at peggis@wsa.org

As in past years, there are also four-hour "refresher" training opportunities available, as agreed to between ERTI and the hospital facility. Examples include: decontamination system set-up/take-down, PPE donning/doffing, WMD information, or site management walk-through. These are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, so get your request in as soon as possible. Contact Chris Orkiolla c.orkiolla@erti.org or Roger Bianchi r.bianchi@erti.org to arrange.

Upcoming Conferences

Note: The following list of available conference opportunities are provided for your interest. Making each opportunity known as available is not necessarily an endorsement as to the value of each conference.

Western Regional Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference

July 9-11, 2007

Location: Las Vegas, Nevada

2007 Western Regional Preparedness Conference brings together regional and national experts in Disaster Planning, Mental Health, Patient Care, Exercise Design, and Communication. This conference offers the most current learning opportunities taught by expert faculty. For More Information: <http://www.snahec.org/wrpc/index.htm>

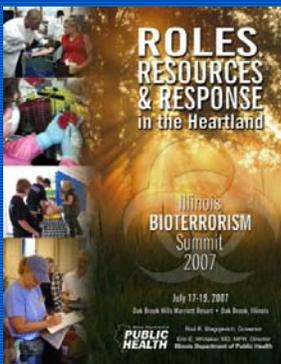
2007 Illinois Bioterrorism Summit

July 17-19, 2007

Location: Oak Brook Hills Marriot, Oak Brook IL

This multidisciplinary conference will benefit a broad range of public health professionals involved in bioterrorism planning and response, including public health administration, environmental health, nursing, communicable disease, laboratory services, food protection, immunization, hospital emergency services, allied health, and other emergency response areas. Highlights of the conference include over 30 concurrent and plenary sessions, roundtable discussions, networking reception and a premiere exhibit hall.

For More Information: <http://www.ipha.com/IPHA3/bioT.php>





Sound Shake '08

Taking the Next Step in Emergency Preparedness

July 18-19, 2007

Sponsored by: Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers and Washington State Department of Health

Location: Wenatchee

To Register, visit: www.wacmhc.org/register_online.cfm

AMA/CDC Second National Congress on Health System Readiness

July 18-20, 2007

Location: Grand Hyatt Hotel, Washington D.C

The purpose of the Congress is to bring public health and healthcare delivery sectors together to improve preparedness for an influenza pandemic at the community level. This is a partnership between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the AMA. The congress planning committee represents a variety of national public health and healthcare organizations. The goals of the Congress are:

- Improve integration of health care and public health leadership at the community level;
- Focus on the necessity for community-wide planning for pandemic influenza; and
- Establish pandemic influenza as a prototype of community readiness

Tribal Emergency Preparedness Conference

August 9-10, 2007

Location: Red Lion Hotel – Jantzen Beach, Portland OR

Cost: No cost

For More Information: Contact Tacey Casey at tcasey@npaihb.org

Upcoming Exercises

Mass Fatalities TTX – Fall 2007

Public Health Seattle & King County, in coordination with the Medical Examiners Office, is planning a tabletop exercise on Mass Fatalities associated with a Pandemic Influenza scenario. Date is still to be determined.

Sound Shake 2008 – March 5, 2008

The Seattle UASI area obtained a grant to develop and execute a Seattle Fault Catastrophic Earthquake exercise. It will be a tri-county, functional exercise. Design Team Contacts for Region 6 include:

Grant Tietje, grant.tietje@seattle.gov – Seattle

Heather Kelly, heather.kelly@metrokc.gov – King Co. OEM and

Vernon Owens, vowens@ci.bellevue.wa.us – Bellevue

For More Information about Sound Shake 2008, please visit:

<http://www.metrokc.gov/prepare/SoundShake08.aspx>

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