

# Central CT Health District

*Mass Dispensing Area #28*

## Emergency Preparedness Newsletter

January 2006



### **Greetings!**

This is the first Public Health Emergency Preparedness Newsletter from the Health District. These newsletters will keep residents, health partners and CCHD volunteers informed regarding various aspects of public health planning for emergency response as well as training opportunities.

Central CT Health District currently serves the towns of Berlin, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield with a population base of approximately 63,000 residents. It has a Central office in the Wethersfield Town Hall and satellite offices in the Town Halls of Berlin and Rocky Hill. The staff consists of a Director of Health, an Administrative Assistant, three Sanitarians, a Health Educator, and an Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

The Health District is committed to providing essential local public health services through on-going health education, prevention and reporting of disease, investigation of health problems and advocacy. Most recently, public health has become more involved in the local, regional and state planning for prevention, response to and restoration after emergency/disaster events. Since most public health agencies have few staff, it was recognized that close coordination with town planning as well as a volunteer base would be needed to support efforts to protect the public.

The Health District maintains a Web site at [www.ccthd.org](http://www.ccthd.org) that describes its services, provides health information including links to other sites and lists upcoming events. A new section is being developed to provide information related to emergency preparedness. Both adults and children will be able to utilize.

### **Emergency Planning**

The District has received funding from the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) which was awarded funding by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The purpose of this funding is to continue to enhance the State's bioterrorism response capacities. DPH is funding 47 full-time local health departments and districts in Connecticut to assist them in developing the infrastructure needed for public health preparedness planning.

The State has grouped municipalities throughout the state into 41 Mass Dispensing Areas (MDAs) and has assigned one full-time department or district in each MDA to be the lead agency to oversee the planning for that area. CCHD is the lead agency for MDA #28 which includes its three towns. A full-time Emergency Preparedness Coordinator is on staff.

When public health was first asked to participate in emergency planning, the focus was on the creation of a smallpox clinic (Mass Vaccination model) plan for Region 28. The focus has now shifted to planning a mass dispensing model for medications or vaccinations via Point of Dispensing clinics referred to as PODs. These PODs will operate under the same organizational structure, called the Incident Command System (ICS) that all emergency responders, at all levels, use. Some of the accomplishments achieved by the Health District since the grant began include:

- Development of a smallpox vaccination clinic plan,
- Participation in national, state, regional and local drills and exercises,
- Participation in training related to the Incident Command System, shelter management, quarantine & isolation, many disease entities, evacuation, POD management, volunteers, management, risk communication, Health Alert Network (HAN), and many other areas,
- Recruitment of medical and non-medical volunteers and
- Coordination with town emergency planners.

This year, we will be focusing on:

- Regional planning for mutual support of PODs,
- Testing of Health Alert Networks,
- Participation in drills and exercises,
- Continued development of plans for Isolation & Quarantine, Pandemic Flu, Smallpox, Anthrax, Plague and
- Recruitment and training of volunteers.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are critical to the success of preparation and response. Point of Dispensing Clinics (PODs) would be staffed primarily by volunteers from the community.

The District is very grateful for all of you who have volunteered, who serve in a first responder capacity or who are town employees.

There are approximately 350 medical and non-medical volunteers who have already agreed to respond if the District needs assistance to respond to natural or man-made event whether accidental or intentional (terrorist). These events could involve biological, chemical or radiological events and could involve mass vaccination or medication dispensing clinics, mass care, evacuation, quarantine/isolation or shelters (emergency or sheltering-in-place). Planning involves all of these issues as well as coordinating with town emergency planning and trying to anticipate the special needs of children, the elderly and others.

Volunteers are from all walks of life. All types of skills are needed both medical and non-medical. Some of the POD roles are: vaccinators, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, greeters, forms distribution, data entry, people flow, security, safety, supply distribution, teaching, child care, assistance for those with special needs, translators and anything else one can think of for a clinic site.

- If you have already volunteered, refer a friend or relative.
- If you have not already volunteered & are interested, you may :
  - Call Judge Torpey at 721-2816 or
  - Email [judyetorpey@wethersfieldct.com](mailto:judyetorpey@wethersfieldct.com)

**Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Exercise: *Volunteers Needed!***

On Wednesday, April 19, 2006, CCHD staff and volunteers will be participating in a CDC SNS full scale functional exercise designed to test state and local health readiness to respond to a major disaster. The local health mission will be to accept delivery of the mock stockpile from the State Department of Public Health, establish a POD and distribute “medications” to a large number of patients. Medical and non-medical staff and volunteers will test the local POD Plan and evaluate its effectiveness.

The SNS is composed of large quantities of medicine and medical supplies to protect the public in an event severe enough to cause local supplies to be depleted. In a real event, the SNS would be delivered to the state within 12 hours of approval of the Governor’s request. The State would receive and distribute the SNS to local public health agencies as quickly as possible.

- The medicine in the SNS is FREE for everyone.
- The SNS has enough medicine to protect several large cities at the same time.
- Federal, state and local community partners are working together to ensure that the SNS medicines will be delivered to the affected area to protect you and your family.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!  
INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING?**

**Contact: Judy Torpey  
Emergency Preparedness Coordinator  
721-2816**

**[Drill will involve several hours on April 19, 2006]  
[Details to follow for participants.]**

**Keep Your Contact Information Up-to-Date**

**Don’t forget, to call (721-2816) or email  
[judy.torpey@wethersfieldct.com](mailto:judy.torpey@wethersfieldct.com)  
if your contact information changes.**

**Thank you.**

## **Interested in Free Training? Register on: <http://ct.train.org/>**

First responders, town employees and CCHD volunteers are eligible to register with the site. You may take any course unless it is restricted or priority has been given to particular disciplines. Courses may be site, distance learning, web-based, or exclusively for people in Connecticut. You may search for courses locally or across the country. You may create a personal online transcript to track your learning not only for TRAIN but inclusive of others you may add. You will have opportunities to provide and view feedback regarding any course listed on the site. You have the option of signing up for emails about new courses.

The Training Finder Real –Time Affiliate Integrated Network, or TRAIN, is the nation’s premier learning resource for professionals who protect the public’s health. TRAIN is a project of the Public Health Foundation with a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and funding from participating states and the CDC. TRAIN is comprised of the national [www.train.org](http://www.train.org) site and participating TRAIN affiliate sites. The CT DPH manages the Connecticut site, <http://www.ct.train.org/>.

### **How To Register:**

1. Select “Create Account” button on left side of screen
2. Read “TRAIN” Policies – Click “I agree to etc.” box then “Next” button
3. Fill-in required fields – Click “Next” button
4. Click on down arrow next to “Select Agency”
5. Select “Smallpox Preparedness & Response” from the menu
6. Click on down arrow next to “Select Smallpox Preparedness & Response”
7. Select “Mass Vaccination Areas” from the menu
8. Click on the down arrow next to “Select Mass Vaccination Areas”
9. Select “28”-“CCHD” from the menu. Click on “Next”
10. Select two(2) roles, then scroll to the bottom of the screen and then select “Volunteer” as your third(3) in “Professional Roles” and click “Next” button
11. Click on “Official Public Health Agencies” box and select “Local” from the menu as one of your three (3) “Work Settings” and click on the “Next” button
12. Selecting Demographic information is optional
13. Click on the “Next” button to complete your registration.

**Once you have registered**, go back to [Http://ct.train.org](http://ct.train.org) to select your training:

1. Type in your “Login Name” and “Password”
2. Click on the “Course Search” button
3. Click on “Browse My State Only” that is in the menu on the left side of the screen and select your course.

**Please direct questions about using the site to:**

**Christopher Stan at**

**[Christopher.stan@po.state.us](mailto:Christopher.stan@po.state.us) or 860-509-7133**

### **Current Training of Interest**

**Incident Command System for Public Health Professionals** 1/26/2006, 3/8/2006, and 4/12/2006 at DPH, Capitol Avenue, Hartford (Awareness level course)

**CT DPH Fundamentals of Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications** 2/23 and 5/11, 2006 at DPH (Introductory-awareness level course)

**Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Guidance and Overview** – 23 minute video

**Public Health Preparedness 101** – introductory web-based course