MANALAPAN TOWNSHIP
MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS &
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONE TEAM

Manalapan MRC-CERT

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)?
The MRC component of the Manalapan Township Medical Reserve Corps and Community Emergency Response Team (Manalapan MRC-CERT) is a U.S. Office of the Surgeon General grant funded program that will enhance the Township of Manalapan's emergency preparedness. The MRC emphasizes the use of medical professionals to supplement the Township's emergency health and medical care systems during a public health emergency.

What is the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)?
The CERT component of the Manalapan Township Medical Reserve Corps and Community Emergency Response Team (Manalapan MRC-CERT) is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security administered program that also enhances the Township's emergency preparedness by focusing its efforts on recruiting all citizens, medical or not.

Who is eligible to volunteer for the Manalapan MRC-CERT?
Any Manalapan Township resident, age 18 or over, is eligible to join the Manalapan MRC-CERT. Persons interested in the Manalapan MRC-CERT who live outside of the Township may participate in the trainings and educational offerings, but because of insurance limitations their activities in an emergency or hands-on-exercise may be barred. Licensed or certified health professionals are the priority of recruitment efforts, but all persons are invited to join.

What might I be asked to do?
In advance of any emergency there are educational forums and trainings on topics related to emergency preparedness and response. These forums and trainings are designed for audiences of both health professionals and non-health persons. Also, there are exercises where volunteers participate in emergency-like situations to sharpen skills. Emergency situations that may require Manalapan MRC-CERT involvement include; large scale vaccination (i.e. smallpox, pandemic flu), large scale antibiotic distribution (i.e. anthrax), assisting with searches for missing persons, supplementing emergency medical services in case of a severe disaster that overwhelms existing primary care resources or operation of a shelter during an emergency.

What is the commitment?
As a volunteer, the Manalapan MRC-CERT can only ask that you try your best to participate in trainings and exercise. In a disaster, it will be essential to only use persons in certain situations where they have demonstrated ability. If our community suffers a serious disaster it is likely we will need to depend on our own resources for at least the first 24 hours. Our primary resource will be trained personnel. These personnel will be organized and scheduled to work in shifts that are most appropriate at that time. In the case of mass vaccination or mass antibiotics distribution, the available and trained personnel will again be organized and scheduled in shifts until the impacted population is served.

Are their training requirements?
Throughout the year there are training opportunities in various aspects of emergency response and MRC-CERT oriented activities. Though, there is no mandate to attend training programs, your participation will be urged and we hope you will be able to attend some of the programs. We have adapted the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training as a foundation-piece for our team. This training (20 hours) is offered once a year. This training touches on incident command system (ICS) basics, fire suppression, first aid, search and rescue, psychological impact of emergency response, bioterrorism and natural disaster response.

How would I be notified if the Manalapan MRC-CERT were activated?
The Manalapan MRC-CERT currently uses a few modes of communication. For distribution of informational materials in non-emergencies the Manalapan MRC uses e-mails and regular mail. In emergent situations an automatic calling system and phone chains are used.

What if I have professional obligations?
The Manalapan MRC is designed to be an asset in many situations. If you are a medical professional with obligations to a hospital that prohibits your participation in Manalapan Township during a regional emergency - that is quite understandable. However, the Manalapan MRC-CERT would like all of its working volunteers to try and establish agreements with their employers to free them during an emergency to assist in the Manalapan MRC-CERT response.

Do volunteers receive compensation?
No. You will be volunteering to help your community in a time of extreme need.

Are volunteers covered by insurance?
Manalapan MRC-CERT volunteers are covered at least by the Manalapan Township insurance policies for workers compensation and liability when working under direct supervision of the Township. Depending on the nature of the emergency this coverage may be extended by the State.

What are the benefits of volunteering for the Manalapan MRC-CERT?
There are opportunities for learning and becoming better prepared for large scale public health crisis. Maybe more important, is the self-satisfaction of volunteering your skills, resources and time to help fellow community members in a time of extreme need.

How do I sign up?
There is a short questionnaire that needs to be filled out. The questionnaire is available on line at the Manalapan Township web site – www.mtnj.org - or for pickup at the Manalapan Health Department or it can be mailed upon request. Please call 732-446-8345 or email health@mtnj.org.

CERT
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM