



Protecting our Hawai'i communities from natural disasters, disease pandemics, bioterrorism and public health emergencies.

Public Health Preparedness News

March 2014

Holy Fukushima, Batman! A chemical and radiological release on Maui?!

No, there aren't any nuclear power plants on Maui. And no, this wasn't a real-life bioterrorism event involving a chemical or radiological release.

The "release" was the scenario for "Biochemical Terrorist Attack on Maui: Is

The didactic learning and field exercises, held at the Puunene National Guard Armory and MMMC, were designed to help refresh the responders' skills in handling a real-life chemical or radiological incident within Maui County.



Scenario: A member of the 93rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team adds a touch of realism to the field exercise.

there an Antidote? Emergency Response Training to Nerve Agent Release." The Maui county-wide annual exercise was held January 7–17 by the 93rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team (CST).

Staff from the Maui District Health Office (MDHO) joined responding personnel from Maui County, Maui Memorial Medical Center (MMMC), American Red Cross, Maui Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and American Medical Response (AMR).

One didactic learning centered upon the CHEMPACK response to nerve agent exposure. The MDHO and MMMC invited members of the response community to a presentation by Michael Kennedy, Medical Operations Officer for the 93rd CST. Mr. Kennedy spoke to a large group from Maui Civil Defense, MDHO, MMMC, and AMR.

"Mike did a great job presenting the CHEMPACK information to our hospital staff as well as to other agencies in attendance," said Gail Miyahira, MMMC Emergency Management Coordinator.

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Measles confirmed on O'ahu

Two cases of measles have been confirmed on O'ahu. The initial case involved an infant who traveled to the Philippines, and is recovering.

However, the Hawaii Department of Health is concerned because the infant was infectious during travel back to Honolulu and subsequent doctor visits. The second case of measles was in an unvaccinated child who was exposed to the first case during the contagious period.

DOH officials are investigating both cases and contacting individuals with known exposure to either of the cases. Measles is a highly contagious disease, in particular to unvaccinated persons.

"We are very concerned about the potential for additional cases of measles," said Dr. Sarah Park, state epidemiologist and chief, DOH Disease Outbreak Control Division. "This disease is so contagious that it will infect 90 percent of the contacts who are not immune."

Persons with suspected cases of measles should contact a health care professional immediately and isolate themselves to prevent spreading the disease.

Everyone should know their immunization status and, if they haven't yet been vaccinated against measles, get vaccinated as soon as possible.

- [List of Vaccinating Pharmacies](#)
- [Measles F.A.Q.](#)



A young child infected with the measles. Photo courtesy of the CDC.

CHEMPACK

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The 93rd CST also conducted a tabletop exercise to plan and coordinate the initial actions of responding agencies to a chemical or radiological event.

The 11-day exercise culminated in the field exercise, in which all county and state personnel in attendance responded to the “release” of both chemicals and radiological agents.

Moulage (makeup applied as injuries) was applied to CERT volunteers who were transported to MMMC.

On arrival, a decontamination line was established, and the “victims” were processed.

The 93rd CST also conducted a tabletop exercise to plan and coordinate the initial actions of responding agencies to a chemical or radiological event.



CHEMPACK: Responders from various Maui agencies participate in the Decon Training Exercise at Maui Memorial Medical Center.

What is CHEMPACK?

CHEMPACK is a CDC initiative to provide state, local and tribal officials throughout the U.S. with supplies of antidotes to nerve agents in preparation for a possible attack.

The program places the medical countermeasures in secure, strategically located sites to improve local capability to respond quickly to a nerve agent attack.

The CDC’s Division of Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) recognizes that even the SNS’ commitment to a 12-hour response time would be too long following a chemical attack.

In Hawaii, CHEMPACKs have been placed on the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, and Kauai. The antidotes are readily available in case of a large nerve agent exposure event, such as to agrochemicals or chemical agents used by terrorists. The antidotes comprising CHEMPACK are a supplement to resources already possessed by major hospitals in the state.

All aboard T-R-A-I-N

Approximately 2,646 people work for the Hawai’i State Department of Health (DOH) – and each one is officially designated an “emergency worker” in the event of a natural disaster, bioterror attack, or public health emergency.

Thus, all DOH staff must be trained in emergency preparedness and response, per guidance from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). This includes the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS).

But how does DOH keep track of who’s taken which training? The answer is “TrainingFinder

Public Health Foundation

TRAIN National

One Stop: TRAIN offers practical solutions for managing educational content, tracking learning, and communicating with learners.

Real-time Affiliate Integrated Network” (TRAIN), a web-based learning management system. DOH Public Health Preparedness (PHP) program uses TRAIN to provide, manage and record all emergency preparedness training that each DOH employee must complete (and yes, there’s a test to pass at the conclusion of some modules).

“As a state agency that receives federal funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DHS, we allocate a percentage of our total grant funds to actual preparedness activities and training, show compliance with NIMS, and report our implementation status using the NIMS Compliance Assistance Support Tool,” says Marilyn Sandvig, PHP Distance Learning Coordinator.

“TRAIN allows us to easily track these annual performance measures,” she adds, “and submit documentation on behalf of the department, which is then added to the state’s report to FEMA.”

Currently, DOH staff are required to take three courses in disaster management: IS 100—Introduction to ICS, IS 700—NIMS Introduction, and EP&R-101—Emergency Preparedness and Response.

Staff interested in further training in public health topics can access almost 30,000 courses offered online by the CDC, DHS, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and many other federal and state agencies through TRAIN.

“With more than 700,000 registered learners, 28 affiliate agencies, and thousands of courses offered in the network, TRAIN is perfect for anyone interested in emergency preparedness, public health and safety,” says Sandvig.

“The Hawaii TRAIN portal is available for use not only by DOH staff, but the general public as well. Learners can search and browse through thousands of courses offered. “TRAIN is helping us build and maintain a prepared public health workforce.”



Big Island nurses plan Alternate Care Capacity

Public Health Nurses (PHNs) of the Hawaii District Health Office (HDHO) are the leads in planning for Alternate Care Capacity (ACC) in the event of a disaster on the Big Island.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, PHN support can range from basic nursing care (as part of public health assessment teams visiting American Red Cross shelters on the island), to assisting with the activities of daily living for shelter occupants who need more help



As part of preparedness activities, HDHO Public Health Nurses have included student nurse interns from the University of Hawaii Hilo School of Nursing in annual planned exercises. This year's interns, Kyleigh Arakaki (middle left) and Emily Brinkman (middle right), assessed the Go Kits under the guidance of East Hawaii ACC leads Chris Barteluze (far left) and Cash Lopez (far right).

than is available in general shelters, but don't need advanced hospital care.

To ensure the PHNs are properly equipped for any challenge, HDHO provides each PHN with an emergency "Go Kit."

Kits include equipment (stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, CPR masks, and thermometers) and essential supplies (hand sanitizers, surgical gloves, protective masks, etc.).

Big Island tests CHEMPACK response

During the 93rd Civil Support Team's annual emergency preparedness exercise March 12-13, HDHO tested the operational plans for deployment of CHEMPACK, the CDC initiative to stock nerve agent antidotes throughout the U.S.

This year's exercise scenario involves an attack at a large public gathering, including the simulated release of an unidentified nerve agent.

Other exercise participants include Hawai'i County Civil Defense Agency, Hawai'i County Fire and Police Departments, Hilo Medical Center, Healthcare Association of Hawai'i, and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

During the exercise, HDHO, under the direction of the County Emergency Operations Center, will release the CHEMPACK cache to the Hawaii County Fire Department and Hilo Medical Center for deployment at the site and the emergency room, where "victims" will be taken.



Battalion Chief Gerald Kosaki, Hawai'i County Fire Department (far right), discusses the full-scale CHEMPACK exercise with (from left) Josh Fishburne, contractor; John Drummond, Hawai'i County Civil Defense; and Lt. Col. Lance Okumura, 93rd CST (Hawai'i National Guard).

Kaua'i recruits Medical Reserve Corps members

What motivates people to volunteer with the Kaua'i Medical Reserve Corps (KMRC)? That question was put to folks who attended a recruitment evening on the island's West Side.

Some were curious:

"I wanted to see what it was about," said James Tanizaki, already an active volunteer with American Red Cross and Kaua'i Amateur Radio Club.

"I came for information on KMRC, and to learn something new," added Iris Craig, with the state Transportation Dept.'s Harbors Division.

Some were motivated by a commitment to render valuable services for the community:

"I came because I'm retired and would like to be more involved in Kaua'i County. I want to know if there's anything I can offer," said Rick Comstock, who spent his career installing containment systems for University of California laboratories—exacting work that protects employees and the environment from exposure to potentially hazardous organic compounds.

"I came to see how I could be of service in a medical emergency situation," said Denese Wojcik, RN, a consultant in medical records management.

Still others cited the need to cultivate a culture of preparedness on Kaua'i:

"I came tonight because I feel it's important – living on a remote island – that everyone be prepared for any event," said Chuck Lasker. Such resolve will enhance KMRC efforts to promote an awareness of disaster preparedness among residents.

Added speech therapist Suzie Woolway, who generously hosted the KMRC recruitment meeting, "As a Home

Health Agency administrator, I have access to a variety of medical personnel. I'm in an 'information collecting' stage for my coworkers." Ms. Woolway and her associates provide medical assistance to clients needing home-based care.



Recruitment: Persons interested in the Kaua'i Medical Reserve Corps met with KMRC volunteers and KDHO staff: (seated) Iris Craig, psychologist Dr. Carol Marsh, and KDHO Planner Tommy Noyes; (middle row) speech language pathologist Suzie Woolway and Virginia Dunas; (back row) KMRC safety officer Dr. Randy Blake, Rick Comstock, Chuck Lasker, RN Denese Wojcik, and James Tanizaki.

Since 2007, KMRC has stood ready and willing to accept public health and preparedness challenges, says Tommy Noyes, Public Health Preparedness Planner for the Kaua'i District Health Office (KDHO).

KMRC's plans for the upcoming months are ambitious; the primary near-term focus is exercising their Incident Command System skills to support TropicCare Kaua'i 2014 in June. Thus, KDHO has been actively seeking new KMRC recruits.

During the two-week deployment, the new KMRC recruits will try to maximize the benefit to the community of free medical services offered by 250 military reservists.

"With dedicated individuals stepping forward at this rate, I'm confident the KMRC will continue to exemplify community engagement for the common good," Noyes told the group.



Spotlight on the HAWAI'I MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS



Jr. MRCs meet VOAD chair

Junior Medical Reserve Corps students at Castle High School were treated to a guest speaker: Darrell McCain, chair of Hawaii Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) and member of the Southern Baptist Church.

Mr. McCain spoke about VOAD and the role that his organization, the Southern Baptist Church, would play in a disaster.

The students, also members of Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA), have completed their [Plan 9](#) lesson plans and disaster preparedness poster boards as part of their curriculum.



Student volunteers: Junior MRC students at Castle High School

Big Island MRC help vision screening

The Big Island Lions Club conducted vision screenings in January, with Hawai'i Medical Reserve Corps (HMRC) volunteers assisting at each screening location.

At Haili Christian School, HMRC members Janice Nakahara and Bobbye St. Ambrogio met with 72 preschool, kindergarten, 1st, 3rd and 5th grade students. At Hilo Hongwanji Preschool, Nakahara also met with preschool students to test their distance and stereo vision (depth perception and how the two eyes work together as a team).



Vision screenings: Big Island Lions Club members with Hawai'i Medical Reserve Corps volunteers.

O'ahu MRC help with vision screening

The O'ahu Medical Reserve Corps assisted with Vision Screening clinics in collaboration with O'ahu's Lions Club.

MRC members Arthur Divinagracia, Susan Fujii and Jessica Spurrier facilitated at Ka'ahumanu Elementary School on January 21.

Liz Meirdiercks, Janis Saiki, Sandy Shimabukuro, and Jessica Spurrier participated in the vision screening clinic at Ma'e'ma'e Elementary School on February 11.

Vision and hearing screenings help to identify keiki who may have vision or hearing problems, so that they may seek further care. O'ahu's Lions Club coordinates the event and O'ahu MRC volunteers help staff clinics.



O'ahu MRC volunteer Arthur Divinagracia

We're Not Scared... We're Prepared!

If getting a toddler to sit still isn't hard enough, why not try three classrooms of 2-, 3-, and 4-year-olds?

Public Health Preparedness (PHP) braved this challenge on Feb. 11 with a visit to the Rainbow School in Prince Kuhio Federal Building. Their goal? To plant the seeds of Emergency Preparedness! in our youngest citizens.

This project was initiated by State Civil Defense and involved collaborative efforts by PHP and other agencies.

Keeping in mind that hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters can be very frightening for our keiki, PHP staff were armed with a very powerful weapon against fear: a video by the Honolulu Theater for Youth!

Made exclusively for the Hawai'i State Department of Health, "We're Not Scared, We're Prepared!" is a short 3-minute song-and-dance performance originally created as an add-on skit to the theater's 2013 mega-hit play, "A Korean Cinderella."

In the video, Cinderella and her hip-hop boy band give advice (to a rapper's delight) about making an emergency supply kit, thereby encouraging the audience to be prepared against disasters.

At the beginning of the visit, Marilyn Sandvig, PHP Distance Learning Coordinator, asked the children questions about emergen-

cies to introduce the idea that an emergency does not have to be scary if they are prepared.

After the video, Sandvig showed the keiki some of the items that should be in an emergency kit to reinforce the concept. The preschoolers, despite their tender ages, could identify the items she presented. Some keiki even chanted, "We're not Scared, We're Prepared," along with the video.

PHP staff gave each child a list of recommended emergency items and the web address of the video, so they could watch it again with their parents (a significant secondary audience).

In the days following the visit, Rain-



Cinderella and her boy band in Honolulu Theater for Youth's "We're Not Scared, We're Prepared" skit.

bow School staff reported many positive comments from the parents, some of whom indeed watched the video ["We're Not Scared, We're Prepared!"](#) online with their child.



Marilyn Sandvig, DOH Public Health Preparedness' Distance Learning Coordinator, talks about emergency preparedness with children at the Rainbow School.

Is it better to evacuate or shelter-in-place during a disaster?
Find out at our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/HI.DOCD



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