

In Response

san francisco

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A Publication of San Francisco Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster
made possible by support from the Pacific Gas and Electric Company and the United Way

In Response is SFCARD's monthly newsletter for current information
on disaster preparedness in the San Francisco community.

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Issue 22, October 2003

The Disaster Files

West Nile Virus

As you may have heard, we have two confirmed human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in the state of California, one in Riverside County, one in Imperial County.

WNV is primarily spread by infected mosquitoes and in a very small number of cases through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and even during pregnancy from mother to baby. WNV is **not** spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

WNV can be potentially serious illness although approximately 80% of people infected show no symptoms at all. 20% of people have mild symptoms such as fever, headache, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash that last a few days. *Less than 1% of people infected suffer serious symptoms.* That can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent.

Keep an eye out for symptoms and take care to avoid mosquito bites: stay inside at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active, wear insect repellent containing DEET, put good screens on your windows and make sure there is no standing water available for mosquitoes to breed in.

This information and further details is available on the CDC website:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/wnv_factSheet.htm

Brown Bag Lunches and Other Free Training Opportunities

Department of Building Inspection

www.sfgov.org/dbi

1660 Mission, room 2001

12-1pm

1. November 20th
Electrical Safety in San Francisco Buildings
2. December 18th
Emergency Response Plans for Earthquakes and Other Events

SF Ready

www.sfreedy.org

SF Federal Reserve Bank,

101 Market Street

12 – 1:30pm

1. December 17th
Workplace Issues and Labor Law

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Disaster Health Issues

Dr. Tomás Aragón of the SF Department of Public Health and the UC Berkeley Center for Infectious Disease Preparedness gave a fabulous presentation on October 9th, providing essential information on infectious diseases. Below is a brief summary that does not do justice to his talk but provides some of the basic information that can help protect you and your agency.

As background, we were introduced to the four types of pathogens:

- parasites – large multicellular organisms, includes: malaria, giardia, and cryptosporidiosis
- fungi - found everywhere, includes: candida and athlete's foot
- bacteria – increasingly resistant to antibiotics, includes: cholera, staph aureus, e coli, strep etc.
- viruses – requires a host in order to reproduce, includes: SARS, HIV and Hepatitis A, B & C

These pathogens cause symptoms such as: coughing, open wounds and bleeding, bodily secretions/fluid, diarrhea and vomiting that are the primary vectors for transmission. Knowing what symptoms to look out for enable you to take important precautionary measures that can save your life and the life of those around you. Following are the primary areas to practice health etiquette, for yourself and for others.

1. Safe body – keep your hands and body clean. Regularly disinfect “toys” for children and adults.
2. Safe breathing – cover your mouth when you cough or better yet, use a mask. Waiting rooms should make tissues, masks and hand sanitizers readily available.
3. Safe food – be sure to take proper care in food storage, preparation and handling. Keep it clean.
4. Safe sex – prevent the transfer of bodily fluids and fecal matter
5. Safe injection – always use fresh needles
6. Safe future – get vaccinated

Standard precautions against infection are common sense solutions: good hygiene, cover/isolate the source of the pathogen, and monitor for new developments.

Remember, before anything else, good health etiquette can save lives.

Use basic infection control practices always. Train the people around you to use them. In a disaster, use them even more. Remember, bleach kills everything!

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SFCARD NEWS!!!

Thank you once again to **Randall Homan** (designer of our new logo) who gave her time to design the invitations for the Disaster Food Conference. They were sent to over 800 agencies and have received compliments all round.

This month, SFCARD completed a project with the **San Francisco Foundation**. The goal of the project was to assist the San Francisco Foundation in the development of its disaster plan. The plan itself had been drawn up by a consultant but as a community resource, SFCARD still had a number of critical inputs.

- Provide the SF Foundation with resources and information. SF Office of Emergency Services, Nor Cal VOAD and FEMA all joined SFCARD to present information on disaster response and recovery.
- Advocate for disaster funding to agencies for immediate response and for long term recovery.
- Advocate that the SF Foundation have an emergency plan requirement of its grantees. This would institutionalize the standard and increase agency resilience in a disaster.
- Coordinate a Bay Area wide foundation planning effort.

Our next information exchange training will be on Thursday, November 6th. **The Disaster Volunteer Advocates** represented by: Amy Conn of the Volunteer Center; Jim Aldrich, Planner at the SF Office of Emergency Services; Patti Oliver, Volunteer Coordinator at Meals on Wheels; and Dana Hojsack, Volunteer Coordinator at the Salvation Army will discuss planning for and managing volunteers in a disaster.

Date: **Thursday, November 6th, 2003**
Time: 9am – 11am
Place: Rose Resnick Lighthouse for the Blind
214 Van Ness Avenue, at Hayes
Nearest MUNI/BART: Civic Center
RSVP: info@sfcard.org or leave a voice mail on (415) 558.2737

Don't forget to check the **Information Exchange Training Schedule for 2003-2004** is out. If you didn't receive a copy you can download it from our website at www.sfcard.org. We have been extremely fortunate and have wonderful speakers and a variety of new and interesting topics. Join us and learn how you and your agency can be prepared for any emergency!