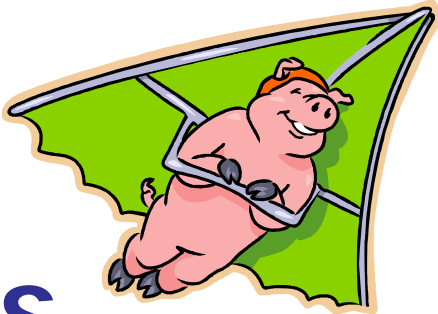




# Making Connections



**S**ince the attacks of September 11, 2001, our nation has placed a keen focus on being prepared—whether responding to a communicable disease outbreak, a natural disaster, or an act of terrorism. Many have criticized or suggested that too much emphasis is being placed on this effort. You may have heard the comment or one similar, that it is more likely to see “pigs fly” before we will experience a pandemic. Then, in April 2009, Swine flu!!!

H1N1 (referred to as “swine flu” early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people across the world. This “novel” flu virus was first detected in the United States in April, 2009 and is now spreading from person-to-person. As of June 26, 2009, 27,717 confirmed and probable infections with pandemic influenza A (H1N1) virus have been identified by the Centers for DiseaseControl and Prevention (CDC), with 127 deaths.

The CDC estimates that this case count is greatly understated and that

## When Pigs Fly

it is more likely there have been at least one million cases in the U. S. This estimate is based on population-based surveys.

Many aspects of this new flu strain are still unknown at this time. The CDC is working closely with countries in the Southern Hemisphere to enhance surveillance for influenza viruses currently circulating as they go into their flu season. How this virus behaves there will give the U. S. clues to prepare for the upcoming flu season in the Northern Hemisphere.

The CDC is taking aggressive early steps to manufacture a vaccine to be administered sometime in the fall. However, it is not known for certain what target populations will receive the vaccination or how much will be available. The fall looks to be very busy as the many details unfold.

Keeping in step with the current pandemic, Mercy Medical Center and West Valley Medical Center took the opportunity to undertake a Mass Fatalities Exercise. The drill was designed to challenge the staff’s response based around H1N1 extremely ill patients. It encompassed ninety-six hours, with a two-hour functional drill.

According to Terry Wilson, Planner for Southwest District Health (SWDH), “Since the arrival of the H1N1 flu virus many systems have been tested at all levels of the public health arena. This drill provided valuable insight as to how we approach a pandemic situation to protect the public.”

Each hospital set up their incident command center; practiced bridge calls; tested communication systems; handled mass fatalities, pushed the emergency department with an influx of patients; and engaged their participants with a realistic scenario.

Linda Anthony, Health District Liaison for SWDH, was very impressed with the outcome of the drill because of the immediate problem solving and use of the ICS that she observed.

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- Inside this issue:*
- MRC Activities
  - Volunteer Idaho
  - Congrats to Graduates
  - What SNS Means to You
  - MRC’s Role
  - Lightning Safety
  - Volunteer of the Qtr.
  - Upcoming Events

### ICS Review Question

**ICS 200: In the incident command structure you may exchange incident information to someone assigned to the incident but outside your assigned chain of command using informal communication. . . True or False? (Check Your Answer on Page 2)**

**Congratulations  
Graduates--  
Extraordinaire!**

Two SWIMRC members have completed very successful years at Valley View High School. Let's give them our support and encouragement as they begin a promising future. With their enthusiasm and determination they will achieve and contribute much to our community!



*Lainey Rittenhaler*

Lainey graduated with top honors in her class which took much hard work and focus. Congratulations and Good Luck with your future plans! YOU GO GIRL!!!



*William Jett*

William has found time to participate in SWIMRC while performing well in the classroom. He received a scholarship to attend a physician assistant's program. Thanks, William, we really need people like you in the healthcare field! YOU ARE THE GREATEST--GOOD LUCK!!!

ICS 200 Answer from Page One: True. Information can be exchanged informally outside the normal chain of command.

**SWIMRC Is What's Happening. . .**

April, May, and June have been busy months. With the arrival of H1N1 influenza the health district activated its Emergency Operation Center (EOC). SWDH's EOC could request assistance from SWIMRC if needed. This is something to keep in mind for the fall. If we need mass vaccination sites the health district may be asking for our assistance.

At the April meeting we started our tabletop for Mass Fatalities. The group broke into operations and planning and began the first phase of the exercise. Each group designated a leader and were given questions to problem solve. These questions included: where can triage take place and where would these patients go from the site of the incident. Please come to the July 23rd meeting as we tackle Phase II of our mass fatalities table top. All members are welcome to take part in the exercise.

Five members volunteered to help with the Mercy Medical Center and West Valley Medical Center summer exercises and will assist with "ventilating" patients, and "acting " as parents of very ill young patients. SWIMRC has continued to support the WIC program with a volunteer during April, May, and June.









**Volunteer Idaho**



Three cheers to the fourteen MRC members who signed up on the Volunteer Idaho Website. They will receive a small token of appreciation for their moxie! You too can register your MRC memberships on the Volunteer Idaho website by following these simple steps.

Go to <http://www.volunteeridaho.com>

-  Click on #3 on the Idaho map.
  -  Then click on Register now.
  -  Fill in the required fields.
  -  Click submit.
  -  Now, leave this site. Go to the e-mail you listed under *register now*. You should receive an e-mail from *EMSystems*.
  -  Click on the internet link within the e-mail to continue your registration.
- For questions, e-mail IDHW: [warnd@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:warnd@dhw.idaho.gov)
- Thanks for applying to the MRC. Your MRC coordinator, Linda Anthony, will be contacting you.*



**Be an  
Everyday Hero  
Join SWDH's Medical Reserve Corps Today!  
Call 455-5377**

# What SNS Means to You

## Pills to People

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has large quantities of emergency lifesaving medicines and supplies to protect Americans if there is a public health emergency, such as a terrorist attack, an outbreak of a contagious disease, a natural disaster, or when someone purposely spreads germs or chemicals to make people sick. Such situations are severe enough to quickly exceed local supplies. This reserve supply is referred to as the Strategic National Stockpile or SNS. Depending on the type of emergency, the SNS will deliver antibiotics, antivirals, vaccines, and/or other medical items to reduce the risk associated with the type of emergency.

The SNS is strategically stored in many secure locations around the country. It is designed for flexible response. Stockpiles can be shipped anywhere in the U. S. within 12 hours. Local communities are prepared to receive SNS medicine and supplies from the state to make them readily available to residents.

### HOW THE SNS IS DEPLOYED

To receive SNS assets, the office of Idaho's Governor will request the deployment of the SNS assets from the CDC or the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HHS, CDC, and other federal officials will evaluate the situation and determine a prompt course of action. HHS will transfer the authority for the SNS material to the state and local authorities once it arrives in Idaho. SNS technical assistants will remain on site to assist and advise state and local officials in putting the SNS assets to prompt and effective use.



### HOW SNS MEDICATION IS DISTRIBUTED

When Idaho receives the SNS shipments, emergency response workers will immediately deliver the supplies and medication directly to the communities that need them. Local public health districts will set up medication dispensing centers (also known as Points of Dispensing or PODs) quickly and in numerous geographic locations where residents can pick up emergency medications and treatment advice as soon as possible. These PODs are often set up in large public buildings such as schools, arenas, or churches which can support many workers and clients over a long period of time. Southwest District Health (SWDH) has made agreements to utilize these facilities in such times of need.



### WHERE DO I GO?

SWDH will announce when medication dispensing centers will open, where the sites are located in southwest Idaho, directions to the sites, operating hours, what to bring to the site, and what to expect when you arrive. In most cases these sites will not be made public until an emergency occurs. You will then be able to determine the facility nearest you.

- ➔ **MEDICINES GIVEN AT THE PODS WILL BE FREE.**
- ➔ PODs will be easy to find and can take care of many people.
- ➔ Federal, state, and local authorities are working together to ensure that sufficient supplies of SNS medicines will get to Idaho quickly and be available for everyone who needs them.
- ➔ Depending on the type of emergency, one person may be able to pick up medications for a household or group.
- ➔ PODs are designed to dispense protective medication only and are not designed to treat ill patients. Alternative sites will be identified for those ill.



## How Would The MRC Respond If The SNS Is Deployed?

With H1N1 looming about, you might wonder how the MRC would be asked to respond during a crisis when the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is deployed and PODs are opened.

**ALWAYS take care of yourself and your family first.**



- Get a flu shot every year
- Have an emergency kit at home containing food, water, medicine and more for 3-7 days of confinement to your house.
- Protect yourself and family from those who are ill. Wash hands frequently. Cover your cough and sneezes. Cough in your sleeve.

If you are comfortable that your family is cared for and you feel healthy, please volunteer by calling your MRC Unit Coordinator or placing a message on [www.volunteeridaho.com](http://www.volunteeridaho.com).

Please pay close attention to TV, radio, the emergency broadcasting system, or watch for emails asking for volunteers from the volunteer Idaho web site.

You may be assigned to a POD for vaccinating or administering medication. Be sure to bring your Go Kit in case you need to change clothes or need snacks etc. The goal will be to distribute medication as quickly and safely as possible to the residents of our local communities.

- Follow the incident command system
- Clean and maintain your work area
- Wear protective equipment
- Communicate
- Attend just-in-time trainings on site



Hundreds of volunteers will be needed to fill the many positions that will be necessary to get *pills to people* as quickly as possible.



**What kind of positions will need to be filled?**

- **POD manager:** makes assignments, does training, monitors operations
- **Support supervisor:** contributes to action planning, finds resources
- **Supplies:** set up and maintain supplies
- **Runner:** carries messages, supplies, etc from one supervisor to another
- **Security:** sets up client flow, client interaction, parking, barriers
- **Safety:** maintain maximum through-put, assist with layout, environmental safety
- **Intake/greeter:** meets and directs clients entering; assists with paper work, copying
- **Support:** Distribute food or water
- **Dispensing:** prepares and dispenses medication (pharmacist, Pharmacy tech, RN)
- **Administrator of Medications :** LPN, RN, certified personnel

# When Thunder Roars - Go Indoors



Don't let summer fun be devastated by lightning. Lightning is a serious danger. In 2008 lightning killed 28 and permanently injured hundreds more across the United States. When thunderstorms threaten, safe shelter should be your first priority.

According to Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) Acting Regional Administrator Dennis Hunsinger, "When thunder roars--Go indoors!" "If you can hear thunder, you are in danger," he said.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that the number of injuries from lightning strikes is likely much higher than those reported and many may suffer with lifelong pain and neurological disabilities. People struck by lightning suffer from a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms, including memory loss, attention deficits, sleeping disorders, numbness, dizziness, stiffness in joints, irritability, fatigue, weakness, muscle spasms, and depression.

Hunsinger suggests that as an additional precaution, lightning safety should be incorporated into every family disaster plan.

Tragedies can be avoided by taking a few simple precautions.



Stay away from metal conductors such as wires or fences.



Check the forecast for thunderstorms. Consider postponing activities.



If you hear thunder, don't use a corded phone, except in an emergency.



Keep away from electrical equipment and wiring.



**Do not** wash your hands, take a shower, wash dishes, or do laundry during a thunder storm. Water pipes conduct electricity.



Stay away from windows and doors. Stay off porches.



Do not lie on concrete floors, nor lean against concrete walls.



Avoid open areas. Don't be the tallest object in the area.



Stay away from isolated tall trees, towers, or utility poles.

For more information:  
[www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov)



## Volunteer of the Quarter



### Norma Petterborg

Thank You Norma! Norma has continued to provide service to SWDH's Women Infant and Children's (WIC) Clinic almost weekly. She weighs, measures, and checks the hemoglobin on participants. What a great gift to our community! Norma has been a member of SWIMRC since 2004 and participated in flu clinics and diabetes clinics. She has been a solid support to the organization.

**Congratulations,  
Norma for 72 hours of  
service this quarter.**

**Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy,  
and Prepared Communities**



920 Main Street  
 Caldwell, ID 83605  
 (208) 455-5300  
 www.swdh.org

## UPCOMING EVENTS in 2009

Southwest District Health  
 Public Health  
 Preparedness Program  
 920 Main Street  
 Caldwell, Idaho 83605  
 (208) 455-5377

*Laurel Bennett*  
 Program Manager

*Terry Wilson*  
 Planner

*Andy Jackson*  
 Health Education Specialist

*Linda Anthony*  
 Health Care Liaison

*Laurie Boston*  
 Public Information Officer

*Ellen Newcomb*  
 Administrative Asst.



**MRC Meeting**  
**Thursday, July 23rd**  
 Southwest District Health  
 920 Main Street - Caldwell  
 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.  
 Join us for Phase II of the  
 Mass Fatality Table Top  
 RSVP on the LMS  
 or call 455-5377.

**July 28-29**

An exercise is planned for the  
 Volunteer Idaho Systems.  
 Watch for e-mails requesting  
 your response.



**Get Ready Day 2009**  
**September 15**

to help Americans prepare for  
 potential hazards .  
 See [www.aphagetready.org](http://www.aphagetready.org)  
 for more information.



### **PASS IT ON . . .**

When you finish reading this newsletter, help spread the word by leaving it where someone else will have the opportunity to read it! Not only will you be recycling, you'll be sharing important preparedness information and encouraging members of your community to volunteer in the Southwest Idaho Medical Reserve Corps.