CERT Volunteers Needed for Niagara County Flu Clinic December 3rd

On Saturday, December 3rd, from 2-4 PM, the Niagara County Department of Health will conduct a Flu and Rabies Point of Dispensing (POD) at the North Tonawanda Public Works Department, 758 Erie Avenue in North Tonawanda. Volunteers are needed for the following roles: Medical Screeners, vaccinators, greeters, registration/intake, flow monitors, paper collection, post vaccination observation, and serving refreshments.

If you are able to volunteer for this POD, please contact Jayne Ferguson with the Department of Health at jayne.ferguson@niagaracounty.com or 716-439-7439.

Another Skills Enhancement Opportunity for our CERT members:

Tuesday, November 29, 2011
5:30-7:30 PM
Buffalo Police Headquarters Training Academy- 2nd Floor

(Corner of Church & Franklin Streets) Parking is available along the streets at meters (no charge at meters after 5 or 6 PM-watch for signs) or in the ramp below the Rath building

Topic: Mass Casualty Triage Drill: as requested by many members of CERT! We will begin with a triage review session and then test our knowledge, quick decisions, and ability to work as a team with a practical exercise! Please bring a small stuffed animal along with you to this session.

Guest Presenter: Pati Aine Guzinski of SMART
(Special Emergency Response Team)

PLEASE RSVP to: Elizabeth H. Oddy, City of Buffalo Project Coordinator ehoddy@bpdny.org or 716-851-4299
October celebrated National Fire Prevention week and I was invited to speak and participate at various events and functions throughout the month. Although I focus on the Ready America presentation, I reminded everyone the importance of checking their smoke alarms and replacing batteries as well as making sure their fire extinguishers are in working order.

During National Fire Prevention Week, October 9-15, I spoke and participated at the Safety Day at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in North Tonawanda. I also had a table providing literature at the Fire Safety and Open House at St. Johnsbury Fire Company in Wheatfield. Thank you to CERT members Janice Vertlieb for organizing the event and Linda Hardy for volunteering her time at the table with me.

In October, I had the opportunity to speak at the monthly meeting for the Niagara County Diabetes Education program, CASE Safety Forum at the Carrousel Apartments in North Tonawanda, and the monthly meeting at AARP #3526 at Sikora Post in North Tonawanda. I was also invited to give the keynote address at HANCI’s Council for Older Adults (COA) Fall Meeting and Luncheon that took place at the Lockport Canalside Restaurant. I addressed the crowd of 60 and reminded them on the importance of preparing for emergencies, especially before the cold weather starts.

I also attended tabling events at the Community Health Fair at St. John’s Outreach Center in Lockport, Pendleton Community Faire and Business Expo at the Pendleton Center United Methodist Church, the Veteran’s Workshop at the Dale Association in Lockport and the Niagara County Employee Wellness Fairs that took place at the Trott Access Center in Niagara Falls and the Niagara County Public Safety Building in Lockport.

The month ended with a Skills Enhancement Training on Working in a Point of Dispensing (POD) presented by Elise K. Pignatora, M.S., Public Health Resource & Strategic National Stockpile Support Officer for the Niagara County Department of Health Emergency Preparedness Division. 20 CERT members were in attendance and learned the purpose of a POD, how a POD is organized and what the duties and responsibilities are for each position. CERT volunteers are very important to helping POD operations flow smoothly so our support assists the Health Department to get medications and vaccinations out to a large number of people quickly in emergencies or for routine flu clinics.

One of our October Skills Enhancement Trainings this past month was titled ‘Electrical Issues in a Disaster.’ A sincere thank you to Wayne Cole and Robert Brown from National Grid, to everyone at Medaille’s Public Safety Office and Evelyn Hamilton for hosting us for this training. Congratulations to the 18 CERT members and other volunteers for attending this Skills Enhancement Training.

Here’s what some of our participants had to say about the class:

“I appreciate the way they took the time to answer everyone’s questions. Before taking this class, I surely would have been ‘juiced’ as a first responder because I would have ran right in to help a victim in a car/utility-wire accident. Now, I know better!”

“This training was very useful and had helpful information. Great presenters! This information could save a life.”

continued on next page...
October began with a disaster preparedness presentation at the BBHB Coalition of Block Clubs at Our Lady of Hope on Lafayette and Grant on the 3rd. All of the attendees were eager to learn what they can do to prepare themselves since the chilly breeze has started to creep under the door, reminding us of what lies ahead for the next few months. I also led a presentation at St. Rose of Lima and would like to thank Jean DeRouche for contacting BCS and encouraging those in the North Buffalo area to attend.

We are continuing on with our Buffalo CERT class where thirty-three participants have been trained in disaster preparedness, disaster psychology, fire safety, terrorism, CERT, and EMO part 1. They will complete the eight week course and receive their certificates at the November 16th Disaster Simulation Drill Exercise that will conclude the class.

BCS participated in the Elmwood-Bidwell Farmers’ Market on the last two Saturdays of the month, distributing disaster preparedness information and safety wraps to those who stopped by our table. It was a little cold, but all the fall scents in the air and the crowded market made it a pleasant morning to be spending outside. A thank you goes out to James Jordan and Jacquie Ornsby for helping out at this tabling event. Thank you to Kelly Dodd for inviting us to hold an informational table at the WNY Homeless Coalition’s Housing and Utility Workshop on October 25th. The participations appreciated the information and took extra brochures to distribute to others they know who would find it helpful.

BCS has partnered with Bill Parke from the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and his “Community Planning and Sustainability” class at Daemen College to bring Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) to the Clinton-Bailey area. On October 24th a Train-the-Trainer session was held and all of the students have been equipped with the information and materials to bring this presentation to their block club meeting on November 3rd. I will be there to assist them if they need it, but I want to wish them the best of luck for a great session! We have also partnered with The Belle Center and attended their “Memorable Tour” on October 27th to learn more about the center and brainstorm ideas how we can reach the wide variety of community groups who utilize this wonderful and growing center.

Thank you for your interest and participation in our programs and please feel free to refer any groups in the City of Buffalo who might be interested in a presentation! Also, if you know of an upcoming event that we could arrange to have a BCS/CERT information table, please contact me at 851-4299 or ehoddy@bpdny.org. Thank you kindly.
Daylight Savings Time Home Checklist

Remember, on Sunday, November 6, 2011 at 2am, we fall back as daylight saving time ends. As you wake up Sunday and start resetting things, it might be a good idea to use your “extra hour” to check on some other things that are just as important.

**Change the batteries in your smoke alarms.** This is the semi-annual favorite. Whether the batteries need it or not, it is a good thing to change them out. The old batteries can be used in a non-emergency item, like a kid’s toy, until they are fully depleted.

**Change the back-up batteries in your carbon monoxide detectors.** Many of these are powered units, but have a battery backup in case of power failure. If you are using a generator as back-up power to run the furnace, the monoxide detector is very important to ensure the generator is not spewing gasses back into the house.

**Go over your fire and emergency escape plans.** Everyone should have the family’s escape route and meet-up point known to them. In case of a fire or other situation where you must leave the home, best routes for getting out of the house as well as a meeting spot such as at the tree in front of the house, or some other easily known location, is vital. It’s a good time for a semi-annual refresher.

**Change the batteries in your emergency flashlights.** This is equally important in the case of a power failure. There is no sense having weak batteries in a truly vital item when it is needed. Again, swap the batteries out into something else.

**Check the expiration date on your fire extinguishers.** You do have at least one on each level of the house, right? If not, it is wise to get one or start saving for one. If you have them, check to ensure they’re still within their serviceable period. If not, look in the phone book for companies that will inspect and re-certify them. This is typically inexpensive, unless the device needs to be refilled.

**Retrain yourself and your family on how to use the fire extinguisher.** Once a fire starts, it spreads quickly. The 30 seconds it takes to read the extinguisher’s instructions could make the difference between something you can put out, and an evacuation scenario. Go over how the extinguisher is used with every member of the family able to move it around.

**Check the contents of your first aid kit** and ensure all the items that might have expiration dates are still serviceable. Ensure the inventory is replenished if things have been used.

**Update and check your 72 hour kits.** Ensure clothes still fit, food is not expired, documentation packets are up to date, medications are cycled to add new ones, and seasonal needs are met.

All the things on this list might take an hour, or a bit more, if you have to go to the store. This hour spent today can save untold inconveniences, and possibly even lives, in the next six months.

Thank You!

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

How to Prevent Thanksgiving Cooking Fires

Did you know that cooking fires happen the most on Thanksgiving? According to the National Fire Protection Association, fires are likely to start in kitchens three times more than on an average day. This is mostly due to leaving overworked heating devices or ranges unattended. This year, while you're enjoying the holiday of feasting, please remember the following safety cooking tips:

- Before you start cooking, check to see if your stovetops, burners and ovens are clean as this will reduce the chances of starting a fire.
- Always use cooking equipment tested and approved by a recognized testing facility.
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Never use an extension cord for a cooking appliance, they can overload the circuit and cause a fire. Be sure to use the actual plug on the appliance.
- Be sure to stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you need to leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove – no matter what!

We hope a fire doesn't happen, but if it does we would like to provide you with how and when you should fight cooking fires in your home to prevent deaths:

- When in doubt, just get out. Make sure the last person out closes the door behind them; this will help contain the fire. Then call 9-1-1.
- Keeping an oven mitt and a lid nearby can help prevent small grease fires from flaring into large fires. While wearing the oven mitt, cover the small grease fire with the lid and turn off the burner. Do not touch or remove anything until the burner is cool.
- After a fire, all appliances need to be checked and serviced before being used again.
- And lastly, never forget to check and make sure that your smoke alarms are working properly.