



**Request for City Council Committee Action
From the Department of Health & Family Support**

Date: April 24, 2006
To: HEALTH, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Subject: QUARTERLY UPDATE ON PUBLIC HEALTH
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Recommendation: Receive and file.

Previous Directives: None

Prepared or Submitted by: Pam Blixt, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Phone: x3933

Approved by: _____
Gretchen Musicant, Commissioner of Health & Family Support

Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Approval ____ Not Applicable X
Policy Review Group (PRG) Approval ____ Date of Approval ____ Not Applicable X

Presenters in Committee: Pam Blixt, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Laura Eiklenborg, Regional Preparedness Coordinator

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

X No financial impact (If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information).

Background/Supporting Information Attached

The Department is requesting to provide a mandatory quarterly update by Pam Blixt on progress in activities for our federal Public Health Emergency Preparedness and the Cities Readiness Initiative Grants. A presentation will also be provided by Laura Eiklenborg about the June 16, 2006, regional public health exercise which will test triage and mass dispensing of medication. MDHFS staff are coordinating the recruitment of volunteers to be victims, with a special emphasis on vulnerable populations.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING
Department of Health & Family Support (MDHFS)
CITY COUNCIL UPDATE: FIRST QUARTER 2005

Planning

1. A much-anticipated addition to Minnesota's Emergency and Community Health Outreach (ECHO) family of communication tools is now up and running. ECHO Phone debuted in February, providing health information in multiple languages. ECHO is a collaborative of public health and safety agencies, ethnic advisory organizations and non-profit groups in Minnesota. The initiative works to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive life-saving health and safety information in the languages they understand best. ECHO phone provides rapid, easily accessible information to people who may not have Web access, may not be near a television, or who prefer using the telephone.
2. We are continuing to make progress to have better financial system in place to track disaster expenses. The meetings with MN Homeland Security and Emergency Management staff have included Health and Family Support, Fire, Finance (including Risk Management and purchasing), and Regulatory Services/Emergency Management.
3. Our department will soon have the ability to view satellite broadcasts on site. We are procuring a satellite dish to be placed on the roof of the Public Service Center and the equipment to view the broadcast in Conference Room 525. Many public health training events are broadcast via satellite, and in an emergency just in time training and information could be provided via satellite.
4. Many city departments participated in the National Response Plan site review. Consultants met with City staff for a day and a half to assess our preparedness and plans for a catastrophic event. The City of Minneapolis was found to be "Partially Sufficient" in the three categories examined. A report back to Congress will be submitted by June 30, 2006 for 75 U.S. cities.
5. MDHFS staff have led the continued work on objectives in the City Special Populations Alert and Response Coordination (SPARC) Plan:
 - a. Held second emergency preparedness meeting with leaders of the African American community.
 - b. Presented emergency preparedness planning workshop to Sabathani Community Center staff, with an additional meeting in the planning stages.
 - c. Planning in progress with Sabathani Community Center to involve staff and clients in Public Health Emergency Exercise on June 16th.
 - d. Initial emergency preparedness meeting planned with American Indian community for April 26th.
 - e. Development of emergency preparedness template for smaller, non-profit, community based organizations.
 - f. Provided individual and family emergency preparedness information for the Fire Department city literature drop.
6. Involvement and leadership continues in conjunction with the Minnesota Home Care Association (MHCA) to initiate a partnership between home care and local public health for emergency preparedness planning.
 - a. Attended MHCA Region 5 (metro area) meeting to present information on emergency preparedness.
 - b. Attending MHCA Emergency Preparedness meetings to provide local public health support and assistance with planning and training.
 - c. MDHFS staff will lead a Round Table discussion at the state home care conference in May.
7. An initial meeting was conducted with St. Thomas University to discuss incorporating emergency preparedness planning into the appropriate venue for non-profit curriculum.
8. The expertise of MDHFS staff in the area of planning for special populations was sought out by University of Minnesota, for help in development of their Public Health Emergency Training Modules. We will serve as a primary resource for them in the area of vulnerable populations. The modules will be available on line this fall.

9. MDHFS is responsible for recruiting, staging, and managing up to 1200 volunteers for the local public health spring exercise on June 16, 2006.
 - a. Have hired U of M Master's in Public Health student as an intern to lead the volunteer recruitment effort.
 - b. Have developed a dynamic volunteer plan that includes working with the city's hard to reach populations and Community Based Organizations.
 - c. Developed volunteer staging plans and have requested local public health partners for workforce assistance.
10. Work has been essentially completed on a Severe Weather Annex of the City Emergency Operations Plan which primarily focuses on heat. Our department received a Team award from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management at its annual Governor's Conference. They recognized the leadership MDHFS provided in the region for the development of an alert and notification plan with the National Weather Service and Emergency Management that includes Heat Index thresholds for Watch, Advisory and Warning levels.
11. Two MDHFS staff participate in the regional workgroups for mass dispensing of medication and one is a co-chair. There are four subgroups: Public Information, Supplies, Procedures and Checklists, and Workforce. In preparation for the June exercise Workforce is piloting the evaluation of "Just In Time" Training and Job Action Sheets. They are also developing a system to enumerate and define workforce trained to Awareness, Knowledge, and Proficiency status.
12. The MDHFS Regional Coordinator is in the process of developing local and inter-jurisdictional guidelines and plans for redistribution of pharmaceuticals and supplies. She has also developed a timeline for the Metro Pharmaceutical Cache activation, transportation, repackaging, and distribution.
13. The MDHFS Regional Coordinator worked with City GIS to identify the natural statistical breaks in the population density using a zip code overlay, to produce a dynamic and scalable foundation for the Cities Readiness Initiative distribution plan. The plan will depend on USPS volunteers for residential delivery in higher density areas (as determined at the time of event) and Mass Dispensing Sites using adjusted standards of care in lower density areas.

Training

1. Fourteen staff from Health and Family Support, Police, Fire, and Regulatory Services attended a 7-day training in the first step to becoming a Regional Incident Management Team. The courses included instruction in incident command principles and practice with tabletop exercises. These teams would be used to manage a large scale internal incident or be called to assist another jurisdiction in the management of an incident which lasts for a long period of time.
2. Most MDHFS staff has completed the federally required courses on incident management. The required courses are NIMS (National Incident Management System) and Incident Command System 100 and 200. We have been coordinating this training with the Fire, Police and the Public Works departments who are also working on completing this requirement.
3. Three department staff attended the first National Public Health Preparedness Summit in Washington D.C. in February.
4. The number of MDHFS staff on call 24/7 for emergencies has expanded to six who are now equipped and trained.