



## POLK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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### Overnight Cooling Shelters

In case of a situation when extreme heat occurs in the community during an extended period of time, the Polk County Health Department will establish an overnight cooling shelter. This non-emergency shelter will offer refuge for individuals and families who do not have access to air conditioning locations to cool off and be safe during an episode of extreme heat.

MRC volunteers will assist with the check-in and checkout process at the shelter. Some activities may include assisting residents with general information about services and rules at the shelter, food distribution, and provide basic medical assistance if needed (ie. blood pressure check, assist with obtaining medications, glucometer use) For more information about how you can be involved, please contact Christine Arauco at [Christine.Arauco@polkcountyiowa.gov](mailto:Christine.Arauco@polkcountyiowa.gov) or (515) 323-5324.

### SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

#### It's Not Just Hot, It's Dangerous!

Hot temperatures that last for several days are very dangerous and can cause death, especially for the elderly, young kids and people with chronic health conditions. The best way to avoid heat related health problems is to spend at least 2 hours in air conditioning every day.

##### How to keep your home cool:

- 1) Use light colored drapes, curtains or blinds to keep the sun out during the day.
- 2) Keep windows closed during the day and open them at night.
- 3) Do not use appliances such as washer or dryer, stove, or oven during the day. Keep the refrigerator/freezer closed.
- 4) Drink cold water all day. Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine. Take a cool shower or apply a cool damp cloth to arms, legs and neck.
- 5) Remove extra bedding at night.
- 6) Place a fan in the window at night. Place a frozen bottle of water in a bowl in front of the fan. DO NOT sit directly in front of the fan.

**Call 211** if you have questions about cooling your home, reduced cost air conditioners, energy assistance, or finding a cooler location.

##### Call 911 if you have any of the following symptoms:

- lack of sweating
- flushed skin
- racing heart rate
- unconsciousness
- dizziness or lightheadedness
- skin that feels cool and moist
- body temperature over 104 F
- nausea and vomiting
- confusion
- rapid breathing
- headache
- muscle cramps

Call neighbors, friends and family members who do not have air conditioning to make sure they are OK at least twice each day.



### TAKE THE QUIZ!

Are you up-to-date on your immunizations?

As a Polk County MRC Volunteer, we want you to be as healthy as you can be and as prepared as you can be. This preparedness starts with knowing your immunization status.

Many viruses that have caused death in humans are vaccine preventable diseases. Getting vaccinated can prevent or significantly reduce illness and the side effects related to the disease, including death.

Follow the link below and take the quiz. What immunizations do you need?

<http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/adultimmsched/>

For more information about vaccines, visit

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/>

Polk County Health Department • 1907 Carpenter Ave, Des Moines • [polkcountyiowa.gov/health](http://polkcountyiowa.gov/health) • 515-286-3798  
Polk County Emergency Management • 1907 Carpenter Ave, Des Moines • [polkcountyiowa.gov/emergency-management](http://polkcountyiowa.gov/emergency-management) • 515-286-2107  
Polk County Community, Family & Youth Services • 1111 Court Ave, Des Moines • [polkcountyiowa.gov/CFYS](http://polkcountyiowa.gov/CFYS) • 515-286-3000

### Upcoming Training Opportunities

Additional Incident Command System (ICS) Training will be offered to MRC volunteers to become more familiar with the direct roles in emergency, incident management and response during an emergency event. Stay tuned for more announcements.

### MRC Volunteers Needed to Staff Local Flu Clinics

Preparations for the Fall 2013 flu season are just around the corner and the Polk County Health Department will be in need of volunteers to assist with their flu clinics. These clinics offer flu vaccinations to the community to stop the spreading of flu and keep the community healthy. For more information on these activities, contact Christine Arauco at [Christine.Arauco@polkcountyiowa.gov](mailto:Christine.Arauco@polkcountyiowa.gov) or (515) 323-5324 or visit our website [www.polkcountyiowa.gov/mrc/](http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/mrc/)

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