



2017 Hurricane Harvey: Medical Reserve Corps Unit Activities



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2017 Hurricane Harvey — Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Unit Activities

Overview

Hurricane Harvey started as a Tropical Storm in the Caribbean and moved west over the Gulf of Mexico toward the Texas coast. On August 24, 2017, Tropical Storm Harvey strengthened to a hurricane with winds of 80 mph. Hurricane Harvey continued to move northwest up the middle Texas coast and made landfall in Texas as a Category 4 Hurricane on the evening of August 25. The hurricane slowly moved across Texas from August 26 – 30, 2017, with heavy rainfall and strong winds that led to catastrophic flooding in communities throughout southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana.¹

Federal, state, and local government and non-governmental partners worked together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from Hurricane Harvey's significant impact. As of March 31, 2018, 41 Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units have reported participation in 81 preparedness, response, and recovery activities related to Hurricane Harvey. Many units performed sheltering functions, including staffing and/or assisting in the set-up of general community, functional/special needs, American Red Cross (ARC), and animal shelters. Units also indicated supporting reception/evacuation centers and providing emergency communications support. Four thousand twenty-nine (4,029) volunteers in these units provided a total of 94,599 hours in community service for an estimated economic value of \$3,566,033. In addition, units within and outside of the impacted region reported having more volunteers ready and willing to assist, if needed.

To gather data for this summary report, MRC Program staff compiled and reviewed all self-reported MRC unit activities for the period of August 24, 2017 – March 31, 2018. It is important to note that at the time of writing this report, units are still engaged in recovery activities and those activities may not yet be captured.

It is the intent of this report to give an overview of the MRC network's actions during the peak activity of this event. Due to the local nature of the MRC, a true accounting of all of the events and activities is not possible at the Federal level.

¹ Information for this summary narrative was extracted from data provided publicly on the [National Weather Service's National Hurricane Center Website](#).

Summary of Reported Hurricane Harvey Activities²

Hurricane	# of MRC Units	# of MRC Volunteers ³	# of MRC Activities	# of Volunteer Service Hours	Estimated Total Economic Value
Harvey	41	4,029	81	94,599	\$3,566,033

MRC Unit Activities

Region 1

Massachusetts

Bristol-Norfolk MRC (North Attleboro, MA). Twenty-nine (29) volunteers were on stand-by to provide assistance to Hurricane Harvey affected areas. The unit leader also sent communications to volunteers regarding ways to assist with the response.

North Shore-Cape Ann Emergency Preparedness Coalition MRC (Hopkinton, MA). MRC volunteers were on stand-by to support the hurricane response.

Region 4

Alabama

Mobile MRC (Mobile, AL). The unit coordinator prepared for a possible activation of the MRC to support self-evacuated patients from Hurricane Harvey by maintaining communications with the local Emergency Management Agency (EMA), health department, and hospitals.

North Carolina

North Carolina Baptist Men MRC Central Region (Cary, NC). From September 3 through November 22, 2017, seven volunteer nurses, doctors, and EMTs served 1,032 hours providing care and supporting recovery efforts in Texas.

Tennessee

Madison County MRC (Jackson, TN). Ten (10) MRC volunteers served 179 hours mobilizing a communications truck and portable tent hospital system in order to be ready for potential

² A number of MRC units throughout the network reported general hurricane-related activities such as maintaining hurricane situational awareness with volunteers; participating in partner meetings that discussed hurricane response; and conducting emergency preparedness outreach. These activities are not included in this summary table; however, a list of MRC units reporting such activities is included in Appendix A.

³ The tally for volunteers listed in this table and on subsequent pages of this report may not necessarily reflect a unique individual volunteer count. For example, an MRC volunteer who participated in multiple response activities with his/her unit would be counted separately in each activity. Other data (e.g., number of units, number of volunteer service hours) are unduplicated counts.

National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) patients being flown in from the Houston area to Memphis after the hurricane.

Nashville MRC (Nashville, TN). Three (3) volunteers supported a tetanus immunization clinic for more than 70 responders supporting search and rescue efforts in Texas in response to Hurricane Harvey.

Region 5

Michigan

Kent County MRC (Rockford, MI). Three (3) MRC volunteers served 24 hours supporting Team Rubicon's efforts to accept donations for Texas after the hurricane.

Region 6

Louisiana

Calcasieu MRC (Lake Charles, LA). Over six days, 1,532 MRC volunteers served 10,268 hours. The unit set up and managed four shelter operations with three of them eventually being consolidated into one at the Lake Charles Civic Center. The unit's medical teams ran operations in support of the shelter's medical and special needs clinics and non-medical volunteers provided shelter support alongside the local Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) chapter. The unit also supported the Burton Coliseum shelter by triaging evacuees from Texas that were being transported to another shelter location.



Figure 1: Angela Jouett, Calcasieu MRC (LA) unit leader, had the opportunity to meet President Trump during his visit to Lake Charles, LA, during Hurricane Harvey response efforts

Louisiana State Animal Response Team (LSART) Veterinary MRC (Baton Rouge, LA). Seventy-five (75) volunteers served 681 hours providing care to more than 490 cats and dogs. The unit was requested by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to provide volunteer veterinarians and veterinary technicians to perform services such as de-worming, de-fleaing, microchipping, and wellness checks to the pets of Texas residents evacuated to shelters in Alexandria, LA, and Houghton, LA.

New Orleans MRC (New Orleans, LA). Five (5) volunteers supported medical providers with providing care and vaccinations to individuals impacted by the hurricane at a clinic in Beaumont, TX. Eleven (11) volunteers also assisted in preparing supplies for possible shelter

openings in Louisiana and joined health department staff in enrolling individuals in the special needs registry. These 16 volunteers served 140 hours.

Northwest Louisiana MRC (Shreveport, LA). Five (5) volunteers opened and supported a medical shelter that operated within an evacuee shelter run by the Department of Children and Family Services.

Oklahoma

Choctaw Nation MRC (Caddo, OK). From September 18 - 28, 2017, three MRC volunteers served 42 hours taking calls from Choctaw tribal members impacted by the hurricane.

Oklahoma Region 4 – Okmulgee County MRC (Okmulgee, OK). Nine (9) volunteers served 18 hours supporting a relief drive for Hurricane Harvey by assisting with traffic control and the unloading of items.

Oklahoma Region 6 – McClain County MRC (Norman, OK). Three (3) volunteers served 50 hours supporting an emergency animal shelter.

Oklahoma Region 7 – Tulsa County MRC (Tulsa, OK). The unit had 205 volunteers serve 1,365 hours in support of animals that were moved from Texas shelters to the Bixby Animal Shelter in Oklahoma. The unit's State Animal Response Team cared for the animals in the Bixby shelter that acted as a hub for animals to rest and receive medical care before moving on to partner agencies throughout the nation to find permanent homes. Volunteers also participated in a stakeholder meeting that included a presentation from the MRC Coordinator on the statewide animal response team activation for the hurricane.



Figure 2: Oklahoma MRC Humane Emergency Animal Response Team (HEART) volunteers load onto air transport one of the 270+ homeless animals that were moved out of Texas shelters during Hurricane Harvey to make room for those displaced by the storm

Oklahoma Region 8 – Oklahoma County MRC (Oklahoma City, OK). Six (6) volunteers were on stand-by to provide psychological first aid to potential patients and caregivers arriving in Oklahoma City through NDMS.

OKMRC Stress Response Team (Oklahoma City, OK). Four (4) volunteers were on stand-by to provide psychological first aid and referral services to the families of hospital patients being transported from flooded hospitals in Houston to Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA) State Animal Response Team (SART) MRC (Oklahoma City, OK). Seventeen (17) volunteers from the unit's Humane Emergency Animal Response Team were activated statewide by the Humane Society of Tulsa to care for more than 160 dogs and cats that had been temporarily relocated from the Houston Humane Society in Texas. Volunteers served 108 hours caring for animals before they could be transported to other areas of the country for adoption.



Figure 3: OVMA SART MRC (OK), a veterinary MRC unit, provided care to animals in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey

Texas

Alamo Area MRC (Brooks City-Base, TX). The unit had 279 volunteers serve 2,137 hours. Physicians and nurses provided medical support at medical stations in four general population shelters, while non-medical volunteers supported scheduling and staffing for the medical stations.

Anderson County MRC (Palestine, TX). The unit conducted a call-down of volunteers available for deployment if needed to assist with the hurricane.

Bell County MRC (Temple, TX). MRC volunteers provided mental health and medical services to the county reception center and shelters that accepted rescued and self-evacuated residents from Brazoria County, TX. The unit also coordinated with the county's Emergency Operations Center on how to best assist those in need. After the response, volunteers participated in a hot wash to discuss what worked well and difficulties encountered. A total of 18 volunteers served 197 hours.

Big Country MRC (Sweetwater, TX). Ten (10) volunteers served 28 hours supporting a 2-1-1 call center that was set up to provide information and resources to those impacted by the hurricane.

Brazoria County MRC (Alvin, TX). Forty-nine (49) volunteers served 384 hours setting up and supporting two shelters for county residents, and an animal shelter for domestic and farm animals. Twenty-five (25) volunteers also set up and operated the evacuation hub for Brazoria County, serving a total of 124 hours. The unit also held multiple orientation sessions and

webinars with attendance from over 500 community members interested in joining the MRC to support the hurricane response. The unit has also supported recovery efforts and participated in shelter debriefing discussions.

- Five (5) volunteers served 16 hours distributing tarps to community members to cover roof damage as well as bug spray to prevent arbovirus.
- The unit partnered with Brazoria County Emergency Management to sponsor the Crisis Cleanup Hotline, a database that helps coordinate the recovery efforts of organizations with residents in need. Fifteen (15) volunteers served 90 hours answering phones and helping residents register for assistance.
- Volunteers completed training to become Case Management Specialists for the county following an increased need after the hurricane. Ten (10) volunteers served 144 hours conducting in-take assessment interviews in order to prepare files for case management.
- Volunteers were trained to collect and prepare well water samples for testing to ensure it was safe to drink following the hurricane. Eight (8) volunteers served 99 hours providing free well water testing to local residents.
- Volunteers assisted with cleaning out a Hurricane Harvey shelter site by filtering and organizing items as well as packing shelter go boxes for future needs. Fifteen (15) volunteers served 52 hours.



Figure 4: Brazoria County MRC (TX) volunteers assist with well water testing for local residents

Cameron County MRC (San Benito, TX). The unit was on stand-by to assist with Hurricane Harvey.

Central Texas MRC (Waco, TX). The unit was on stand-by to assist with Hurricane Harvey.

Collin County MRC (McKinney, TX). Nine (9) MRC volunteers served 150 hours at the Dallas Convention Center Mega Shelter: three nurses and two EMT volunteers worked in medical triage in the shelter's medical clinic; three engineers set up HAM radios and communications; and a non-medical volunteer supported the unified command post to identify staffing needs.

Dallas County MRC (Dallas, TX). The unit worked with Dallas County Health and Human Services and other volunteer agencies to support all shelters in the Dallas area for nearly a month. A total of 150 volunteers served 9,000 hours setting up and staffing shelters and providing medical services ranging from triage to mental health.

Denton County MRC (Denton, TX). At the request of the city of Dallas, a total of 47 volunteers served 329 hours helping to staff mega shelter operations in support of up to 5,000 people at the Dallas Convention Center.

Fort Bend County MRC (Rosenberg, TX). The unit supported emergency shelter operations and assisted with providing medical support at a general population shelter.

Galveston County MRC (Texas City, TX). Forty-four (44) volunteers served 666 hours supporting response and recovery efforts. Efforts included the following:

- Volunteers set up and supported operations at a local shelter with the assistance of the American Red Cross.
- MRC nurses staffed a Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap) vaccination clinic for first responders.
- Nurses and paramedics were requested to deploy with the county Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and National Guard to conduct community assessments.
- The unit leader, along with a volunteer, participated in training on how to conduct landscape assessments of hurricane damaged areas and then served in teams to survey damage and meet with local officials.
- Volunteers participated in an MRC meeting that included discussion on the hurricane and Health and Social Services (HSS) Recovery Support Function (RSF) recovery operations.
- In December, volunteers worked alongside CERT to help distribute 500 holiday meal packages that were donated to citizens displaced by the hurricane.



Figure 5: Galveston County MRC (TX) volunteers assist with shelter set-up

Harris County Gateway to Care MRC (Houston, TX). Medical and non-medical volunteers supported multiple shelters that were opened for those displaced by the hurricane. The unit also disseminated 6,500 buckets with cleaning supplies, food, bottled water, clothing, and items for babies and toddlers. In addition, volunteers supported a food fair for a community impacted by the hurricane, as well as two health fairs signing-up victims of the hurricane for resources while sharing preparedness information for the upcoming hurricane season.

Kingsville & Kleberg County MRC (Kingsville, TX). Four (4) volunteers served 24 hours manning and supporting the FEMA shelter for Kleberg County that received more than 235 people seeking refuge from the hurricane.

MRC of Gregg County Texas (Longview, TX). Two (2) MRC volunteers served a total of 240 hours supporting a mobile communications bus as communication specialists.

Montgomery County MRC (Conroe, TX). The unit supported the Emergency Operations Center and worked with local Emergency Management to monitor social media for areas of concern. The unit also opened a shelter at the Lone Star Convention Center and provided medical support to an American Red Cross shelter in New Caney, TX.

Pearland Area MRC (Pearland, TX). From August 24 through November 3, 2017, volunteers participated in just-in-time training on the topics of muck-out, warehouse operations, sheltering, victim removal from homes, and mental health requests. Volunteers registered and mucked 80 homes. Volunteers also off-loaded, sorted, palletized, and distributed items and supplies.

Tarrant County MRC (Fort Worth, TX). Volunteers supported shelters during the hurricane.

Texas State Guard Medical Brigade MRC (Austin, TX). The unit deployed all 350 volunteers in support of the hurricane response. Volunteers performed Emergency Tracking Network (ETN) activities; provided basic life sustaining medical support to responders and civilians at shelters; mobilized as medical teams supporting shelters for the Department of State Health Services; supported a telemedicine facility at the Dallas Mega Shelter for families with sick children; and provided medical screenings for deploying and returning Texas Army National Guard troops. In addition, the Medical Brigade Commander and Operations Officer supported a large-scale air evacuation hub at Houston Intercontinental Airport to support planning to evacuate hospital patients in the event that the local hospital system failed.

Texas Veterinary MRC (College Station, TX). Eighteen (18) volunteers served 1,008 hours during the response. Activities included supporting emergency shelters for large and small animals from nine counties; assisting with animal search and rescue efforts; providing emergency triage, medical, and surgical support for incoming animals; and providing bio-security and sheltering consultations to several counties.

University of Texas at Austin MRC (Austin, TX). Seven (7) volunteers helped organize a Hurricane Harvey relief concert fundraiser for university students impacted by the hurricane and collected personal items for donation to the Austin Disaster Relief Network. The unit leader also participated in Central Texas VOAD conference calls related to Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts.

Rio Grande Valley MRC (Weslaco, TX). The unit had six volunteers stationed at the Emergency Operations Center from noon until midnight for two days in anticipation of Hurricane Harvey. Volunteers helped with documentation, social media monitoring, answering phones, and other general duties. MRC volunteers were a valuable asset due to their understanding of the Incident Command System and forms they had used during training with previous community events.

Region 9

Arizona

Yavapai County MRC (Prescott, AZ). Arizona received a state-to-state mutual aid request from Texas and Florida for hurricane relief assistance. An emergency call-out was sent to all MRC units throughout Arizona. All staff and volunteers were on stand-by for approximately a month; however, no deployments were issued.

Appendix A

The following MRC units reported general hurricane-related activities, such as maintaining hurricane situational awareness with volunteers; participating in partner meetings that discussed hurricane response; and conducting emergency preparedness outreach.

Region 1

- Wachusett MRC (Hubbardston, MA)

Region 2

- Bergen County MRC (Hackensack, NJ)
- Camden County MRC (Blackwood, NJ)

Region 3

- Chester County MRC (West Chester, PA)
- Greater Prince William MRC (Manassas, VA)
- Lord Fairfax Health District MRC (Winchester, VA)

Region 4

- Calhoun-Cleburne MRC (Jacksonville, AL)
- Coastal Georgia MRC (Savannah, GA)
- MRC of West Georgia (LaGrange, GA)
- Clayton County MRC (Forest Park, GA)
- Clark County MRC (Winchester, KY)
- Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department (Chattanooga, TN)
- Upper Cumberland Tennessee Regional MRC (Cookeville, TN)

Region 5

- Indiana State Board of Animal Health MRC (Indianapolis, IN)
- Washtenaw County MRC (Ypsilanti, MI)
- MRC of Freeborn County (Albert Lea, MN)

Region 6

- Acadiana MRC (Lafayette, LA)

Region 8

- Pueblo MRC (Pueblo, CO)
- Bear River MRC – Box Elder County (Brigham City, UT)
- Bear River MRC – Cache County (Logan, UT)
- Bear River MRC – Rich County (Logan, UT)