



Public Health
Division

County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 Emeline Ave., SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962

TELEPHONE: (831) 454-4000 FAX: (831) 454-4488 TDD: Call 711

Press Release

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Contact: Corinne Hyland, PIO
Phone: (831) 566-4370

County, Medical Reserve Corps Test County's First-Ever Mobile Medical Hospital

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY – The Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency and members of the County's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) on Monday began training exercises using the County's first-ever Mobile Medical Hospital.

Awarded by the State of California Emergency Medical Services Authority and housed at Watsonville Community Hospital, the Mobile Medical Hospital enhances our disaster response capabilities by increasing our resiliency and expanding the resources available to assist residents in the event of a natural or man-made emergency.

"The Mobile Medical Hospital is a critical piece of our disaster response infrastructure," Arnold Leff, M.D., the county's health officer and Medical/Health Operations Area Coordinator said. "This greatly increases our medical providers' ability to care for the community during its hours of greatest need."

The Mobile Medical Hospital has multiple functions and can be configured to address a variety of scenarios. Due to unique challenges during catastrophic weather created by the County's unique geography, the Mobile Medical Hospital also reduces Santa Cruz County's dependency on outside aid during wildfires, tsunamis, earthquakes or other events.

- During a flu pandemic, the Mobile Medical Hospital may be used as an "Alternate Care Site" to handle any overflow of patients requiring hospitalizations for respiratory care.
- During mass casualty incidents, a single tent can be deployed for on-site triage, or the complete unit can be used as a surgical hospital.
- If hospitals or clinics are damaged during a natural disaster, the complete Mobile Medical Hospital can be set-up at or near the facility to provide continuity of care.
- During a health fair, a single tent can be deployed for demonstrations and to engage the public in issues such as disaster preparedness and County disaster response.

The Mobile Medical Hospital is a self-contained unit equipped with all necessary equipment other than disposable supplies and staff. The Santa Cruz County Medical Reserve Corps, a group of 400 volunteers with varied healthcare professional backgrounds, are tasked with staffing the Mobile Hospital when it is deployed.

The MRC is holding an upcoming recruitment for licensed and un-licensed health care volunteers, who are invited to pre-register on the [Disaster Healthcare Volunteer](#) website. "There is a great need for credentialed respiratory, physical and occupational therapists, but there are ways for all health care professionals to get involved," MRC Coordinator Nancy Yellin said. "We invite them to contact us as soon as possible."



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