



# The Community Hero

## Volunteers needed for seasonal flu campaign

Health departments around the region are gearing up for their annual seasonal influenza clinics and you can help! Every year, health departments across southwest Missouri encourage individuals to protect themselves, their families and their communities from seasonal flu by washing their hands regularly, practicing good respiratory etiquette and by getting their flu shot.

Volunteers can help their local health department with this empowering message. But, they can

also lend a helping hand .

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department and others around the region will be starting clinics at the end of September (dates and times vary). Volunteers are needed to help set up and break down, direct patients where to go, and assist with some clerical duties. Approximately, two to four volunteers are needed per clinic.

Thousands of influenza vaccine is given out regionally every year. Volunteers are a key com-

ponent of making this happen and helping to protect our families and neighbors.

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department will need volunteers on Monday, September 28, Monday, Oct. 12, and Thursday, Oct. 15. All clinics run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Rebecca Ray at (417) 874-1297. You may also contact your local health department to learn about their specific volunteer needs.

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## Fight the flu—wash your hands

In partnership with local public health agencies across Missouri and the greater Springfield area health care community, the Springfield-Greene County Health Department announce the launch of “Fight the Flu”.

“This grassroots campaign developed by local public health agencies across Missouri encourages residents to work to-

gether to help protect our families and our communities against all types of flu, including H1N1,” said Director of Health Kevin Gipson.

As flu season approaches and H1N1 influenza continues to spread across the state, community members are urged to follow tips to protect their families, themselves and their community.

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# Flu prevention is in your hands; fight the flu

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## Protect your family

- get your family vaccinated against seasonal flu
- establish healthy practices of hand washing and not sharing personal items
- stockpile enough food, water and medication to last at least seven days in case you need to voluntarily isolate or quarantine yourself and your family
- make arrangements for child care if schools close
- talk to your employer about flexible work options.

## Protect yourself

- get a seasonal flu shot
- wash your hands
- keep a distance of at least 6 feet from people who are sick
- choose a healthy lifestyle to build your immune system, including; getting adequate sleep, reducing stress, stopping smoking and using tobacco products, staying physically active, choosing nutritious foods, and drinking plenty of water.

## Protect our communities

- stay home if you are sick,
- keep kids home when they are sick (for at least 24 hours after their fever goes away without the use of medication),

- cover your sneeze and cough with a disposable tissue or the crook of your arm
- wash your hands frequently with soap and water
- don't share personal items like drinks, silverware or toothbrushes.

Printable materials, fact sheets, links to local public health agencies and other information can be found on the campaign website at [www.fightthefluMO.com](http://www.fightthefluMO.com). In addition, residents can receive updates by following the campaign's Twitter account at [www.twitter.com/fightthefluMO](http://www.twitter.com/fightthefluMO) or Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/FighttheFluMo-Campaign/125270083116>.

Instructional videos on how to properly wash your hands, how to cover your cough and other pieces will be posted on the campaign's YouTube account at [www.youtube.com/fightthefluMO](http://www.youtube.com/fightthefluMO), and questions can be submitted and surveys filled out on the campaign's blog at <http://fightthefluMO.blogspot.com>.

"We need each member of our community to join in this effort to fight the flu," added Gipson.

"We know seasonal flu is coming. We expect to see H1N1

continue to circulate as well, and we must work together to slow the spread of flu in our community."

More volunteers may be needed for the H1N1 response. Community Hero applications and training are now being taken and held throughout the region in order to have qualified volunteers participating in this year's flu season response.

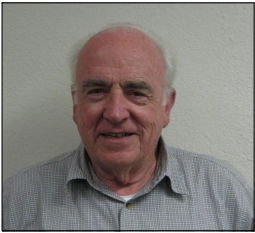
The Community Hero volunteer program provides many different opportunities for individuals to apply personal skills, talents, and experiences while assisting the community before, during, and after a public health emergency or disaster. Community Heroes strives to match volunteers to tasks based upon individual skills, interests, and availability. As a Community Hero, volunteers are not only trained to respond to public health emergencies, but are encouraged to join in other emergency response activities (such as Community Emergency Response Team—CERT) as well.

To become a Community Hero, visit [www.beacommunityhero.com](http://www.beacommunityhero.com) or call the Regional Community Heroes office at (417) 874-1297.

Volunteers will soon be able to submit applications electronically and find new volunteer orientation and training dates and times in individual counties.

## Volunteer Profile

### Dick Erickson



**Q: What is your current job?** I am retired.

**Q: Where do you live?** I

live on Table Rock lake overlooking Cow Creek. It is in Blue Eye, which is in Stone County.

**Q: What is your family like?** My wife and I have two children, a son and a daughter. We have two grandsons and a granddaughter who are all college age.

**Q: Why did you decide to be-**

**come a Community Hero?**

I look for volunteer opportunities that I feel are worthy. It is important to help your community when it's in need.

**Q: Why do you think it's important to be prepared?**

I was taught to be prepared in Boy Scouts. The real test of our skills is when we will put them to use during a crisis.

**Q: What are your hobbies?**

I enjoy videos, politics, self-improvement projects, and family activities.

**Q: Why do you think it's important to volunteer?**

It is the best use of time. If you don't use it, you lose it. This is a good program and we should all be a part.

**Q: What is your favorite food?**

I like food to be nourishing and tasteful.

**Q: What is your favorite color?**

Red, white and blue.

**Q: What is your life philosophy?**

Networking is a way for self improvement and making a difference.

## Featured Partner

### Greene County Office of Emergency Management

Information obtained from [www.greenecountymo.org/web/OEM/](http://www.greenecountymo.org/web/OEM/)

The Greene County Office of Emergency Management, located at 833 Booneville in Springfield, is focused on community preparation. Emergency Management Director Ryan Nicholls said the mission of the Office is to fulfill their responsibilities with integrity and professionalism, for any disastrous event and minimize loss of life and property, with effective response and recovery management.

The 10 member staff accomplished this through

- Coordinating education, training, and exercises
- Planning in Mitigation and Emergency Operations
- Collaborating with community leaders in information and resources

Nicholls added that Greene County is leading a Southwest Missouri effort toward a regional Emergency Management sys-

tem. This system includes volunteer opportunities through Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), the Hometown Ready initiative, Regional Homeland Security, and a Weapons of Mass Destruction planning committee.

CERT has recently started an Animal CERT initiative based out of Greene County. If you are interested in Emergency training and/or volunteer opportunities, call (417) 869-6040.

# Calendar of Events

**Sept. Community Heroes volunteer opportunities.** The Regional Community Heroes office needs volunteers to help with the recruitment and training of new volunteers. Interested volunteers should contact Rebecca Ray at (417) 874-1297 or rray@springfieldmo.gov. Some of the volunteer work may be done from home. Call for more information.

**Oct. 6. Greene County CERT.** Classes are forming for Greene County Community Emergency Response Teams. Classes are limited to 40 people per class, so sign up now! CERT is a hands on class to teach you how to respond to a local emergency. Training is free, but you must attend all sessions to be CERT certified. Classes start on Oct. 6 and run every Tuesday through November 17. Two sessions are offered during this time frame; (Group A) 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and (Group B) 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Please call (417) 869-6040 and refer to the group you would like to participate in to reserve your spot.

**Oct. 8. Greene County CERT.** Classes are forming for Greene County Community Emergency

Response Teams. Classes are limited to 40 people per class, so sign up now! CERT is a hands on class to teach you how to respond to a local emergency. Training is free, but you must attend all sessions to be CERT certified. Classes start on Oct. 8 and run every Thursday through November 19. Two sessions are offered during this time frame; (Group C) 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and (Group D) 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Please call (417) 869-6040 and refer to the group you would like to participate in to reserve your spot.

**Nov. 6, 7 & 8. Greene County. CERT Train the Trainer.** This Train-the-Trainer will give you the skills to train citizens in your community to perform essential life-saving functions while waiting for the professional responders to arrive following a disaster. Must have completed the 20 hour classroom Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) course. To register visit [www.sema.dps.mo.gov](http://www.sema.dps.mo.gov) and click on Training and Exercises.

## Mission Statement

We will provide volunteer help to the communities we serve whenever it is most needed. We will always plan, prepare and participate.

Community Heroes is a Region D Local Public Health Volunteer program. Community Heroes does not discriminate against any individual because of race, color, religion, sex, age, physical or mental handicap, sensory disabilities or veteran status.

For questions, comments, or suggestions contact Regional Educator/Volunteer Coordinator, Rebecca Ray at (417) 874-1297 or by e-mail at rray@springfieldmo.gov

Visit us or sign up to be a Community Hero at [www.beacommunityhero.com](http://www.beacommunityhero.com)

**The Community Hero is a monthly publication for the volunteers and staff members of Region D local public health departments.**

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If you would like to have your training or event listed in *The Community Hero*, please contact Rebecca Ray at (417) 874-1297.