

May 30, 2014



Mock disaster exercises prepare volunteers for hurricane season

SARASOTA — Volunteer Community Connections will conduct its annual mock Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) disaster exercises. The first one will take place on Wednesday, June 4, from 12:45 to 2:15 p.m. at Fruitville Library, 100 Coburn Road, Sarasota. A similar exercise is set for Wednesday, June 11, 6-7:30 p.m., at North Port Library, 13800 S. Tamiami Trail, North Port.

The purpose of the training exercise is to create a mock volunteer reception center and to walk-through the steps of registering unaffiliated volunteers who are offering their help following a disaster, including people who live in the area, as well as those from out of town.

“It’s very important to have trained volunteers who can help operate a volunteer reception center in the event of a disaster,” said Mindi Rohan, executive director of Volunteer Community Connections. “This exercise is largely intended to allow disaster volunteers the opportunity to practice the process.”



The volunteer reception center would open at the direction of Emergency Management officials after the “all clear” notice has been given. Unaffiliated volunteers would perform such duties as water and ice distribution, tree and limb removal, answering information hotlines, delivering meals and more.

Volunteer Community Connections mission is to provide members of our community meaningful ways to connect to nonprofit, civic and service organizations. “A volunteer registry is available that will allow you to identify your areas of interest before a disaster and to secure the needed training to be effective in your volunteer role,” said Rohan.

For more information about disaster volunteer needs or to register for this exercise, visit www.connectingvolunteers.org or call 941-953-5965 for more information.

-30-

Sarasota County prohibits discrimination in all services, programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, familial status, religion, or genetic information. Persons with disabilities who require assistance or alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.), or who wish to file a complaint, should contact Sarasota County ADA/ Civil Rights Coordinator, 1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34236. Phone: 941-861-5000, TTY 7-1-1 or 1-800-955-8771; email: adacoordinator@scgov.net.

MEDIA NOTES:

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; Dianne.Shipley@flhealth.gov

Volunteer Community Connections Media Contact:

Mindi Rohan, 941-953-5965; info@vccflorida.org