



# THE CORPS

MISSOURI VOLUNTEER VETERINARY CORPS

The Emergency Management and Public Health Committee of the MVMA has been actively recruiting veterinarians to join an elite group of emergency management veterinarians. Members of this group work in their respective counties to assist local officials and animal owners in planning for animal emergencies and disasters. This group of volunteers has had several different names since 2001 when this effort was loosely organized.

We have now assigned a name to our group, and we are in the process of it. The name, the **Missouri Volunteer Veterinary Corps, MOVVC, “The Corps”**, came about through some discussions with other states in the Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture, which was formed in August 2003. The Partnership consists of the following states: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Wisconsin. The MOVVC is a project of the MVMA Emergency Management and Public Health Committee. Members of the Volunteer Corps are not required to be members of the MVMA, but membership is certainly a distinct advantage for all veterinarians in Missouri, and is encouraged. Eventually, possibly through grant funding, we will offer a logo'd polo shirt for members.

The Missouri Department of Agriculture's State Veterinarian office is sponsoring seminars in every county in Missouri on Agriculture Emergency Planning. These are six-hour seminars that are very valuable to all veterinarians, and especially to members of The Corps. You will learn many necessary details concerning local response to dangerous animal diseases, whether introduced to the U.S. through an act of terrorism or by accident. This is a very well-organized and well-taught course and we encourage all veterinarians in Missouri to attend it when presented in your respective counties. The latest schedule of courses is included with this letter. For location of the courses, please contact the office of the State Veterinarian, 573-751-3377, or the MVMA, 573-636-8612, or visit the MVMA website, [www.mvma.us](http://www.mvma.us), select “Veterinarian” tab, open “Emergency Management Notices” from the menu on the left, then select “Agroterrorism Awareness and Planning Meetings by County”, which opens as a pdf document that shows locations and dates of the meetings. In addition to learning, you will receive six hours of C.E. credit through the MAVP. Also, this will give you the opportunity to better know the local emergency managers you will be working with, to design county animal emergency management plans.

Another goal of the MVMA is to encourage all veterinarians in Missouri, and especially members of the Missouri Veterinary Volunteer Corps, to enroll in the USDA/APHIS National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps (NAHERC). An explanatory letter and two forms are included with this letter. Please look this over and enroll if you possibly can. Many states have most of their veterinarians enrolled. You need to fill out both forms, and be sure to include a copy of your DVM or Technician diploma/certificate. Please send these documents to Dr. David Hopson, USDA/APHIS/VS/AVIC, P. O. Box 104418, Jefferson City, MO 65110-4418. If you have questions, please call the office of the AVIC for Missouri, 573-636-3116.

As members of the MOVVC we recognize that we need more training in order to perform efficiently at the local level during an animal emergency. In addition, some training may be required for certification

of enrollees in the NAHERC. We have had some success with the video-teleconferences, which focused mostly on foreign animal and zoonotic diseases, and the Missouri Veterinary Emergency Awareness Manual, which has been distributed to all veterinarians in Missouri. To further the goal of training, the Missouri Department of Agriculture is applying for a grant that will help to defray some of the expenses of this training. Part of the money from this grant, if approved, will be to provide incentives for practitioners to attend the training sessions. We would like for some of the training to be done at the annual conference by nationally recognized speakers who have experience in foreign animal diseases and response to animal emergencies during natural disasters.

Members of MOVVC will need to be trained in the basics of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS), which are the standard programs for all emergency responses. The MVMA web site will be used for training purposes for NIMS and ICS, foreign animal and zoonotic diseases, and many other web-based courses. More information will be sent later about how this can be done, and the C.E. credits earned for web-based training.

Also, we plan to use the website for bulletins to MOVVC members in order to save money on mass mailings, and to provide emergency response information more rapidly to members. E-mail will also be a major method of communicating to members but we need to be sure that we have correct addresses and that those addresses are updated as needed. Included with this letter is a survey with several questions and a request for updated contact information. Please send this back in the envelope provided, addressed to the MVMA.

We are asking you, as members of MOVVC, to recruit more members to our Corps. If each one of you could convince a colleague to join us, please send the name to the MVMA, or call the office and we will proceed from there.

Our mission is to help animal owners and officials in our communities protect the animals and the public health in case of a disease outbreak or natural disaster. There is not a more important mission for our profession than this. We are the first line of defense and response. It's a heavy responsibility and we must be prepared.