March 11, 2008

To: Region 3/CREPC First Response Agencies  
From: John Shaw, Capitol Region Metropolitan Medical Response System  
Subject: Replacement of Expiring Nerve Agent Antidote Kits (Mark I)

In 2003, the Capitol Region Metropolitan Medical Response System (CRMMRS) established a stockpile of Mark I nerve agent antidote kits to protect first responders in the Capitol Region who may become exposed to chemical agents in the course of duty. Upon completion of required training of personnel, and the implementation of strict storage and security protocols, each response agency could apply to the CRMMRS for a sufficient number of Mark I kits to cover the needs of their on-duty personnel.

Based on the success of that program, in 2007 the CT Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) and the CT Department of Public Health (CTDPH) jointly implemented a statewide program to provide Mark I protection to all trained first response agencies in CT. CRMMRS participated in the development of the statewide program and fully supports this initiative. Currently, all CT first response agencies are eligible to receive their Mark I kits from the stockpile managed by CTDPH, once state-recognized training has been completed and appropriate storage and security protocols have been approved.

In DEMHS Region 3 (the Capitol Region) only, CRMMRS has agreed to administer the state Mark I program on behalf of CTDPH. Mark I kits newly issued to Region 3 response agencies, and Mark I kits issued to replace expiring kits for those Region 3 agencies already possessing these kits, will continue to direct their requests to the Capitol Region MMRS. However, from this point on, kits will be provided from the CTDPH cache.

Please note that CRMMRS will continue to provide the diazepam (Valium®) auto-injectors to any requesting Region 3 response agency. The diazepam is not a component of the statewide nerve agent antidote program, and is not available to agencies outside of Region 3. Those Region 3 agencies requesting the diazepam injectors must comply with the strict standards of storage and security established by CRMMRS in 2003.

Note also that the statewide Mark I program does not provide a nerve agent antidote kit for each individual responder, as occurred in the CRMMRS program. Instead, under the state program, one kit (each kit contains three Mark I auto-injectors) will be issued for each seat in response vehicles.

The statewide Mark I program requires additional information from each responder agency beyond what has already been provided to CRMMRS. The details of the statewide program are included in the packet of information attached to this letter.
Effective immediately, those first response agencies in the Capitol Region currently in possession of expiring CRMMRS-issued Mark I kits (refers to kits with a 2008 expiration date), and that wish to replace those expired kits, must provide the following documentation to comply with the statewide Mark I program requirements established by the CT Department of Public Health:

The Chief Elected Official (CEO) of your (Region 3) municipality must comply with the following:

1. Attest in writing that it is the CEO’s intent to have your community participate in the Mark I program, and that the CEO will direct your community’s responder agencies (fire, police and emergency medical service providers) to complete and to comply with the training and distribution protocol requirements of the Mark I program
2. Additionally, upon completion of training by your responders, and after implementation of the storage and security protocols for your community, the CEO shall verify by signature that the training has been completed and documented satisfactorily for each responder agency in that jurisdiction
3. The Chief Elected Official shall designate a person from your community to serve as the principal point of contact (POC) for the Mark I program, and shall provide the contact information for that individual
4. Completed forms (see attached packet) shall be submitted to CRMMRS acting on behalf of CTDPH for approval and processing, at jjsmmrs@aol.com.

Once these requirements have been met, CRMMRS will authorize the release or replacement of Mark I kits from the CTDPH stockpile.

Please direct questions or concerns to:

John J. Shaw, DMD
Program Director
Capitol Region Metropolitan Medical Response System
Chair, ESF 8 [Health and Medical]
Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee
e-mail: jjsmmrs@aol.com
860-883-7952  [cell]