

Emergency Preparedness For ESRD

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

WINTER 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ⇒ **Winter weather prep**
- ⇒ **Emsystems**
- ⇒ **Influenza prevention**

Be Prepared, Winter Is Upon Us

The winter season brings a set of challenges that we need to be prepared for. Ice and snow storms are sometimes forecasted days in advance or may strike unexpectedly. We need to have our dialysis facilities prepared in advance of a forecasted storm. Here are a few recommendations and tips to help you be prepared.

Maintaining a safe physical plant:

- Make sure you have rock salt on hand. If it is sold out in your area, two alternatives would be sand or kitty litter. Though the latter will not melt the ice, they can at least provide some traction for slippery walkways. These are helpful tools that can be used to prevent ice buildup in front of the entrance/exits to your facility and parking lot.
- Adequate manual equipment; snow shovels, ice scrapers, brooms, floor mats for the interior and exterior.
- Preventive maintenance on snow and ice removal equipment should be done before the projected date of the storm.
- Contract with a snow and ice removal contractor. If you wait until the storm, these contractors may be obligated to respond to contracted customers first.
- Make sure the roof has not been compromised and in danger of collapsing due to the weight of snow or ice. Watch for falling ice on multi story buildings.
- Restock batteries if you don't have the hand-crank type flashlights. Unplug any electronic items that could be especially damaged by a power surge in the event of a power failure.
- If you plan to go to work, take extra clothes, blankets and food with you in the event that you are unable to return home for a day or more.
- Contact your back-up facilities and have open communication.



Continued from pg 1...

Attention

Did you know TEEC has meetings all over the state every other month? This is a good opportunity to have disaster questions answered and be better prepared for all disaster situations. Look for a fax at your facility, or on TEEC's website at www.texasteec.org for meeting dates and locations.

- Make sure you have extra dialysis supplies on hand. Deliveries may be delayed due to bad weather, even in other parts of the country. If Nashville gets iced in, FedEx can't deliver, just an example.
- Do not get near any downed power lines, treat all power lines as if they are "LIVE".

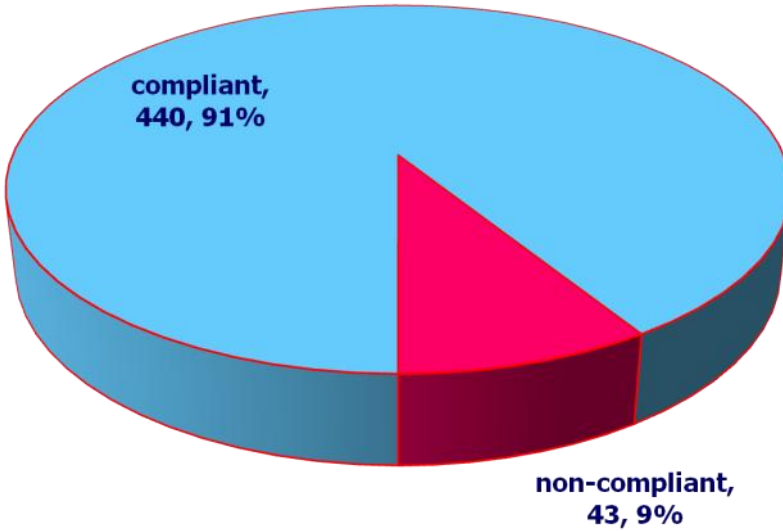
Technical Precautions, know your water system:

- Do you have a blending valve? Is the water heater of sufficient size to support the R.O.?
- Cold feed water temperature can compromise the ability of carbon to remove chlorine/chloramines to safe levels.
- Cold feed water temperature can also effect the R.O. water production, it may make less water than you are accustomed to. The R.O. may not be able to keep up and may cause a loss of Dialysis Quality water to the dialysis machines.
- The temperature in the water room must be monitored. If the water room temperature is too cold, the water in the storage tank may be too cold to mix concentrates or bicarb.
- If the facility has a loss of power, you may have to perform an end to end R.O. System disinfection.
- Make sure your backup generator has been inspected and is in operating condition and has a sufficient fuel supply

You may also want to consider renting a hotel room close to your facility for staff members. This will make it easier for essential employees to make it to work safely and on time. The patients always find a way to make it to dialysis. Your staff can be there with the doors open and a warm smile.

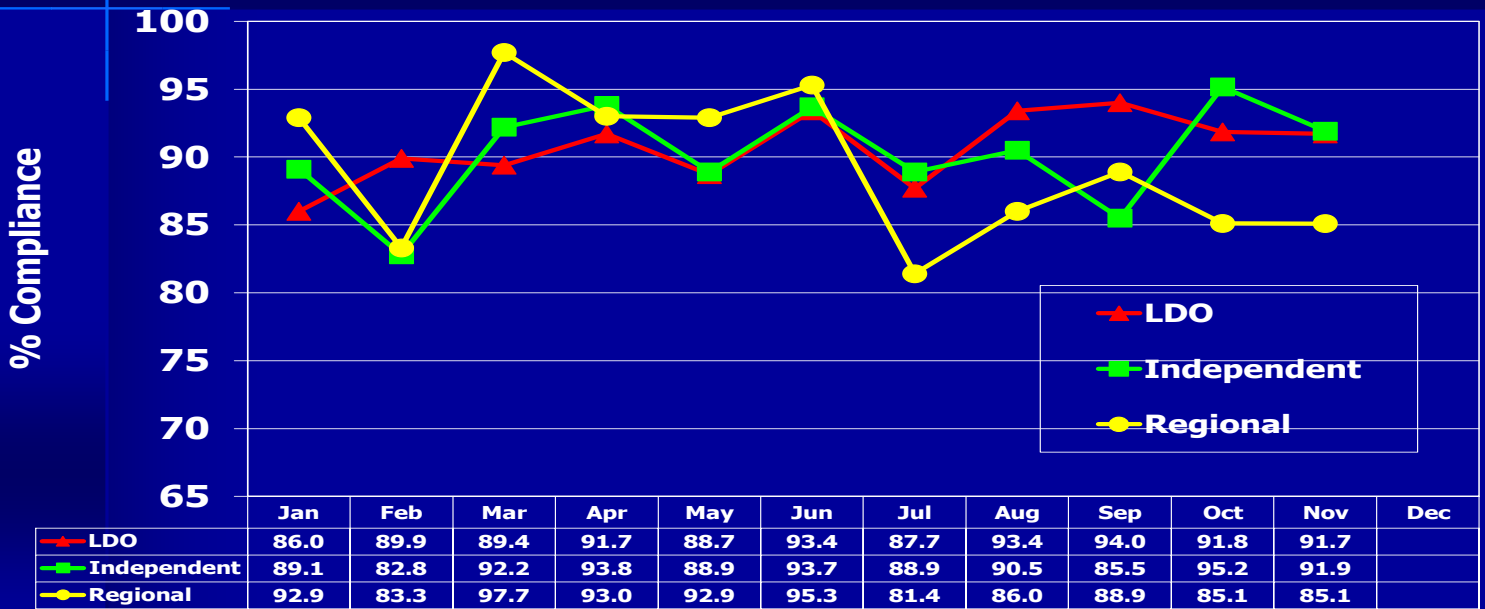


EMSystems Compliance: How Are We Doing?



Emergency drills are run quarterly on EMSystems that all facilities are required to participate in. The most recent drill ran in November and only had a 46.9% compliance rate. These drills prepare you for a real emergency and tell us at the Network, how well facilities monitor their reporting systems. Be sure to participate in the next drill so we can make that number 100%!

% of Compliant Facilities EMSystems - 2011



Percent of facilities EMSystems monthly compliance so far this year, grouped by ownership. How does your organization rank on this scale? Are you tracking your facility's own compliance?

It's Time to Take Action!

Influenza (Flu) season is upon us, and it is time to get that annual flu shot! Do you know why? What do you know about the flu vaccine?

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control) updates information concerning the flu vaccine every year. Here is a summary of the information that is provided on the Vaccination Information Sheet (VIS) for the influenza season 2011 – 2012. This information should be provided to you every time you get a vaccination.

Why should you get a vaccination?

Flu is a contagious disease, which can be spread by coughing, sneezing, or nasal secretions.

Anyone can get the flu, but children experience the highest infection rates.

Symptoms last a few days and include: fever, chills, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, runny or stuffy nose and fatigue.

Some people have a higher risk of getting much sicker, including:

- ⇒ Young children
- ⇒ People over 65
- ⇒ Pregnant women
- ⇒ People with health conditions such as heart, lung or kidney disease, or a weakened immune system

Each year thousands of people die from influenza and even more require hospitalization.

By getting a flu shot, you accomplish two things: you protect yourselves, and protect others by not spreading the flu to them. All people over 6 months old should get the vaccine. That includes the high-risk group listed above and their close contacts, and healthcare workers.

What about the two types of influenza vaccine?

There are two types of influenza vaccine.

Inactivated (killed) vaccine is given with a needle as a shot, and approved for all people over 6 months old. You cannot get the flu from the vaccination.

Live, attenuated (weakened) vaccine is given as a nasal spray.

Your doctor will let you know which is best for you, and discuss any concerns you may have about the flu vaccine.

The influenza viruses change every year, so scientists develop an annual vaccination which will respond to the most prevalent viruses. It is important to remember that the flu vaccine will only protect you from the virus in the vaccine.

After the shot is given, it will take two weeks for protection to develop in your system, and will last about a year.

When should you take action to get vaccinated?

Take action as soon as the vaccine is available. That will allow you to be protected if the flu season arrives early.

Flu can happen at any time of the year. The flu season most commonly runs from October to May, with the highest rates in January and February. You can still have protection with a vaccination in December.

A vaccination once a year is adequate for adults and older children. Some children between 2 and 9 years old may need two doses. Ask your doctor if that is true for your child.

You may receive the flu vaccine while getting another vaccination such as pneumococcal vaccine.

Who should not get the flu shot?

People with a moderate or severe illness should wait until they recover before getting the flu vaccine. A mild illness usually will not prevent the vaccine from being given. Discuss your illness with your doctor before rescheduling your vaccination, if you are ill.

Those people with a severe allergy to eggs or any component of the vaccine may have a reason not to get a flu shot. If you have ever had a severe reaction after getting a dose of the flu vaccine, or have ever had Guillain-Barre Syndrome, talk to your doctor to decide the best course of action.

Where can you get more information about the Influenza Vaccine?

You can check with your doctor. The local health department has information and can even help you with locations in your area where free flu shots are given.

Your state health department has a web site: www.dshs.state.tx.us

The CDC offers information on their web site: www.cdc.gov/flu or you may call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1-800-232-4636

Take Action!

Arm yourself with knowledge, and then go get the influenza vaccine. Protect yourself and those you love

Did you know EMSystems has a mapping feature?

On November 8, 2011, TEEC and members of the Travis County Dialysis community attended a Dialysis Facility Emergency Management Workshop presented by the Austin/Travis County Emergency Operations Center. At this workshop we had the opportunity to discuss the Bastrop County wildfires that occurred Labor Day weekend of this past year. The facility representative from the Bastrop County clinic was able to report to other attendees what the largest obstacles were for the clinic during this natural disaster. One of the main issues the clinic had was routing patients and staff to and from the clinic or informing patients and staff what roads were open for them to take to and from the clinic. As some of you may already know, there is a map feature on EM Systems. This map offers the ability to turn the traffic signals on and enables facilities to track how fast traffic is moving in various directions. This map tool should be utilized in the event of a disaster or emergency in order to route patients to and from your clinic, to and from another dialysis facility, or to and from the hospital. This map tool is also utilized by the Network to help facilities route patients during large scale disasters or evacuations.

In order to access the traffic option on the map you should be on your facility resource page. The Google map feature is located to the right of your facility resource details. Simply click on the link above the map entitled: larger map/driving directions. This link will open up a new window to the Google map. Located on the upper right hand corner of the map is an option for earth or satellite. When you are on the satellite view, you can choose traffic in the drop down menu from satellite. If you see a check mark by the word traffic then the tool is activated. The roads will now show up green, yellow, red, or a combination of red and black. Just like a stop light these colors indicate the speed of traffic flow. The map is capable of zooming in or out for you to see various routes from close to the facility to far away.

Next time you log in to EM Systems take a look at the google map feature. Be sure to familiarize yourself with its capabilities so you can utilize the map in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Questions about EM Systems? Contact Anna Koenig at akoenig@nw14.esrd.net or 469-916-3800.



The recent disasters in our state have provided an opportunity for providers to utilize EMSystems and meet to discuss emergency preparedness within our state. Dave Reimer who is the executive director of the Capital Area Regional Advisory Counsel has used EMSystems in his emergency planning and response and had this to say about it's functionality:

"I recently had the pleasure of speaking at the Dialysis Facilities Emergency Management Workshop in Austin. It reminds me what a valuable service the group provides on a daily basis. The services they provide to our region are readily apparent as well during an event such as a weather, evacuation or other catastrophic issue. One of the CATRAC (Capital Area Trauma Regional Advisory Council) roles is to help facilitate resources and patient coordination during these events. I appreciate all the Dialysis services taking the time to enter data into the EMResource system specific to their clinics, contacts and types of clients served. It has been a tremendous help for us in assisting individuals, hospitals, and sheltering facilities locate clinics for displaced individuals in need of dialysis. Being able to view this data all in one area has been invaluable and a huge time saver when working in the Incident Command Medical Operations Center. In past events there has never been any hesitation from your clinic staff when CATRAC uses that data to contact them for assistance with our regional needs. Keep up the good work and realize your posting of data is very much appreciated by CATRAC and does make a difference. Thanks again for your work and dedication. "– Dave



Happy New Year from TEEC! Be sure to have not only your facility ready for 2012 but also all of your patients!



Please refer to the Network's or TEEC's websites for more information on disaster preparedness.

www.esrdnetwork.org and www.texasteec.org