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## News Release

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## A New Web Site for Ohio Disaster Volunteers

Columbus, OH – Today the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) and the Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) Office of Health Preparedness announced a new Web site, <http://ohioresponds.gov>, to support the coordinated volunteer programs that make Ohio communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to any emergency situation. Ohio Responds maintains a pool of volunteers who can be quickly and efficiently mobilized to respond in the event of an emergency. Activities change with each disaster, and can vary from sandbagging to answering telephones to providing medical assistance.

ODH is the coordinating agency for Ohio Medical Reserve Corps. Ohio EMA coordinates the remainder of the Ohio Citizen Corps programs which include: Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Fire Corps, Volunteers in Police Corps Services (VIPs), and USA on Watch/Neighborhood Watch.

This network empowers the "first responders" to focus on saving lives during an emergency, and allows volunteers to quickly mobilize and focus on critical support tasks such as debris removal, staffing shelters or providing critical medical support for disaster victims. As community service continues to grow, Ohio Responds will support volunteering through a variety of programming to meet the needs of the individual, community and state.

Ohioans who wish to volunteer with an Ohio Citizen Corps program found on Ohio Responds can register through the new Web site, <http://ohioresponds.gov>. This site will continue to serve existing Ohio Citizen Corps volunteers, unit leaders and points of contact.

Ohio Responds was previously managed by the Ohio Community Service Council (OCSC) through the Web site, [www.serveohio.org](http://www.serveohio.org). OCSC will continue to be the point of contact for AmeriCorps in Ohio.