As we move into hurricane and wildfire season we are hearing questions about what we expect sheltering to look like during COVID-19.

Let’s start by emphasizing that the safety of our workforce and the communities we serve remain our priority.

In many cases, instead of opening shelters, we’re prioritizing individual hotel rooms or dormitory-style rooms to make sure people have a safe place to stay if they can’t return home after a disaster. Congregate vs. noncongregate sheltering will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

If hotels or dormitories aren’t a viable option, additional safety precautions have been put in place to allow us to more safely open emergency shelters at the request of local officials.

For example, we will work with local officials to set up a health screening process for everyone coming into the shelter, provide masks, add additional space between cots and use enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices.

Everyone in a Red Cross shelter—including shelter residents and staff—are expected to wear face masks.

If a person showing COVID-19 symptoms arrives at a Red Cross shelter, we will not turn away that person.

July 2020

KEEPING our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed

ON THE HORIZON

◼ World Humanitarian Day

LOG YOUR HOURS AND WIN! In July, we will have drawings for Red Cross apparel. Volunteers who have logged 20 hours will have four chances to win while those with 100 hours will have eight chances.

MILESTONES

KENNETH AKERS, 5 years
JOHN McGRGREW, 5 years
TONI TAYLOR, 5 years
CLAUDIA WARNER, 5 years
DAVE WARNER, 5 years

What does sheltering look like during COVID?

Eager Montana teens learn that even on the battlefield, laws apply

With a father in the Montana Air National Guard who has deployed seven times to places like Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait, Madison Wilson is no stranger to military life and the dangers of combat.

But even she was surprised by many of the things she learned through a Red Cross program that teaches young adults about international humanitarian law and the rules of war.

“Nobody ever talks about it,” the 17-year-old from Cascade said. “I like that (international humanitarian law) protects everyone. It’s not biased at all. I think that’s so important because that’s how you save lives.”

Madison and 13 other teens from across Montana recently participated in the Red Cross Youth Action Campaign, which covers the reality of armed conflicts and the measures in place to protect lives and preserve human dignity. They learned about neutrality, targets vs. nontargets and the treatment of prisoners of war.

Madison said she was surprised to see how strict those rules are, especially when it comes to areas that can and cannot be targeted during combat.

“If you see the bad guy that you’re trying to get but if they’re in one of those zones where

SEE RULES, PAGE 2

Madison Wilson said she was surprised by many of the things she learned about the rules of war, and it helped give her peace of mind.

To areas that can and cannot be targeted during combat.

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SEE SHELTER, PAGE 2

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What does sheltering look like during COVID?

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  - Volunteers who have logged 20 hours will have four chances to win, those with 100 hours will have eight chances.

- RULES OF WAR, PEACE OF MIND
  - Madison Wilson was surprised by the strictness of the rules, especially when it comes to targeting.

- LOG YOUR HOURS AND WIN!
  - Drawings for Red Cross apparel.

- MILESTONES
  - Kenneth Akers, 5 years.
  - John McGrew, 5 years.
  - Toni Taylor, 5 years.
  - Claudia Warner, 5 years.
  - Dave Warner, 5 years.

- ON THE HORIZON

- QUESTIONS TO KNOW
  - June 7: Send in a question to volunteerconnection.redcross.org.

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- ON THE HORIZON
Roadblocks to transitioning from a shelter

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Rules: Sharing with their peers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

or his or her family. Each shelter will work in coordination with local public health and Red Cross Disaster Health Services to help ensure symptomatic residents receive appropriate care.

During a disaster, the Red Cross is committed to ensuring that everyone who comes to us has a safe place to stay. For more guidance on wildfire sheltering during COVID-19, please visit this document on the Exchange: intranet.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/documents/our_services/DisasterCycleServices/des-management/covid-19/WRH/IfRedEvacuations/Congregate-ShelterOperationsInCOVID-19Pandemic.pdf.

Also, check out this video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/kZ-YIPR6e8.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY SERIES. We encourage you to participate in a monthly series focused on the unique cultural characteristics of diverse communities as well as overarching principles that support a culturally proficient organization.

Attention will be given to effective communication and individual responsibility.

Sessions usually occur on the second Friday of every month from 11 a.m.—12:30 p.m. EST. Webinars and call-in instructions will be updated on the Exchange and announced in Cross Connection.

If you missed the June 19 session, Exploring Black Community Anger, Frustration and Hopelessness: From Covid-19 to George Floyd, it will be posted in Edge sometime in the next couple of weeks.

The Youth Action Council planned a capture the flag-type game to teach their peers about the rules of war but the activity was canceled because of COVID-19.

We had six kids who experienced deployment within a year before the training, and we had one girl who is currently experiencing deployment. To understand the role IHL plays in a conflict, it gives them a better idea of what IHL does to protect people and that’s really important.

As part of the Youth Action Campaign, Madison and the other teens were encouraged to share what they learned about humanitarian law, laying out the ground rules for the day ahead.

Those who were tagged during the game would be escorted from the playing field by a “Red Crossover” wearing an armband and taken to the out-zone. There they had to correctly answer questions about international humanitarian law before they could re-enter the game.

Scattered throughout the field were designated safe zones like a school, park or hospital where participants could’t be tagged.

The group put a ton of work into planning the game and were looking forward to sharing what they learned in a creative, interactive way.

“We were super excited about this,” Madison said. “Unfortunately, because of COVID-19, Camp Runnamucka was canceled and capture the flag never happened.”

It was disappointing because I feel my dad can be safer in a lot of situations and that brings a lot of peace of mind for me as his daughter at home waiting for him,” she said.

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It was disappointing because I feel my dad and I had a lot of really good ideas on how we could reach out to people,” Madison said. “We’re still able to do that, but we just had to shift our plans.”

Instead the teens launched a social media campaign through platforms like TikTok. And despite the disappointment of not being able to complete the program like they had hoped, the group still learned lots and is excited to spread the word to others.

“I am proud of what they did,” said Sara Cease, the Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces program manager who led the youth campaign. “I’m super proud of the kids — they’re so smart and so welcome to learning new things and then applying them in their lives as military kids.”

“Some of this stuff my dad didn’t even know about,” Madison added. “To learn more about international humanitarian law and the Youth Action Campaign, visit https://www.redcross.org/humanityinwar.html.

— Story by Matt Ochsner

SHELTER: Keeping clients, staff safe

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A note from Regional Disaster Of- ficer Ted Koenig:

There are few tasks more challenging than finding alternative housing in the aftermath of a disaster. For those who find themselves in shelters, the transition can be especially difficult and confusing.

We have experienced far too many times, disasters destroy or damage the community’s available housing stock — which was often scarce even before the disaster — and, at time, those remaining in shelters typically have challenges accessing benefits. That’s why the effectiveness of our Shelter Resident Transition process is so important.

SRT is a component of the Red Cross’ sheltering program that enables shelter residents, the Red Cross and its partners to comprehensively understand and collaboratively overcome the recovery roadblocks limiting shelter residents from moving forward.

Everyone — not just caseworkers — has a role to play in helping shelter residents identify and overcome the individual barriers preventing their rapid transition from a Red Cross shelter to a more sustainable housing solution.

In preparation for an active wildfire and hurricane season, we encourage the following to help every Red Cross responder understand how they contribute to the Shelter Resident Transition process in a Disaster Relief Operation:

• Watch this six-minute video about Shelter Resident Transition (https:// youtube.com/671xG5HFtE).


Thank you for your time, attention and care for the clients in our care following a disaster.

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• Complete the following 11 EDGE course: Shelter Resident Transition for those working in a Shelter: https://bit.ly/EDGE-SRT-course.

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