October: Agent Orange Awareness Month

Did you know that prostate cancer is one of the 14+ illnesses related to Agent Orange exposure? Millions of gallons of Agent Orange were sprayed to clear plants and trees during the Vietnam War. Those who served in Vietnam or in or near the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) during the Vietnam Era—or in certain related jobs—may have had contact with this herbicide and be eligible for disability and other benefits for illnesses.

More information can be found on the VA’s website here: https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/agent-orange/

The Vietnam Veterans of America also has an excellent 24 page self help booklet about service related disability claims due to Agent Orange exposure for veterans and their family members that may also have been affected by the toxin exposure. They are actively advocating for an additional five related illnesses as well as paternally mediated birth defects. Available here: https://vva.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/AgentOrangeGuide.pdf

This issue:

Agent Orange Awareness Month

Top 8 Ways to increase VRC Visits

Do you have something to contribute? Please email wolfe@plpinfo.org


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Top 8 Ways to Increase Visits to your VRC

- When your Center is open, and if permitted in your library, use the library’s PA system to announce when your Veteran Resource Center is open and/or when a volunteer with special expertise is available.

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VA Agent Orange help line
800-749-8387
Promote your Veteran Resource Center at the entrance to your library with a banner, sign, and occasionally a table of volunteers.

Explain the program to all staff and library volunteers who work at a public service desk or in your library. Teach them to ask “Have you served?” (This elicits a different response than are you a veteran) when appropriate in a conversation. Have them distribute copies of CalVet’s California Veterans Resource Book and make appointments for volunteers/VA Work Study to do a benefits “checkup.”

Promote the services, days/hours of your Veteran Resource Center in your local paper.

Promote the services, days/hours of your Veteran Resource Center via your library’s social media outlets.

Attend local veteran coalition/collaborative meetings (staff and/or volunteers/VA Work Study).

If your library has an outreach team, orient them to the Veterans Resource Center and have them promote your VRC.

Participate in city, local events by “tabling” with your Veteran Resource Center staff/volunteers. Be sure to take the CalVet California Veterans Resource Book to distribute.