



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

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County Executive

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Director

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## VA Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

VA established the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry (AHOBPR) in 2014 to help put data to work for Veterans through research about potential health effects of airborne hazard exposures.

By joining the registry, you can provide information to help them better understand whether long-term health conditions may be related to these exposures. Even if you have not experienced any symptoms or illnesses you believe are related to exposures during military service, your participation in the registry could help VA provide better care to all Veterans.

To check your eligibility for the registry and complete the online questionnaire, visit the secure registry portal at [veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/HBurnPitRegistry/#page/home](https://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/HBurnPitRegistry/#page/home)

- Participation in the registry is voluntary and cannot negatively impact your access to VA health care ([va.gov/healthcare/](https://va.gov/healthcare/)) or your claim for compensation and benefits.
- You may save and submit your responses to the registry questionnaire and notes from optional medical assessment to support your VA claim if you choose.
- Completing the questionnaire can also help you proactively identify health concerns, discuss them with your health care provider, and get follow-up care.
- You can participate even if you do not recall any exposure to airborne hazards during your military service.

### Registry Eligibility

You are eligible to participate in the registry if you were deployed to the Southwest Asia theater of operations any time after August 2, 1990 or Afghanistan or Djibouti on or after September 11, 2001.

- Regions and countries include: Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Djibouti, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, waters of the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, and Red Sea.
- Operations and campaigns include: Desert Shield and Desert Storm (ODS/S), Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Enduring Freedom (OEF), and New Dawn (OND).

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### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for *most morning* medical appointments.

For more details please call 270-2760.



### VETERANS CRISIS LINE

1-800-273-8255  
PRESS 1

**\*\*Confidential chat at Veterans CrisisLine.net or text to 838255\*\***  
TTY service 1-800-799-4889

Confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for veterans and their loved ones.

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**\*\*You do not have to have been exposed to specific airborne hazards or have related health concerns to participate in the registry.\*\***

While these hazards may have been present in other locations or during other time periods, participation in the registry is currently limited to support specific research and public health studies. Even if you are not eligible for the registry, they encourage all Veterans who are concerned that their military service has impacted their health to talk to their health care provider, apply for VA health care ([va.gov/health-care/](http://va.gov/health-care/)), and file a claim for compensation and benefits ([va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/](http://va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/)). You do not have to participate in the registry to receive compensation and benefits or health care from VA.

To learn more about other types of military exposures, visit the military exposures homepage at [publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp](http://publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp)

To participate, visit [veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry/#page/home](http://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry/#page/home) and log in using your DSLogon credentials.

VA uses the DS Logon credentials issued by the Department of Defense (DoD) to help protect any personal health information (PHI) you may share via the registry. If you already have a VA MyHealtheVet premium account, you can use the same credentials to log into the burn pit registry. To apply for a new DSLogon account, please visit the VA Mobile Health site at [mobile.va.gov](http://mobile.va.gov)

- You may complete the questionnaire in one sitting or save and return later to complete it.
- When you are done, please save and/or print your questionnaire responses for your own records.
- You can also come back at any time to view or save your questionnaire responses or change your address or contact information.
- You may also share your questionnaire responses with your health care provider or submit them as documentation to support your VA claim if you choose.

*Please Note: If you were deployed before 9/11, were a part of special forces, or were re-deployed within three months, you may get a notification in the registry portal that you do not have an eligible deployment. This is due to technical constraints but does not necessarily mean you are not eligible. To continue completing the questionnaire please click the blue banner stating "Request Eligibility Review" and follow the additional steps.*

*If you need technical support or assistance logging into the registry, call 1-877-470-5947.*

#### **Optional Health Evaluation**

Once you complete the burn pit registry questionnaire, you also have the option to schedule a free environmental health evaluation at your local VA medical facility. In some cases, these evaluations are performed by primary care providers and

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in other cases they may be completed by an environmental health clinician at special environmental hazard clinics or remotely via a telehealth appointment.

- The evaluation is completely voluntary and is separate from the compensation and benefits evaluations or regular visits with your VA provider.
- Notes from your evaluation will be used to support research into the health effects of airborne hazards. Taking advantage of this exam cannot negatively impact your VA claim.
- You can save and submit your registry questionnaire and notes from the evaluation to support your claim.

All registry participants are encouraged to take advantage of this free evaluation to help you better understand your health, document your exposures, and talk to your primary health care provider about your symptoms and treatment.

You can schedule your evaluation at your convenience by contacting the environmental health coordinator at your local VA facility.

<p><b>Albany Stratton VA Medical Center</b>  <b>113 Holland Avenue</b>  <b>Albany, NY 12208</b></p>	<p><b>James Arrington</b>  <b>(518) 626-6721</b>  <b>James.Arrington@va.gov</b>  <b>Fax: (518) 626-6725</b></p>
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Completing the registry questionnaire does not automatically alert VA to schedule your exam, so you must reach out to schedule this appointment. All Veterans are encouraged to apply for VA health care to proactively monitor and treat any health conditions that may be related to your military service.

*You are eligible to participate if you served in Operations Desert Storm/Desert Shield (ODS), New Dawn (OND), or Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) \*.*

*We encourage you to join even if:*

*You don't think you were exposed to specific airborne hazards.*

*You are not experiencing symptoms or illnesses you think are related to your exposures.*

*You have not filed a VA claim for compensation and benefits or applied for VA health care \*\*.*

*You are still an active-duty service member or have returned to active service.*

*\* Includes deployment to countries in the Southwest Asia theater of operations any time after August 2, 1990 or Afghanistan or Djibouti after September 11, 2001.*

*\*\* Participation in the registry cannot negatively impact your VA claim or ability to get health care from VA.*

## A Message from the County Executive

Memorial Day can be a busy time, with the onset of summer, neighborhood gatherings and trips for fun and family. It is also a time when communities across Rensselaer County show respect and appreciation for those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation.

As County Executive, I was privileged to attend a number of the observances for Memorial Day, with a number on the holiday, and several others in the days immediately preceding the holiday. The parades and ceremonies have great meaning and importance, and I am pleased to report that overall, more residents turned out for the events. Thank you to everyone who organized and participated in the Memorial Day observances across the county for 2022 and thank you also to those who observed these parades and ceremonies during the holiday.

Special recognition goes out the veteran organizations that coordinated, supported and hosted these events. Your work ensures those who have fallen for freedom and paid the highest price for our nation are never forgotten. My administration was proud to recognize your work with financial support through the Rensselaer County Responds effort in 2021, and look forward to working with your organizations in the coming months and years.

When a veteran passes, it is a significant loss for county and community. I was among the many proud to attend services in memory of Richard Butterfield, a Vietnam veteran who was described as a warrior's warrior. Many of Rick's fellow veterans and colleagues from the New York State Police joined to say farewell to Rick and remember his vast contributions in protecting our freedom aboard and safety at home. I was proud to know Rick and speak with him on events and issues. Thank you to Rick Butterfield and his family for his service and my condolences to his many friends and family.

Sincerely,

Steven F. McLaughlin

## Upcoming Events:



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event.*

**July 11th...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony-County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 am:  
Robert D. Smith - USN, Fireman 1c - WWII**

**July 30th...Upstate New York Wounded Vet Run (Rain or Shine), registration starts at 9am at Brunswick Harley, 1130 Hoosick Rd., Troy and ends at Wicked Eatery, 1602 U.S. 9, Clifton Park. For more info: [upstatenywvr@gmail.com](mailto:upstatenywvr@gmail.com) or 518-720-7111.**

**August 2nd...6th Annual Best Ball QM3 Francis Brown Golf Outing, contact Mike Brown @ 518-542-5137**

**August 8th...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony-County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 am:  
Samuel Abate, USN, AM2c - WWII**

**August 21st...CVMA NY 19-1 12th Annual Tri-State Poker Run, registration from 10am-11am, Start and Finish at the Veterans of Lansingburgh, 777 1st Ave., Troy, NY - \$20 riders - \$10 passengers**

**August 31st - September 5th...Schaghticoke Fair**

**September 5th... Labor Day-OFFICE CLOSED**

**September 12th...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony-County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 am:  
Dale R. "Dick" French - USA, Cpl - Korea**