For Emergency Duty- Kitchens on Wheels

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For Emergency Duty—

Kitchens on Wheels

Betty Ann Erickson explains how canteen workers are being aided by mobile kitchen units.

As their contribution toward winning the war, women in Ames have joined the ranks of homemakers who are establishing emergency feeding programs. With the aid of mobile kitchen units, trained canteen workers may supply nutritious, hot meals where there are widespread epidemics, disasters or in evacuated areas.

Efficient operation of the movable kitchens requires specialized training which is now being offered throughout the country by local leaders cooperating with the American National Red Cross and the Office of Civilian Defense. In Ames 28 women have attended the canteen workers' classes. The 20-hour nutrition course and American citizenship are prerequisites of the course.

Community planning and cooperation in Kansas City, Missouri, have resulted in a mobile canteen unit completely equipped for less than $500. Nine corps of canteen workers have already displayed the usefulness of these units in serving large groups during an emergency.

A mobile kitchen unit is completely equipped to serve 50 to 75 people. One type of unit, now being used in Atlanta, Ga., contains two 5-gallon vacuum containers with faucets to dispense soup, stew, beans, coffee or cocoa. The containers hold enough to furnish 80 cups of coffee or 50 bowls of soup. Food can be kept hot for several hours even in the coldest weather.

Removable drawers on each side of the trailer may be used to store soup bowls, coffee mugs, sugar, cream, spoons, bread and sandwiches. On the back of the trailer kitchen are removable charcoal containers, each equipped with a bucket for heating nutritious beverages and soups.

Prepared at designated central kitchens the food may be transported to different locations where it is needed and the meals are served from the trailer counter by the canteen crew. Dishes are washed and rinsed in water heated by charcoal or gas burners.

Red Cross canteen workers can operate the mobile units promptly and efficiently after completing the 20-hour training course. The course provides training in setting up canteens, in improvising equipment and in the planning, preparation and serving of food in large quantities with a minimum of time and effort.

The minimum requirement of the national organization for volunteer service in the Canteen Corps is 18 hours a year. With the increasing need for canteen workers this requirement may be lowered.

Atlanta has a specially equipped mobile trailer kitchen designed to feed many people in time of emergency. It may be moved where it is most needed for serving hot food.