

National Preparedness Month

September is National Preparedness Month and is sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA has many ideas on how to prepare for disasters on a personal level, a family level, and a community level. Go to www.ready.gov/september for in depth suggestions.

Floods

- Avoid walking through flood waters. Six inches of moving water can knock you down. Two feet of water can overpower your car.
- If there's a chance of flash flooding, move immediately to higher ground. This is the #1 cause of weather-related deaths in the United States.
- If floodwaters rise around your car but the water is not moving, abandon the car and move to higher ground.
- If the flood waters ARE moving, do not leave the car and enter moving water.
- Avoid camping or parking along streams, rivers, and creeks during heavy rainfall. These areas can flood quickly and with little warning!

Tornados

- Be alert to changing weather conditions. Look for approaching storms.
- Look for danger signs. Danger signs include dark, often greenish sky; large hail; large, dark, low-lying cloud; loud roar, similar to a freight train. If you see or hear these signs, prepare to take shelter.
- When under a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately! Most injuries associated with high winds are from flying debris. Protect your head.
- After a tornado, be careful when entering a structure that has been damaged. Be aware of hazards from exposed nails and broken glass.
- After a tornado, don't touch downed power lines. Report electrical hazards to the police and the utility company.

Earthquakes

- Before an earthquake, look around places where you spend time. Identify safe places that you could crawl to.
- Practice how to Drop, Cover, and Hold On. You may only have seconds to protect yourself in an earthquake.
- Before an earthquake occurs, secure items that could fall and cause injuries, such as bookshelves, mirrors, and light fixtures.
- To prepare for an earthquake, store critical supplies and documents and plan how you will communicate with family members.
- Cover your head and neck with your arms to protect yourself from falling debris during an earthquake.

Power Outages

- Charge battery powered devices. Locate flashlights and radios. Tell friends and family your location in case of power loss.
- Make a list of battery power items along with the type of batteries required for emergencies.
- If you're running a portable generator, you need to have a battery-powered carbon monoxide alarm on each floor of your home.
- An emergency may knock out power. Prepare by stocking non-perishable food items and water.
- Keep your car tank at least half full. Gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps.

