

September is National Preparedness Month

The summer storms highlight the importance of being prepared for an emergency. The Department of Homeland Security asks individuals to do three key things during National Preparedness Month. 1) Get an emergency supply kit; 2) Make a family emergency plan; and 3) Be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses.

National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools.

A national survey conducted by The Ad Council in August 2007 found that 54% of households have an emergency kit and 37% have created a family emergency plan. Keep your family safe by implementing these suggestions.

Get a Kit

When preparing for a possible emergency situation, it's best to think first about the basics of survival: **fresh water, food, clean air and warmth.**

Recommended items to include in a basic emergency supply kit:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps



Additional items to consider adding to an emergency supply kit:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – when diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. In an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels

- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Make a Plan

- It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact may be in a better position

to communicate among separated family members.

- Be sure every member of your family knows the phone number and has coins or a prepaid phone card to call the emergency contact.
- You may have trouble getting through, or the telephone system may be down altogether—be patient.

Emergency information: Find out what kinds of disasters, both natural and man-made, are most likely to occur in your area and how you will be notified. Methods of getting your attention vary from community to community. One common method is to broadcast via emergency radio and TV broadcasts. You might hear a special siren, or get a telephone call or emergency workers may go door-to-door.

Emergency plans: You may also want to inquire about emergency plans at places where your family spends time: work, daycare and school. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together in the event of an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance.

Be Informed

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as making an emergency supply kit and

developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency.

However, there are important differences among potential emergencies that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take. Learn more about the potential emergencies that could happen where you live and the appropriate way to respond to them.

In addition, learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your state and local government.

Emergency preparedness is no longer the sole concern of earthquake prone Californians and those who live in the part of the country known as "Tornado Alley." For Americans, preparedness must now account for man-made disasters as well as natural ones. Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.

Individuals can visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY for information about emergency preparedness.

Get Involved

Get involved in preparing your community. Citizen Corps, Homeland Security's grassroots effort, provides opportunities for citizens to get emergency response training; participate in community exercises; and volunteer to support local first responders. To learn more and to get involved contact www.citizencorps.gov or contact Volunteer Partners at 435-2100 or director@volunteerpartners.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Go to the national Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) on the Web at www.eden.lsu.edu/npm – topic-specific resources include:

- Children and Youth
- Multi-cultural
- Resources and Collaborators
- Business Preparedness

Enter Disaster Preparedness Challenge to Win Prizes! Get Points for Activities Done in September

Eligibility Information:

1. You must live, work or attend school in Lancaster County, Nebraska to participate and be eligible for prizes.
2. Individuals, families, classrooms, or workgroups are eligible to participate.
3. Only one scorecard per individual, family, classroom or workgroup.

Prizes will include:

- Weather Radio with batteries
- Carbon Monoxide Detector with batteries
- Smoke Detector with batteries
- Drop Ladder (for fire escape from 2nd floor)
- Assembled Disaster Preparedness Kit
- First Aid Kits
- Fire Extinguisher
- Car Disaster Preparedness Kit

Prize winners will be notified by mail or phone. Grand prize winners will be announced in October 2008. Details will be provided to grand prize winners. Individuals need not be present to win.

Please keep this portion of the scorecard for information on prize drawing.

Directions:

1. Give yourself one point for each completed activity.
2. Total your points at the end of each week. (4 point maximum per week).
3. On September 28, 2008 add up the total points for the 3 weeks (12 point maximum).
4. If you have accumulated at least 8 points, return your scorecard to be eligible for the 2008 Disaster Preparedness Challenge drawing.
5. Tear or cut your scorecard on the dotted line and mail to the address below. All scorecards must be postmarked or delivered by September 30, 2008 to be eligible for prize drawings. Mail to:

Lancaster County Extension
Attn: Lorene Bartos
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

are YOU ready?

Scorecard:

Please Print:

Name _____ Signature (Must be 19 year of age) _____

Home Address _____ School/Business Name _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone Number _____

How did you participate: Individual Family Classroom Workgroup Other: _____

Number in your group: _____ Total Points Scored: _____

Activity (1 point per activity):

Week 1 (September 8– September 14)	SCORES
1. Start your Disaster Kit by purchasing a plastic tub and getting 2 items from the list above.	
2. Make a sign for your refrigerator that identifies the differences between a tornado watch and warning and what you should do for each.	
3. Discuss and record with your family what you will do in case of fire, tornado, flood, or other types of disaster.	
4. Organize important documents and place in a safe location (i.e. birth certificates, social security card, marriage license, passport, etc.).	
Week 2 (September 15– September 21)	SCORES
1. Add at least 3 more items from the list above to your Disaster Kit.	
2. LES customers call 402-441-4444 to register your number for power outages and/or Norris customers put your power outage numbers in your Disaster Kit.	
3. Practice a mock tornado drill.	
4. Put something fun to do in your Disaster Kit to do while taking shelter. i.e. board game, coloring book and crayons, card game, etc.	
Week 3 (September 22– September 28)	SCORES
1. Add at least 3 more items from the list above to your Disaster Kit.	
2. Practice a mock fire drill, making sure you have a designated spot to meet.	
3. Check batteries in your smoke detectors or install a smoke detector or carbon monoxide detector.	
4. Complete the disaster preparedness survey online at www.nema.ne.gov (click on "Are You Ready" button)	

Tear or cut along this line and mail your scorecard in by September 30, 2008