

September is...

# National Preparedness Month

Get a Kit, Make a Plan,  
Be Informed and  
Get Involved

National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort held each September to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools. National Preparedness Month 2007 is sponsored by the [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#). The goal of the month is to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and to encourage individuals to take action.

Throughout September, Homeland Security will work with a wide variety of organizations, including local, state and federal government agencies and the private sector, to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and promote individual involvement through events and activities across the nation. The Guernsey County Board of MRDD wishes to help you and your family get prepared by giving you the following information provided from [www.ready.gov](#), [www.disabilitypreparedness.gov](#) and [www.redcross.org](#). Taking these simple steps can make a big difference in ensuring your safety and well-being and that of your loved ones.

## For People with Disabilities:

- Create a support network to help in an emergency.
- Tell these people where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Give one member of your support network a key to your house or apartment.
- Contact your city or county government's emergency information management office. Many local offices keep lists of people with disabilities so they can be located quickly in a sudden emergency.
- Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to help identify your disability.
- If you are dependent on dialysis or other life sustaining treatment, know the location and availability of more than one facility.
- Show others how to operate your wheelchair.
- Know the size and weight of your wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.
  - *Additional Supplies for People with Disabilities:*
- Prescription medicines, list of medications including dosage, list of any allergies.
- Extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries.
- Extra wheelchair batteries and oxygen.
- Keep a list of the style and serial number of medical devices.
- Medical insurance and Medicare cards.
- List of doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt.



## 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
- Dust Mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- 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](http://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. Or 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:** Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to plan in advance: how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations.

### Family Emergency 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, **but 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.

