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HEALTH OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES DURING NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH



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Tallahassee, Fla.—Throughout September, the Florida Department of Health is participating in National Preparedness Month by encouraging Floridians to take action and make a plan to ensure their families, homes and businesses are prepared when natural disasters or other emergencies occur.

“National Preparedness Month reminds us to be ready for any disaster,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Commit today to making an emergency plan, building a supply kit and staying informed about dangerous situations in your area.”

Emergencies come in all shapes and sizes and can affect one person or millions of people. Having a basic preparedness plan goes a long way in protecting individuals, families and communities. Knowing what your risks may be and creating a communications plan for all types of emergencies provides the best protection for you and your family.

“The importance of being prepared well in advance of a disaster cannot be understated,” said Florida Division of Emergency Management Director Bryan W. Koon. “Your chances of survival are much higher when you’ve got a plan for you and your family and every member of your family understands how the plan will work.”

During National Preparedness Month everyone should take a look around and ask the questions, “Do I know the potential hazards and what would I do if a natural disaster such as a hurricane, flood or tornado hit my community? Is my family prepared?”

The department recommends the following top 10 preparedness and health-specific tips that can be found in the [Florida Emergency Preparedness Guide](#), available in English, Spanish, Haitian-Creole and large print versions:

1. Make an emergency plan for you and your family;
2. Put together an emergency supply kit, including healthy emergency foods;
3. List each person involved in the plan, contact information and label necessary supplies;
4. Have enough healthy food and water for at least 72 hours (1 gallon of water per person per day);
5. If evacuating, have a place to go, call ahead and plan your route;
6. Designate a point of contact and consider how you will let others know you are ok;

7. Carry sufficient medications and first aid kit with you;
8. Make sure the emergency plan includes your pets;
9. Maintain good physical and mental health; and
10. Help children cope with disasters and make sure they understand your emergency plan.

The Florida Division of Emergency Management provides online tools for building an emergency plan for families and businesses at FLGetaPlan.com and information on registering for a special needs shelter [here](#).

During severe weather and other emergencies, you can count on active alerts from the department's official social media accounts. One of the fastest ways to receive official and accurate health-related information is to monitor [@HealthyFla](#) on Twitter and on [Facebook](#).

For more information about National Preparedness Month, how you can get involved and to find opportunities to support your community's preparedness activities, visit <http://www.community.fema.gov/>.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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