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September is National Preparedness Month in Illinois

Campaign will prepare residents, families and communities for emergencies or disasters

SPRINGFIELD – National Preparedness Month is recognized each September as a way to promote family and community disaster and emergency planning. The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), and local emergency managers, are encouraging Illinoisans to take time to prepare for potential emergencies at homes, at work, and in the community. Having a plan that includes where to go and how to communicate during disasters, building an emergency supply kit and learning lifesaving skills could help your family, friends, neighbors and employees during a disaster.

“A disaster can strike at any time and anywhere: When you are at home, at work or while you are traveling on vacation,” said Acting IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. “Today, preparedness is more than building a kit. Community resiliency is achieved when neighbors help neighbors plan for and respond to emergencies. Building a culture of preparedness is the cornerstone of disaster preparedness.”

Here are five steps to Disaster Preparedness:

- **Save Early for a Disaster:** Can you afford a disaster or emergency? According to the Federal Reserve, 40-percent of Americans do not have \$400 in savings. [Operation Hope](#) is a non-profit that provides pre-disaster preparedness planning. They work with adults, youth and disaster survivors to equip them with the financial knowledge and tools to create a secure future. These programs and services are offered at no cost to a client.
- **Learn Lifesaving Skills:** Every day citizens can be first responders. This is a great time to learn lifesaving skills, such as CPR and first aid techniques, in order to provide immediate aid until help arrives.
- **Make a Plan for When a Disaster Strikes:** Your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, so it is important to know which types of disasters could affect your area, and know how you will contact one another and reconnect if separated.

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- **Teach Youth how to Prepare for Disasters:** Disaster planning, response, and recovery efforts should take into account the unique needs of children, who make up roughly a quarter of the U.S. population. Get kids involved in building their own emergency kit. Make sure to include your child's favorite stuffed animals, board games, books or music in their emergency kit to comfort them in a disaster.
- **Get Involved in Community Preparedness:** Check in with your neighbors to see how you can help each other before, during and after a storm. You can also bolster your community's resiliency efforts by joining a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). CERTs train volunteers to prepare for various. Find your local [CERT](#).

IEMA offers disaster preparedness information on the Ready Illinois website (www.Ready.Illinois.gov), a one-stop resource for detailed information about what to do before, during and after disasters. During large-scale disasters, IEMA uses the Ready Illinois website, Facebook and Twitter pages to provide critical information about the incident, including shelter locations, road closures, safety information, photos and more.

For more information about emergency and disaster preparedness, visit ready.illinois.gov.

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