

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEWSLETTER

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY



## Get Emergency Preparedness Supplies During Virginia's Sales Tax Holiday

Virginia's Sales Tax Holiday, August 5 – 7, 2022, is a great time to stock up on hurricane and emergency preparedness items, without paying sales tax. Yes, that's right, NO SALES TAX. What is included?

- Portable generators - \$1,000 or less per item
- Gas-powered chainsaws - \$350 or less per item
- Chainsaw accessories - \$60 or less per item
- Other specified hurricane preparedness items - \$60 or less per item

What are you going to buy? First, review the Emergency Kit Checklist in the Community Emergency Response Guide (CERG). You should include basic supplies and tailor the emergency kit to your needs. Fairfax County recommends every household keep 3-5 days' worth of food, water, and supplies for each member of the household.

For a list full of qualifying items, visit: [www.tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday](http://www.tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday)

Emergency Kit Checklist in the CERG: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/cerg](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/cerg)

## Back To School Preparedness

It's that time of year where you might be thinking about all the back to school shopping you have to do in the next few weeks. However, it is really important to talk to your children about preparing for emergencies, especially if an emergency happens when they are at school. In school, kids practice many drills such as a fire drill (evacuation), a shelter in place drill (tornado or earthquake), and a lockdown drill (active violence). How can you help prepare your kids for those kinds of drills? Talk to them about the different types of emergencies that can happen and some of the actions they might have to take. It is important to emphasize they should follow the instructions given by the teacher.



**Children Can be Confident During an Emergency** - Children who are prepared experience less anxiety and feel more confident during actual emergencies and disasters.

Parents, we have some work for you as well! That's right – some homework for the adults!

1. Find out the school or childcare center's emergency plans. Every school and childcare center should have a written emergency plan with information, such as how to contact parents in an emergency and where children will go if evacuated. Also, ask how you can contact the school or childcare center during an emergency and how parents and caregivers will reunite with their children. If your school system has an alerting system, sign up so you can get the most up to date information.

If you live in Fairfax County, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) has a Text Messaging for parents and students for times when it is critical to notify FCPS parents as quickly as possible. Text messaging is an additional way to quickly and efficiently contact parents when your child's school or district needs to notify you in cases of emergency, attendance, and essential communications related to your student(s) education. Link to sign up: <https://www.fcps.edu/resources/parent-communication-overview/fcps-text-messaging-parents-and-students>

2. Update your emergency contact information. Make sure that the school has up-to-date emergency contact information for your child. Notify the school every time your address or phone number changes. Keeping a backpack emergency card with your child is one way to make sure that emergency contact information – as well as other important information like medications and allergies – is handy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a great printable template for you to use: <https://www.cdc.gov/parents/backtoschool/Backpack-Card.pdf>
3. Understand the reality of reuniting after an emergency. Children may be away from their parents or accidentally separated during an emergency. Your first instinct might be to go check to make sure your child is safe. However, it is not always that simple. It is very important to listen to directions and DO NOT go near the incident scene. This can put you and your children at greater risk. Wait until public safety or school authorities say it is safe for you to pick up your children and where to pick them up from. School authorities may evacuate your children to a safer place or emergency shelter. Once the scene is safe, parents will be reunited with their children.
4. Talk to your children about the emergency after it happens. Regardless of your child's age, he or she may feel upset or have other strong emotions after an emergency. Some children react right away, while others may show signs of difficulty much later. How children react or common signs of distress can vary according to age. Knowing how to help children cope after an emergency can help them stay healthy in future emergencies.

For some additional resources or to read more on how you can prepare for the 2022 school year, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/parents/children/back-to-school.html>

## Request an Emergency Preparedness Workshop



The Fairfax County Department of Emergency Management and Security can conduct a workshop (virtual or in person) to prepare your networks for an emergency. Submit your request today: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/presentation-requests](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/presentation-requests)

Workshop Topics:

1. Personal Preparedness using the Community Emergency Response Guide (CERG).
2. 5 Step Neighborhood Guide Workshop – Learn how to prepare where you live!
3. Business Disaster Resilience Workshop – Learn how to prepare your business!
4. Youth Preparedness (Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, schools, etc.).

## August Monthly Webinar:

### Children and Youth Preparedness

Interested in learning more? Join us for our **Monthly Webinar on Wednesday, August 3, 2022, at 7 PM to talk about Children and Youth Preparedness.** We will cover some of the topics above and much more!

Link to join: <https://youtu.be/y4lvFLr2V9o>

