

# Emergency Preparedness Newsletter



Department of Emergency Management and Security (DEMS)



## DEMS Monthly Webinar on Wednesday, May 1, 2024, at 7 PM

Join us on Wednesday, May 1, at 7 p.m. as we host the program manager for the Virginia Urban Search and Rescue Program (Virginia Task Force 1 / USA-1) who will tell us about the program and the incredible skill the team has. Link: [https://youtube.com/live/i9A3i\\_FeLqw](https://youtube.com/live/i9A3i_FeLqw)

## Hurricane Preparedness Week May 1-7

Be ready for hurricane season. Take action TODAY to be better prepared for when the worst happens. Understand your risk from hurricanes and begin pre-season preparations now. Make sure you understand how to interpret forecasts and alerts, as well as know what to do before, during, and after a storm. For additional preparedness tips for Hurricanes/Tropical Storms in Fairfax County, visit the Community Emergency Response Guide (CERG): [Hurricanes/Tropical Storms | Emergency \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency)

### Sunday (5/5/24) - Know Your Risk: Wind & Water

- Consider your threats: storm surge, flooding from heavy rain, strong winds, tornadoes, rip currents
- Determine if you live in a flood-prone area

The first step of preparing for hurricanes is to know your risk. Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem, but they can affect our area too! Flooding is our #1 hazard in Fairfax County, which could result from storms, rain, or coastal flooding.

### Monday (5/6/24) – Prepare Before Hurricane Season

- Get an insurance checkup and document your possessions
- Create a communication plan with a hand-written list of contacts

The best time to prepare for hurricanes is BEFORE hurricane season begins. Avoid having to rush through

potentially life-saving preparations by waiting until it's too late. Get your disaster supplies while the shelves are still stocked, and get that insurance checkup early, as flood insurance requires a 30-day waiting period. [noaa.gov/prepare-before-hurricane-season](https://www.noaa.gov/prepare-before-hurricane-season)

### Tuesday (5/7/24) - Understand Forecast Information

- Know your alerts & the difference between a Watch and Warning
- Focus on potential impacts, regardless of storm size or category

Prepare for hurricane season by knowing how to understand forecasts. They can tell you a lot about what is expected,

including the storm's paths, rainfall amounts, wind speeds, and more. There is a lot of information available days ahead of a storm, and it is important to understand what it means. [noaa.gov/understand-forecast-information](https://www.noaa.gov/understand-forecast-information)

### Wednesday (5/8/24) - Get Moving When a Storm Threatens

- Protect your home: cover windows, secure doors & loose items
- Determine sheltering options and consider your pets

Do you know what to do when a storm threatens? Prepare for hurricane season by taking the time now to understand the actions needed when time is of the essence.

### Thursday (5/9/24) - Stay Protected During Storms

- Stay in your safe places from water & wind
- Have a way to get weather alerts and forecast updates

Whether you've evacuated or are sheltering in place, know what to expect from the hazards you may face. Remain vigilant, stay up to date with the latest forecasts and alerts, and continue to listen to local officials. Sign up for Fairfax Alerts ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts)) to get weather and emergency information.

### Friday (5/10/24) - Use Caution After Storms

- Only use generators outdoors, 20+ feet from your home
- Prepare for the likelihood that help and communications may not be available

A key part of hurricane preparedness is understanding the dangers that can remain after a storm. This is NOT the time to put your guard down. Nearly half of hurricane fatalities occur after the storm. [noaa.gov/use-caution-after-storms](https://www.noaa.gov/use-caution-after-storms)

### Saturday (5/11/24) - Take Action Today

- Learn how to understand hurricane forecasts and alerts
- Learn what to do before, during, and after a storm

Are you ready for hurricane season? Take action TODAY to be better prepared for when the worst happens. Even if you feel ready, there may be additional things you could do or learn. [noaa.gov/take-action-today](https://www.noaa.gov/take-action-today)

## Fairfax Disability First Responder and Safety Resource Fair

Fairfax County public safety agencies have partnered with the Arc of Northern Virginia and the Northern Virginia Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NVRC) to host a safety resource fair tailored for individuals with disabilities. This event provides a controlled and safe environment for attendees to meet and engage with first responders. Attendees will have the opportunity to interact with first responders, learn about available safety resources, and participate in various activities, including:



- Practice police traffic stops.
- Practice talking with and using fire and EMS services.
- Gain insights on how emergency planning can vary for those with disabilities.
- Receive a personalized identification card to hand to first responders in the event of an emergency.

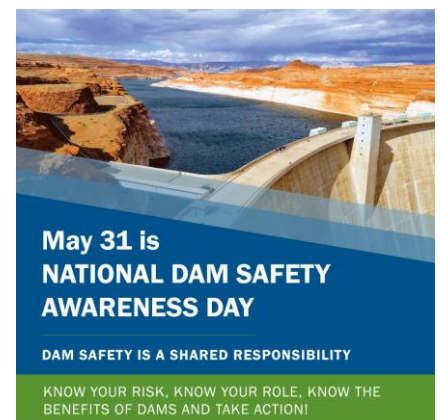
This event will take place both indoors and outdoors, with activities set up in the parking lot.

The event is free, but registration is requested. Register by either scanning the QR code above, or by visiting [arcofnva.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/arcofnva/event.jsp?event=8368&](https://arcofnva.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/arcofnva/event.jsp?event=8368&).

## National Dam Safety Day

National Dam Safety Awareness Day is observed on May 31 each year. Here are a few steps you can take to be personally prepared:

- Be aware of the dams in your area. Fairfax County has several of them!
- Purchase or renew flood insurance.
- Have an emergency plan and an emergency kit in place for your family or business and know what to do if you have to evacuate.
- Take a look at our Dam Hazard Page in the Fairfax County CERG: [Dam Failure | Emergency \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)



## National Wildfire Awareness Month

As the sun rises higher in the sky and the temperatures begin to climb, so does the risk of wildfires! May marks National Wildfire Awareness Month, a time to educate, prepare, and take action against the destructive power of wildfires.

National Wildfire Awareness Month emphasizes the importance of community preparedness in preventing and responding to wildfires. This includes cleaning out leaves and branches, implementing fire-resistant landscaping, and having evacuation plans in place. Remember, only you can prevent wildfires!

For more information on fire prevention, education and mitigation visit the National Interagency Fire Center website here <https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information/fire-prevention-education-mitigation#:~:text=Plan%20for%20wildfire,embers%20cause%20most%20home%20ignitions.>

## Business Continuity Awareness Week May 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>

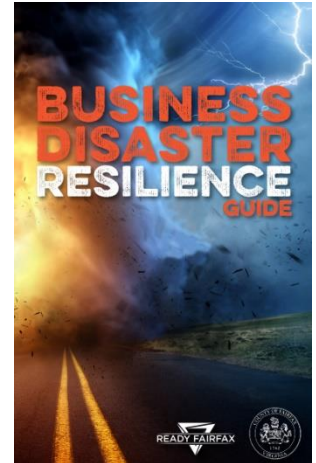
For those who may not be familiar, business continuity describes an organization's ability to withstand and recover from physical threats, such as natural disasters and security breaches, as well as risks related to technology, operations, and reputational damage. According to the Insurance Institute, "up to 40% of businesses affected by a natural or man-made disaster never reopen."

Fairfax County helps businesses in the county increase their resiliency through the Business Disaster Resilience Guide and online training. Implementing a business preparedness plan to ensure that each component of a business is prepared to respond and recover from a disruption is vital to securing business continuity. By working together, we can ensure that Fairfax County is prepared and resilient in the face of ongoing challenges, contributing to the stability and sustainability of our economy and society.

DEMS now offers an online training course, Introduction to Business Preparedness. The goal of the Introduction to Business Preparedness course is to introduce participants to the Fairfax County Business Disaster Resilience Guide to assist businesses in building resilience for disasters.

Introduction to Business Preparedness Link: <https://bit.ly/DEMS-Training>

Business Disaster Resilience Guide Link: [Business Disaster Resilience \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/business-disaster-resilience-guide)



## Building Safety Month

May is recognized as Building Safety Month! This campaign reinforces the need for the adoption of modern, regularly updated building codes, and helps individuals, families and businesses understand what it takes to create safe and sustainable structures. The 2024 campaign theme is "Mission Possible" and includes five special weekly themes:

- **Week 1: Understanding the Mission** - Includes an introduction to building safety, what Building Safety Month is, and how building safety affects us all.
- **Week 2: Preparing a Building Safety Plan** - Highlights available educational resources (water/fire, sustainability & resiliency/disaster preparedness), including downloadable brochures, for building safety tips and best practices at home and in your community.
- **Week 3: Learning from the Pros** - Shines a spotlight on building safety professionals, including what they do, how to work with them and how to become one yourself.
- **Week 4: Engaging Your Community** - Includes information on how to advocate for building safety in your community, including actionable tips on how to be a proponent of building safety and ways to get kids involved.
- **Week 5: Celebrating Success in Building Safety** - Highlighting individuals and communities who are making a difference in building safety (editorial spotlights), including sharing the current year's Building Safety Month celebrations and events.

Visit the International Code Council website for additional information about building safety and ways to get involved this May: <https://www.iccsafe.org/advocacy/building-safety-month/building-safety-month/>

## Older Americans Month

Each May, the Administration for Community Living leads Older Americans Month (OAM) nationwide. The theme for this year, “Powered by Connection,” is to emphasize the importance of relationships and social connections when it comes to overall health and well-being. A great way to celebrate Older Americans Month this May is to host or attend events that allow for people to get together for a common goal. This could be done by a multitude of ways that relate to emergency preparedness such as:

- Request an emergency preparedness presentation:  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/presentation-requests](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/presentation-requests)
- Leading a book club meeting on a historical weather event such as Hurricane Katrina
- Getting together with your neighborhood to develop a Neighborhood Disaster Plan. A template can be found here: [Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Guide](#)
- Comparing individual emergency plans with loved ones, taking resources from the Community Emergency Response Guide: [Community Emergency Response Guide | Emergency Management \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

Community is important every day, not only in May or when an emergency is taking place. Take time this month to reach out to loved ones.

## National Water Safety Month

Life is hectic, and distractions will happen, but in a matter of seconds, so can drowning. A phone call, a package being delivered to the door, cleaning up a spill, or a quick trip to the bathroom are all distractions that can lead a child gaining unexpected access to water. Drowning is the single leading cause of death for children ages 1-4, and sadly, 70% of drownings among young children happen during non-swim times. Drowning happens quickly and quietly, in as little as 2 inches of water within 30 seconds. There is no single way to prevent drowning, but you can educate yourself with the necessary prevention methods by learning the 5 Layers of Protection.

1. **Barriers and Alarms:** It's important to use four-sided fencing with self-closing, self-latching gates, pool safety covers, and alarm systems to help prevent children and unauthorized adults from accessing water unsupervised.
2. **Supervision:** Stay vigilant and aware of your surroundings with close, constant, and capable adult supervision from a designated water watcher or lifeguard anytime children are in or around water.
3. **Water Competency:** Every child and adult should be equipped with the skills to protect themselves in water by learning and enhancing their basic water safety skills to reduce the risk of drowning and aquatic-related injuries.
4. **Life Jackets:** When used appropriately, life jackets protect you when you are not expecting to be in the water, especially around open water. Ensure your life jackets are tested and approved by the United States Coast Guard (USCG).
5. **Emergency Preparation:** Knowing how to prepare for an emergency with CPR training with rescue breaths, and basic water rescue skills can make the difference between life and death. Have a phone available and ready to call 911.

## Volunteer with the Emergency Management Volunteer Corps

The Department of Emergency Management and Security's (DEMS) Volunteer Corps volunteers are trained in emergency preparedness and emergency management principles to help inform the public by staffing public events, leading presentations, and participating in trainings.

Interested in answering the call? Visit here for more info: [Volunteering in Emergency Preparedness | Emergency Management \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency-preparedness).



## Request an Emergency Preparedness Workshop

DEMS conducts workshops (virtual or in person) to prepare your networks for an emergency. Submit your request today: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/presentation-requests](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/presentation-requests).

- Introduction to Preparedness
- Until Help Arrives
- 5 Step Neighborhood Guide Workshop – Learn how to prepare for where you live!
- Business Disaster Resilience Workshop – Learn how to prepare your business!
- House of Worship Workshop – Learn how to prepare your house of worship.
- Youth Preparedness (Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, schools, etc.).
- Online Trainings - <https://bit.ly/DEMS-Training>
  - Introduction to Preparedness
  - Introduction to Business Preparedness

## Where Will You Be This Month?

While we attend several community events and conduct presentations on a regular basis, please stop by our table at the following community events:



- May 4, 2024 – Culmore Community Day
- May 18, 2024 – McLean Day
- May 19, 2024 – Braddock Bark

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