

JULY 2008

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ARE YOU READY FOR SEPTEMBER?

National Preparedness Month will be here before you know it.

This September, houses of worship throughout Fairfax County will be conducting the 2008 Ready-Pack-Go initiative.

The theme of “Ready-Pack-Go” is be “ready”—have a plan for you and your family; “pack”—pre-package your food, water, and supplies; and “go”—to

a safe location based on the type of disaster.

Many congregational coordinators have already attended sessions to discuss how to implement this preparedness awareness campaign along with how to help individuals and families make a plan and build an emergency kit. Organizer’s notes, planning items, and materials were distributed during those sessions.



If you were not able to attend one of these sessions, please contact Sandy Chisholm at 703.324.5185.

NORTHERN VOAD AND FCIA— RECIPIENTS OF NATIONAL RECOGNITION

During the National VOAD conference in Little Rock, Arkansas, the National VOAD announced that the recipients of its inaugural “Preparedness Non-Profit Partnership” award were the FCIA Interfaith Emergency Planning Steering Committee and the Northern Virginia VOAD.

This national recognition

was awarded to our two groups based on the mutually supportive and collaborative efforts to foster greater community readiness among the faith community. The “Ready-Pack-Go” effort, faith leaders briefing on the pandemic influenza, the emergency planning newsletter, and the overall initiative to build awareness were among the key elements

highlighted for presenting the award to our groups.

A special presentation was made during the June meeting of the Northern Virginia VOAD meeting.

Congratulations to everyone working on making our faith communities more resilient and ready to serve those in need.

NEW PROTOCOL FOR HANDS-ONLY CPR

The American Heart Association recently announced a major change in the way CPR is administered—the use of hands only.

Their review of research studies on CPR resulted in the AHA Science Advisory releasing a report

in the April 2008 edition of the medical journal *Circulation*.

The title of the report is, “Hands-Only (Compression-Only) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation: A Call to Action for Bystander Response to Adults Who Experi-

ence Out-of-Hospital Sudden Cardiac Arrest.” The report, along with other information on programs and training can be found on the American Heart Association web site—
www.americanheart.org.



LOCAL PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES

There is a lot of activity taking place regarding preparing our localities and region. We thought it would be helpful to highlight a few of these initiatives.

The 2nd National Capital Region Interagency Chaplains Conference was held in May at Fort Myer by Joint Force Headquarters—National Capital Region / U.S. Army Military District of Washington and the Public Safety Chaplains Committee of the Metropolitan Washington

Council of Governments. The conference theme was “Concentric Circles of Care: Who Can Do What, When, Where, Why, and How in Response to a Disaster in the NCR?” Speakers at the conference included chaplaincy directors from military, national guard, public safety as well as those involved with community based and faith based organizations.

The Fairfax County Community Liaison Office continues its efforts

to organize a Disaster Chaplain Corps in support of the family assistance centers. The assistance centers would be one of the ways that the County could respond to the needs of those impacted by a disaster.

An ad hoc group in Prince William County is planning for a preparedness effort for houses of worship in their County during September.

Under the umbrella of

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**NEW GUIDE AVAILABLE—
“RESOURCES & MORE”**

During May 2008, we assembled an initial list of preparedness materials, publications, organizations for your use. This free resource will be revised as individuals recommend materials, etc. to us. If you have not yet received “Resources & More—May 2008,” please contact the editor.

**NEED A PREVIOUS ISSUE OF
AN INTERFAITH EMERGENCY
PLANNING NEWSLETTER ?**

We maintain copies of our previous issues in a soft copy format. If you need a past issue, simply send us your email address.

USHER TRAINING—CHANGING EXPECTATIONS

In just about every house of worship there is someone responsible for greeting members and visitors to the worship service, escorting people to an open seat, handing out information, collecting donations, and generally doing whatever it takes to help make everyone's experience as pleasant as possible.

For many years, these types of roles have been performed by an "usher" or "usher team." Depending on the size of your congregation and its location, the role of usher has changed tremendously. Today the role of an usher often encompasses a wider range of duties and the usher training is becoming more and more vital to help create a safer and more prepared environment for your members, guests, and visitors.

Whether your house of worship uses ushers to cover the following duties or has separate vol-

unteers to perform these new tasks, training for those helping in and around a house of worship has become an essential objective.

For example, a few training topics can include:

- The safe collection of offerings and cash donations.

- How to handle medical emergencies including CPR, the use of an AED, first aid training, and how to coordinate with the clergy during such a situation.

- How to communicate with other ushers during worship services and other events with large attendance.

- Who and when should 911 be contacted in an emergency.

- Child safety support.

- Intruder protocols.

- Evacuation procedures to ensure everyone—infants, children, youth, and adults are quickly removed from the house of worship to a desig-

nated location outside and away from the building.

- Sheltering-in-place during severe weather or other conditions that call for people remaining in your facility for a period of time.

- Traffic control.

- Fire safety.

The key to your usher training is providing clear expectations, give periodic updates, and then practice.

Practice how to evacuate your sanctuary or your large assembly hall.

Practice CPR. Practice how to find a missing child. By practicing your plans, you enhance the opportunity for a calmer and quicker response by your ushers.

NEED A SPEAKER ???

As you organize your next event whether for your house of worship, judicatory function, or faith based group and need a guest speaker, contact our FCI/IA Interfaith Emergency Planning Steering Committee.



SIGN UP FOR FREE SERVICE—COMMUNITY EMERGENCY ALERT NETWORK (CEAN)

The Community Emergency Alert Network, or CEAN, is used to send emergency alerts, notifications and updates to your cell phone, pager, PDA and/or e-mail account. In the event of an emergency, you will be able to receive important alerts and updates.

To sign up for this service, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov and type in community emergency alerts.

IS YOUR FOOD BANK READY FOR A DISASTER?

Much attention has been given to preparing houses of worship for internal emergencies and external disasters. Recognizing that many houses of worship have some type of a food ministry, it would be wise to consider a preparedness

plan for this essential ministry/service. Depending on the type of food housed in your food bank, your planning should consider what would happen if the electric service is interrupted for hours to days. Another consideration is

how would you notify those that depend on your food bank should you need to relocate for a period of time. Developing a plan today will help ensure that you can deliver your promise of care in the midst of a disaster.

LOCAL PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

the Lutheran Disaster Relief, the Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area and the Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod conducted a series of 3 workshops in VA, DC, and MD. These “PRE-ACT” workshops covered issues of how to provide spiritual care, organizing a disaster plan, and connecting with a local community groups.

Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington has released its 25th edition of “Emergency Food, Shelter, and

Health Care Directory.” The pocket size booklet contains 164 pages of resources.

Although it was not a faith based event, the George Mason District Boy Scouts in collaboration with the Fairfax County CERT program conducted an overnight Camporee focused on disaster response. The event provided the Scouts with the opportunity to practice search/rescue, medical care, and leadership in the aftermath of an incident. It was an interesting time of teaching and mentoring young people to be

of aid to their communities. It was certainly an event that houses of worship could replicate for their youth groups.

The National Association of Church Business Administration, a membership organization comprised of staff and executive pastors, has recently published an article on the immediate benefits of preparedness for congregations, hosted a web cast on the pandemic influenza, and announced that a workshop will be held at their national conference in July.

Are you on our contact list? Would you like to discuss how you can become better connected to others in the faith community working on preparedness?

Contact:

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FCIA Interfaith Emergency Planning Newsletter

Our newsletter is released throughout the year to the broad faith community in Fairfax County.

This publication is compiled by Lewis Saylor, editor. To submit ideas, news items, and resources, contact him at:

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