

Emergency Preparedness

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Don't Drive or Walk Through Flood Waters

Turn Around. Don't Drown.

Flooding can occur in almost every part of the U.S. and during any month. In 2012, 39 percent of flood fatalities occurred from driving into flood water and 18 percent from walking into it.

If you're driving or walking and encounter flood water – **Turn around. Don't drown.**

It only takes 6 inches of water to knock over an adult and cause loss of control of a vehicle. A foot of water will float many vehicles and only 2 feet of rushing water will carry them away, including pickups and SUVs.

The depth of flood water is not always obvious. It can be especially hard to judge at night. The best option is to play it safe and turn around.

Find out what you can do to keep your family safe before, during and after floods. Visit www.ready.gov/floods.

Prevent Poisonings

Every day, 87 people in the U.S. die as a result of unintentional poisoning and more than 2,200 are treated in emergency rooms. Most of these poisonings occur in people's homes.

Get tips to prevent poisonings from CDC at



www.cdc.gov/homeandcommunitybased/safety/poisoning/preventiontips.htm. You can also visit the Poison Help Line at <http://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/what-can-you-do/poison-proof-your-home/index.html>.



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2012 SuperStar Awards

Multiple individuals and groups who volunteer or work on behalf of emergency preparedness and response in Virginia are being recognized with 2012 SuperStar Awards sponsored by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

A total of 46 nominations were submitted in 11 categories, including Most Outstanding Individual Volunteers from the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), Fire Corps, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and Volunteer Trainer. Additional award categories were Most Outstanding Event/Activity, Regional Exercise, Local Exercise, Collaborative Event and Innovative Training.

Among those honored from across the state were two Fairfax County volunteers – Rick Machado and Judy Howell. Machado was honored with the Most Outstanding Fire Corps Volunteer; Howell was one of nine Most Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers.

Most Outstanding Fire Corps Volunteer Rick Machado, Springfield Fire Corps

According to the award submission, Machado had just over 560 hours of operational and administrative participation with the Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department.

“He is always willing to help out with any need on any topic – whether it’s the canteen, ambulance, fundraising, website, etc. This is what public service is all about,” stated his nomination.

Machado obtained his EMT in 2008, is now a cleared ambulance driver and is the driving force behind a smaller version of the canteen that allows the volunteer department to get to calls quicker, requiring less training than the full canteen. He assisted with the department’s fundraising and single-handedly initiated the department’s involvement with Fire Corps. In addition, he led the redesign of the station’s website www.gsvfd.org.

Most Outstanding CERT Volunteer Judith M. Howell, Fairfax County

Judy Howell is the volunteer public information officer (PIO) for Fairfax County CERT, contributing 306 hours in 2012. Howell received her CERT training in 2007, when she immediately began volunteering for outreach events. Shortly thereafter, she was selected to be the outreach coordinator and eventually PIO.

She has conducted countless CERT events at local homeowners associations, community awareness events, business associations and local churches where she emphasizes the need for personal emergency preparedness and the importance of CERT training as part of that preparedness. Howell has been involved in outreach events at the Pentagon, the Department of Homeland Security and the State Department’s Crisis Action Team. She also is a member of the Fairfax County CERT steering committee.

A staunch supporter of the semi-annual field exercises, Howell provides a single point of contact for media outlets during CERT exercises.

For the complete list of award winners, visit www.vaemergency.gov/sites/default/files/2012SuperStarAwardWinners_0.pdf.



www.vaemergency.gov/News/readyvirginia/mobileapp



Fairfax County, Va., publication.

To request this information in an alternate format, call 571-350-1000, TTY 711.

Flood Insurance 101

Did you know standard homeowners insurance does not cover flooding? This is why it's critically important to have protection from the floods associated with hurricanes, snow melt, heavy rains and other conditions that frequently impact the United States. Learn the facts about flood insurance and what you can do to make sure you, your family and home are protected. Some basic tips include:

- There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance goes into effect, so don't delay.
- Flood insurance is available in most communities through insurance agents.
- Flood insurance is available for buildings in or out of an identified flood-prone area.

For more information on flood insurance, visit FloodSmart.gov.

Cybersecurity for Your Small Business

Is cybersecurity part of your small business Internet plan? Whether you're thinking of adopting cloud computing or just using email and maintaining a website, cybersecurity is an essential consideration.

Check out the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) website devoted to cybersecurity for small businesses, including top 10 tips to keep your business safe. Among the tips:

- Protect information, computers and networks from cyber attacks.
- Provide firewall security for your Internet connection.
- Create a mobile device action plan.
- Make backup copies of important business data and information.
- Control physical access to your computers and create user accounts for each employee.

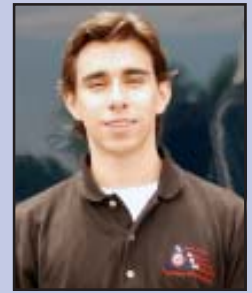
Read all the tips with details at www.fcc.gov/cyberfor-smallbiz.

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management is available to deliver emergency preparedness presentations to community organizations and homeowners associations. If interested, contact Marcelo Ferreira at 571-350-1013, TTY 711, or via email at marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Marcelo's Minute

Turn Around. Don't Drown

The NOAA National Weather Service reports that more deaths occur due to flooding than from any other severe weather-related hazard. Avoid flood hazards by following the mantra "Turn Around. Don't Drown."



Marcelo Ferreira

Six inches of fast-moving flood water can knock over an adult. As little as 12 inches of flowing water can carry away most vehicles, including SUVs.

Safety first – if you are unsure about the amount of water on a flooded road, **Turn Around. Don't Drown.**

FEMA recommends a few practices to keep you safe during a flood:

- Always plan ahead and know the risks before flooding happens.
- If flooding is expected or is occurring, get to higher ground **FAST!** Leave typical flood areas such as ditches, ravines, dips or low spots and canyons.
- **NEVER drive through flooded roadways.** Road beds may be washed out under flood waters. Turn Around Don't Drown.
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes, particularly during threatening conditions.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.
- Never cross any barriers that are put in place by local emergency officials.
- Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams. Turn Around. Don't Drown.

If you need additional information, contact me at 571-350-1013, TTY 711, or email marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Marcelo Ferreira, OEM community liaison, holds the certified emergency manager (CEM) credential from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM).

Free Mobile App Helps Virginia Residents Prepare for Emergencies

Virginians now can be “mobile ready” for disasters with a new app from Ready Virginia. The app gives those who use smartphones and tablets a convenient way to prepare for disasters and stay informed during emergencies with the latest information.

The Ready Virginia app for iPhone and Android mobile devices provides emergency planning and preparedness guidance along with these important features:

- Location-specific weather watches and warnings as well as flood information issued by the National Weather Service.
- Disaster news from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.
- A customizable family emergency plan that can be easily shared.
- Maps of open American Red Cross shelters, hurricane evacuation routes, hurricane storm surge zones and stream gauges.
- A checklist for gathering emergency supplies.
- Contact information for local emergency managers.
- Links to register for local emergency alerts.

The Ready Virginia app is available for download on the App Store and on Google Play.

The app was developed by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management in response to the rapid



increase in use of mobile phones and tablets by residents seeking information during last year's severe derecho windstorm and Hurricane Sandy.

In addition to the app, VDEM launched a mobile version of its website at m.vaemergency.gov. The mobile site contains all the information available on VDEM's regular website with an easier navigation for smart phones and tablets.

Debunking Tornado Myths

Several myths about the nature of tornadoes have long existed and serve as a hindrance to preparedness. FEMA is asking for residents help to dispel these common myths.

Myth: Areas near rivers, lakes and mountains are safe from tornadoes.

Fact: No terrain is safe from tornadoes. Example, a tornado swept through Yellowstone National Park leaving a path of destruction up and down a 10,000 foot mountain.

Myth: The low pressure with a tornado causes buildings to “explode” as the tornado passes overhead.

Fact: Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause most structural damage.

Myth: Windows should be opened before a tornado approaches to equalize pressure and minimize damage.

Fact: Opening windows allows damaging winds to enter a structure. Leave windows alone; instead, immediately go to a basement, interior room or bathroom without windows.



Health and Safety

A Fairfax County Podcast

Emergency preparedness news and information every two weeks – in audio form. Listen to the “Health and Safety” Podcast; subscribe in iTunes at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/fairfax-county-health-safety/id287751962>.

Save the Dates – June 29-30

Fairfax County CERT will be hosting the National Capital Region CERT-CON 2013, Saturday and Sunday, June 29-30, at the Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus.

The conference will feature lectures and discussions on Saturday and a functional field exercise on Sunday. The lineup of speakers for the weekend will consist of practicing professionals in the fields of emergency management, public health preparedness, search and rescue, fire suppression and more. The speakers hail from a variety of organizations and agencies, including FEMA, Fairfax Fire and Rescue Department, Virginia Task Force 1, etc.

The conference will include a keynote address given by a subject matter expert in the field of emergency management.

All CERT members from across the Washington metropolitan area will be invited to participate, with the goals of sharing best practices and review and enhance their skills.

This program is hosted by Fairfax County Fire and Rescue in conjunction with the Northern Virginia Community College Office of Emergency Management and Planning, Georgetown CERT and Montgomery County CERT.

More information about the event will follow during the next few weeks.



Office of Emergency Management
4890 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030
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The Fairfax County Citizen Corps

harnesses the power of individuals through education, training and volunteer service to make communities



safe, stronger and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues and disasters of all kinds. There are five core programs:

Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)



Provides support for the police department by incorporating volunteers so that law enforcement professionals have more time for frontline duty. VIPS includes auxiliary police officers, administrative volunteers, and the Citizen's Police Academy. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/getinvolved/120711volunteers.htm

Neighborhood Watch



Brings private citizens and law enforcement together to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods. It brings to life the simple concept of neighbors watching out for neighbors. Volunteers may join an existing group or establish one in their neighborhood. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/nw.htm

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)



The Medical Reserve Corps is composed of medical and non-medical volunteers of the Fairfax County Health Department that could support the Health Department if called upon to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural and man-made disasters and emergencies. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/MRC

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)



Trains people in neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools in basic disaster response skills, such as fire suppression and search and rescue, and helps them take a more active role in emergency preparedness. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/cert.htm

Fire Corps



Volunteers are trained to perform non-operational administrative duties at the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Headquarters and at volunteer fire stations. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/firecorps.htm

Purchasing - and Maintaining - Flood Insurance Is a Great Investment Anytime

Flooding strikes countless unprepared Americans each year. Unlike fire, wind, hail or most other perils, flood damage is not covered by a homeowner’s policy. An uninsured flood loss can undo a lifetime’s worth of work and create a mountain of bills. Fortunately, a National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policy provides defense against such losses and can ensure that a flood doesn’t bring financial ruin.

Flooding can happen at any time and in nearly any location. While some areas may be more likely to flood – especially coastal or riverine areas – history shows that almost no place is safe from flooding. Flooding can have many causes: a quick heavy rainfall or rapid snowmelt can cause flash flooding; a blocked culvert or storm sewer drain can create flooding in a city neighborhood; or prolonged wet weather can swell streams and rivers. Even dry conditions can pose a threat, because little rainfall in wildfire burn areas or drought-stricken regions can create flash flooding when soils can’t absorb even a little water.

“Flooding can, and does happen in any area, that’s why I encourage everyone to consider getting flood insurance” said FEMA Region III Administrator MaryAnn Tierney. “Almost 20 percent of NFIP claims happen outside of the high-risk areas, so make sure flooding doesn’t wipe you out and insure yourself.”

Flood insurance is easy to get, you just have to live in a participating community (which might be a county or other jurisdiction for those living in unincorporated areas). That’s right; you don’t need to live in a floodplain to purchase a policy. In fact, if you live outside a floodplain you may be eligible for a preferred risk policy that has a much lower premium than for a



Fairfax County Fire and Rescue personnel during Tropical Storm Lee in 2011.


policy in a higher flood risk area. In most cases you can purchase an NFIP policy with the insurance agent you already deal with for other insurance needs. When that isn’t possible, the NFIP can put you in touch with another agent that can get you a flood insurance policy. You can find out if your community participates in the NFIP by reviewing the Community Status Book, available at fema.gov/cis/nation.

One key difference of an NFIP policy from another insurance policy is the 30-day waiting period prior to the policy going into effect. A policy should be viewed as protection against a continuing threat rather than a hedge against a singular event such as anticipated spring flooding or flooding following a wildfire.

The average cost of flood insurance is about \$650 a year – less than \$2 a day for financial protection from what could be devastating effects of a flood to a home or business. By buying a policy now, or keeping your existing policy, you have peace of mind.

As with any insurance, be sure to talk with your agent about the specifics of your policy – how much coverage you need, coverage of contents as well as structure and any other questions you might have.

Find out more about your risk and flood insurance at www.floodsmart.gov. To purchase flood insurance or find an agent, call 1-800-427-2419.



Fairfax County and Northern Virginia residents can use the family and business emergency planners at www.ReadyNOVA.org.



Virginia's Hurricane Preparedness

Sales Tax Holiday – May 25-31

It's smart to get ready for hurricane and flash flooding season, which arrives June 1. And it's smart to save money.

You can do both by shopping for such products as batteries, food storage containers, generators, first-aid kits, bottled water, radios and more between May 25-31. When you do, you won't pay sales tax on many useful products that cost up to \$60 or on generators costing \$1,000 or less. That's a savings of 5 percent.

A complete list of exempt items is available at www.tax.virginia.gov/salestaxholiday.

Purchasing supplies is important, but it's critical to make a family emergency plan. Protect your family now by making a plan. It's free, it's simple and it will make a big difference.

Read more about hurricanes at www.vaemergency.gov.



www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov

Your source for regional news and information

Before the Storm ... Save Money!

Before the tropical storms arrive, you can get ready and save money, too. Shop during **Virginia's Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday, May 25-31**, and you won't pay sales tax on many supplies for protecting your home and business.

Many useful items qualify. Shop for items on this list that have a price of \$60 or less:

- Artificial ice, blue ice, ice packs, reusable ice.
- Batteries, excluding car or boat batteries.
- Portable self-powered light sources, including flashlights and lanterns and glow sticks.
- First-aid kits.
- Cellphone chargers.
- Weather Band radios and NOAA Weather Radios.
- Portable self-powered radios, including radios with electrical power capability.
- Bottled water of any size, including flavored and carbonated.
- Two-way radios.
- Manual can openers.
- Tarps, plastic sheeting, plastic drop cloths.
- Bungee cords and rope.
- Ground anchor systems or tie-down kits.
- Ratchet straps.
- Duct tape.
- Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, fire extinguishers.
- Empty gas, propane or diesel fuel tanks or containers.
- Water storage containers such as buckets, barrels, canteens, coolers.



Shop for items on this list that have a sales price of \$1,000 or less:

- Portable generators and generator power cords.
- Inverters and inverter power cables.

Retail outlets will have information about the tax holiday. For more, go to www.tax.virginia.gov/site.cfm?alias=STHoliday.

For information about getting ready for hurricane and flooding season in Virginia, visit www.ReadyVirginia.gov and www.ListoVirginia.gov.

Barbeque Grill Fire Season Safety

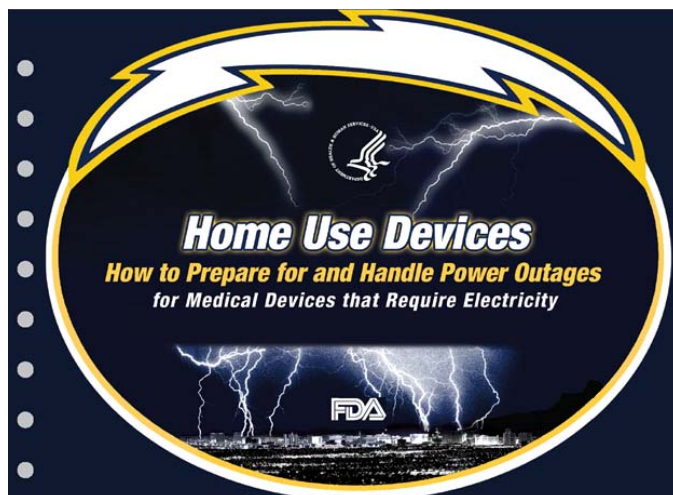
As the grilling or barbeque season arrives, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department reminds residents that grill fires cause an estimated average of 10 deaths, 100 injuries and \$37 million in property loss each year nationwide, according to the U.S. Fire Administration.

Almost half (49 percent) of grill fires on residential properties occur from 5 to 8 p.m. Thirty-two percent of all grill fires occur in the months of May, June, July and August, and the leading category of equipment power source is gas fuels (79 percent). Heat from powered equipment is the leading heat source category from grill fires on residential properties.

The leading category of factors contributing to ignition is mechanical failure, malfunction (39 percent). Within this category, leaks or breaks of containers or pipes account for approximately 23 percent of all grill fires on residential properties. Grills, hibachis and barbeques on residential properties continue to be a high fire risk and, on average, result in more injuries and slightly higher dollar losses when compared to all other fires. It is crucial that everyone diligently practice fire safety when cooking or grilling outside.

- Grills should be placed at least 15 feet from any home, building, or combustibles to ensure adequate air circulation.
- Charcoal must be kept dry. Wet charcoal can spontaneously ignite. Spare propane bottles should be stored outside away from the home. A backyard shed is a good storage place.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill. Grills continue to give off heat long after cooking has stopped.
- Never place hot ashes in paper or plastic bags or containers. Only use metal containers for hot ashes.
- Use Underwriters Laboratories (UL) approved electrical starters in place of lighter fluid.
- Never use gas or charcoal fueled grills on apartment or condominium balconies, doing so is against the law. However, electric grills listed by a recognized testing authority may be used on balconies.

Learn more from the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr.



Home Use Devices

If you are a home medical device user, it is important that your device works during a power outage and that you have a plan to ensure you know what to do.

The booklet, “Home Use Devices: How to Prepare and Handle Power Outages for Medical Devices that Require Electricity,” will help you create an established plan to obtain and organize your medical device information, take necessary actions so that you can continue to use your device, have the necessary supplies for the operation of your device and know where to go or what to do during a power outage.

If you use more than one medical device, complete a booklet for each device and ask your health care professional to help you.

The booklet, from the Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities (Texas), can be found online at www.fda.gov/downloads/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/HomeHealthandConsumer/UCM252812.pdf.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is seeking nominations for participants in the agency’s Youth Preparedness Council (YPC). Anyone between the ages of 12 and 17, who is engaged in individual and community preparedness, is encouraged to apply or be nominated. Applications must be received no later than 11:59 E.D.T. on April 19. Members will be selected based on vacancies and announced in May. For more information visit www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness.