

Emergency Preparedness

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Extreme Heat; Beat the Heat

Temperatures are hot across the National Capital Region and many areas have – and may again this summer – feel the heat of 100 degrees or more.

With the addition of humidity, extreme heat is a problem. During extreme heat, it is important to stay cool.

Extreme heat causes more deaths than hurricanes, tornados, floods and earthquakes combined. Heat related illnesses occur when the body is not able to compensate and properly cool itself.

The great news is extreme heat is preventable by following a few tips:

- Listen to local weather forecasts and stay aware of upcoming temperatures.
- Weather strip doors and windows to keep cool air in.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sunshine with drapes, shades or awnings.
- Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Stay indoors. If you do not have air conditioning, visit a cooling

station such as your local library or shopping mall.

- Wear lightweight and light-colored clothing with sunscreen to reduce exposure to the sun.
- Do not leave children or pets in

the car unattended at any time.

- Pace yourself in your outside activities. Reschedule if needed.

For more information on beating the heat visit www.ready.gov/heat.



heat.

Reprinted from FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief, July 25.

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Second Annual Great Southeast ShakeOut Earthquake Drill Coming in October

This fall, Virginia will participate again in the Great Southeast ShakeOut, an event designed to practice earthquake safety steps. Several states across the Southeast U.S. will participate on Thursday, Oct. 17, at 10:17 a.m. to “drop, cover, and hold on,” the catch phrase for staying safe through an earthquake.



Last year’s drill was the first extensive campaign in Virginia to promote earthquake safety awareness. The 2011 earthquake in

Mineral, Va. has increased awareness for Virginians in the heightened importance of preparing for the natural disaster.

To register your organization or group, go to www.shakeout.org/southeast.

To “drop, cover, and hold on,” “drop” to the ground where you are without attempting to run down stairs or go outside. “Cover” under a sturdy table or desk to protect your head and neck, the body’s most vulnerable areas during an earthquake. After dropping and taking cover, “hold on” until the shaking has stopped before safely evacuating.

The Great Southeast ShakeOut is part of an international campaign that began in California to promote earthquake safety.

Emergency Actions

<p>Get information Subscribe to emergency alert systems in your community. NOAA Weather Radios provide weather warnings directly from the National Weather Service. Listen to local TV and radio stations for information and instructions. Follow local emergency response agencies and media on social media.</p>	<p>Get help Police: Call 9-1-1 or _____ Fire Dept.: Call 9-1-1 or _____ Ambulance: Call 9-1-1 or _____ Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222 Other local numbers: _____</p>
<p>Tornado</p> <p> Listen to local media and NOAA Weather Radio for possible warnings. Be ready to take cover. Go to the lowest level of your building when a tornado warning is issued. Get in a closet, hallway or interior room without windows. Choose an interior hallway away from outside walls if you don't have time to go to the lowest floor or if you are in a shopping mall or large open building such as a gym. Stay in your safe place until the tornado warning expires.</p>	<p>Fire</p> <p> Activate fire alarms if they are nearby. Leave immediately and calmly. Test doors before opening. If a door is cool, open it slowly and leave. If it is hot, do not open it. Use a window or other exit to escape. Do not use elevators. Crawl low under any smoke to your exit. Stay out once you get out. Do not reenter.</p>
<p>Earthquake</p> <p> Drop. Immediately drop to the ground where you are. Shaking may be so violent that you can't run or crawl. Cover. Get under something heavy, such as a desk or table, away from large windows and mirrors. Cover your face and head with your arms. Hold on. Stay where you are, and hold on to something sturdy until the shaking stops. Do not run outside. You are much more likely to be injured by falling or flying objects than to die in a collapsed building.</p>	<p>Active Shooter</p> <p> Evacuate. Escape quickly and quietly. Leave your belongings. Call 9-1-1 when safe. Hide. If you can't safely escape, hide. Turn off lights, lock the door, hide behind a large item, silence cell phones, stay quiet. Call 9-1-1 when it is safe. If you can't talk, leave the line open so dispatcher can hear what's happening. Take action. As an absolute last resort, act aggressively. Throw items, improvise weapons, yell. Commit to your actions. Follow police instructions.</p>
<p>EXIT</p> <p></p>	
<p>ATTACH YOUR EVACUATION MAP</p>	

This poster from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management is available at www.vaemergency.gov/sites/default/files/EmergencyActionsFinal.pdf.



Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN)
Get emergency alerts by email, as well as by text or pager. Sign up at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean.
Businesses can also register up to five people in their organizations – such as security officers – who can receive alerts and then share that information with their workforce.

Lightning Strikes – Stay Safe

Thunderstorms are dangerous due to lightning. Although lightning fatalities have decreased over the past 30 years, lightning continues to be one of the top three storm-related killers in the United States.

Most lightning deaths and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors in the summer months in the afternoon and evening. Although most lightning victims survive, people struck by lightning often report a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms.

- Help reduce your risks. Below are a few tips to start:
- Postpone outdoor activities when a storm is forecast.
- Unplug electronic equipment before the storms begins.
- Remember the 30/30 Lightning Safety Rule: The first “30” represents 30 seconds. If the time between when you see the flash and hear the thunder is 30 seconds or less, the lightning is close enough to hit you.
- During a storm, use your NOAA Weather Radio for updates from local officials.
- Avoid contact with any metal – tractors, motorcycles, bicycles, and golf clubs.
- Avoid contact with plumbing. Do not wash your hands, take a shower, wash dishes or do laundry. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.

For more tips and helpful information, visit www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning.

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management is available to deliver emergency preparedness presentations to community organizations and homeowners associations. If interested, contact OEM at 571-350-1000, TTY 711, or via email at oem@fairfaxcounty.gov.

CapitalRegionUpdates.Gov



News & Info - Around the Region

Marcelo's Minute

Thanks Marcelo!

Marcelo Ferreira has begun a new journey. He has taken a new position in Boulder, Co.



Marcelo Ferreira

“Marcelo was OEM’s community liaison/outreach coordinator and had contact with many of our partners,” said OEM Coordinator Dave McKernan. “We will miss him but wish him the best of luck in his new job and know that the residents of Boulder will be well served.”

Ferreira worked hard to get the message out to the community about preparedness, as well as served as a situation unit leader in the county’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) when it was activated. He worked with faith-based groups, businesses, home owners associations, nonprofits and others to increase awareness of the importance of being prepared.

OEM will be advertising soon for his position so stay tuned to the county job listings if you are interested in this exciting position.

4th Fairfax County Community Chaplain Class

Applications Now Being Accepted

Applications are now being accepted for the 4th Fairfax County Community Chaplain Corps (FCCC Corps) class, which will begin training in January 2014. An “Inquirer’s Class” will be held on Monday, Sept. 30, from 2-4 p.m. in Conference Rooms 9/10 of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Those interested in attending should RSVP no later than Sept. 25.

Applications for the training must be received by Oct. 4, however earlier submissions are greatly appreciated. Learn more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/cic/emergency.htm#CommunityChaplainProgram. You may also call 703-324-3453 or email NCSInterfaith@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Creating a Family Communications Plan Can Help You Weather a Disaster

As we learned during Superstorm Sandy, a natural disaster can disrupt communications and leave people literally in the dark and alone.

As the historic storm swept across the region last October, power lines came down, traffic signals stopped working, and cable, Internet and cellphone communication networks were blown out of action.

Suddenly, thousands of people were on their own and “off the grid,” unable to communicate with friends and loved ones for days, and in some cases, weeks.

When a disaster of the magnitude of Superstorm Sandy occurs, it’s a scary situation for everyone, but particularly for children, the elderly and those with special needs.

And while we can’t predict the whims of Mother Nature, with a little planning we can be better prepared to handle the challenges such an event presents.

Among the most important first steps to take is to develop a family communications plan that every member of the family can rely on should another disaster occur.


Here are a few tips on reducing the worry and stress that naturally arises when you’re unable to get in touch with those you love:

- Complete a contact form for each member of your family that includes name, address, and home, work and cell numbers for family members. Include the name of a neighbor or relative who is willing to respond in an emergency.
- Agree on a meeting place in your neighborhood as well as out of town where family members can gather should you be unable to go home.
- Identify a family member or friend who lives out-of-state who can act as a central contact for household members to notify that they are safe. It may be easier to

- make an out-of-town call than to get a local connection.
- Be sure that every member of your family knows the phone number of that contact person, has a cellphone, or carries change or a prepaid phone card to be used in an emergency.
- Family members can program an “ICE” (In Case of Emergency) number in their phone. If you or a family member is injured, emergency personnel can use that number to contact your family or friends. Be sure to alert the person you choose that you are designating him or her as your emergency contact.
- Teach family members how to use text messaging (also known as SMS or Short Message Service). Text communications can often get through when phone calls fail.
- Subscribe to alert services. Many communities relay emergency messages to residents via phone calls, emails and text alerts. Check with your local emergency management office to sign up for the service.
- Once you have created your family communications plan, practice your plan once or twice a year. That way, should an actual disaster happen, you’ll be comfortable with the routine and ready to act.
- Update the information when necessary.

For downloadable emergency contact cards and more information on developing a Family Communications Plan, visit www.ready.gov/family-communications. ReadyNoVa.org is another valuable resource for residents to create a family or business emergency plan

Reprinted from FEMA (www.fema.gov)



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



Office of Emergency Management
4890 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030
571-350-1000, TTY 711



Fairfax County, Va., publication.

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

Three CERT Classes this Fall

When emergencies happen, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with non-emergency projects to improve the preparedness and safety of the community.

Fairfax County is offering three CERT basic training classes this fall. Two identical classes will be conducted at the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Academy (4600 West Ox Road, Fairfax). The first class is held on Mondays, beginning Sept. 9, and the second on Wednesdays, beginning Sept. 11. Each class will have eight sessions, 7-10 p.m. There is a good mix of classroom instruction with practice drills and exercises to enhance skill learning.

A third CERT class will be conducted at the Great Springfield Volunteer Fire Station 22 (7011 Backlick Road, Springfield) beginning on Wednesday, Sept. 11. This class also has eight sessions, 7-9:30 p.m.

CERT basic training does not require any special physical strength or agility. Safety and preparedness is stressed throughout the course of instruction. This training is free and CERT furnishes personal protective equipment for the training that the students retain upon completion of the class. People who go through CERT training have a better understanding of the potential threats to their home, workplace and community and can take the right steps to lessen the effects of these hazards on themselves, their homes or workplace.

You can enroll in any of these three classes by going to www.fairfaxcert.com. Register as a new volunteer and when confirmed you can login and register for CERT class 73, 74 or 75.

For further information contact the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Volunteer Coordinator's Office, 703-246-3926, TTY 711. You can also follow the Fairfax County CERT volunteers blog (<http://fairfaxcountycert.blogspot.com>) for news and updates on CERT activities. CERT basic training can be conducted anywhere in the community for civic or church groups, businesses or neighborhood associations. Call the CERT volunteer training coordinator at 703-887-1421, TTY 711, for the requirements.

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



Protecting a home from Storms and Flooding Begins on the Inside

To protect a home from damage from a flood or a hurricane takes more than just making the outside stronger. The inside of the house can be better protected from wind and water with a little planning and preparation. Several things can be done to minimize damage inside a structure. Here are some ideas.

Floors

- Consider using one or more area rugs or carpet remnants rather than wall-to-wall carpet; smaller pieces can be rolled up and stored on an upper floor in a heavy rain event.
- Completely dry subflooring before laying new flooring.
- Do not use laminate flooring on top of concrete – especially in a basement – where the floor could retain moisture or get wet.

Drains

- Install a sewer backflow valve to prevent sewage from backing up into the house.
- Install a sump pump or pumps in the basement floor to help keep groundwater from entering a structure. Sump pumps are used to remove water from basements and other low areas. Consider choosing a model with a battery backup so that it continues to work if the power goes out.

Electrical System

- Raise wiring and electrical components – panel boxes, switches, outlets – at least 1 foot above the base flood

2014 Statewide Tornado Drill Set for March 11

Virginia's annual tornado drill, sponsored by the National Weather Service and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, will take place on Tuesday, March 11, at 9:45 a.m. Local emergency managers, local and state agencies, the media and school systems across Virginia will be notified when registration is open. The date was selected by the Virginia Department of Education with the National Weather Service and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Last year's tornado drill included over 1 million registered participants.

- elevation. Homeowners who are not in a designated floodplain, should consider raising these components an extra 1 foot above the level required by building codes.
- Use wire rated for underground use if it has to run into areas that could get wet.
- Ensure that all junctions are in approved junction boxes.
- Change all outlets to ground fault interrupters (GFI).
- Raise electric baseboard heaters above the base flood elevation.
- Hire a licensed electrician for all wiring work and be sure the work is properly permitted and approved by the local building department.

For questions about a home's or building's base flood elevation contact the local building or floodplain management department.

Appliances

- Elevate appliances – water heaters, furnaces, washers and dryers.
- When possible, move them from a basement or lower level to an upper floor. Otherwise, relocate appliances on a masonry or pressure-treated lumber base that's at least 1 foot above the base flood elevation (or at least 6 inches tall if there is no base flood elevation).
- Make sure washers/dryers will not vibrate off the platform during use.
- Hire a licensed contractor when plumbing or electrical changes are needed.

Interior Walls

- Wash and disinfect the studs and sills if the drywall and insulation have been removed. Give the studs and sills plenty of time to dry before hanging new drywall. Use a moisture meter to be doubly sure.
- Cut drywall so that it is one-half to 1 inch off the floor, especially in basements.
- Concrete floors commonly absorb ground moisture – especially in winter months. That moisture can wick up the wallboard if it's touching the floor, allowing mold to grow out-of-sight within the walls. (Hide the gap with wood or rubberized floor trim.)

Reprinted from FEMA (www.fema.gov)

Prepping for Brownouts and Blackouts

The high demands for electricity to keep cool are increasing the risk of areas experiencing blackouts or brownouts.

Brownouts typically occur during heat waves due to heavy equipment coming online, short circuits, or electrical companies decreasing voltage in order to meet the needs of peak time. Blackouts occur when it is a complete power outage and can last hours to weeks.

It's important that you take action now and prepare for the next time service interruptions occur in your area. Because the length of a power outage can vary from a few hours to several days, you need to plan to get by without utilities for at least three days.

Use FEMA's "Going Off Grid: Utility Outages" online at http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/assets/14_GoingOffGrid.pdf activity module to find simple steps to get prepared for an outage. Some utility outage checklist items include:

- Document important phone numbers and vital power company information.
- Locate and label your utility shutoffs.
- Follow energy conservation measures to keep the use of electricity as low as possible, which can help power companies avoid imposing rolling blackouts.
- Have your disaster kit ready and stocked.

The "Going Off Grid: Utility Outages" activity module is part of FEMA's "Preparedness Activities for Communities Everywhere" tools (<http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/CP0101150.htm>), which educate individuals about relatively easy steps to take to become prepared for all types of hazards. For additional tips on blackouts visit www.ready.gov/blackouts.



GOING OFF GRID: UTILITY OUTAGES

OUTAGE CHECKLIST: HANDOUT FEMA

Important Phone Numbers

- Electric company phone number/Web site: _____
- Natural gas company phone number/Web site: _____
- Water company phone number/Web site: _____
- Plumbing company phone number/Web site: _____
- Oil/gas heat service phone number/Web site: _____
- Telephone company phone number/Web site: _____
- For more information about outages and public shelters, listen to or contact: _____

If you use medical equipment that requires electricity to operate, register with your power company and health care provider to learn about alternatives.

Assess Your Neighborhood

- If there is a utility outage, who may need extra support because of their functional or medical needs?
- Does anyone in the neighborhood have special skills who can help others?

Electricity Outages

- Locate and label utility shutoff (see diagram at the end of this handout).
- Post instructions next to fuse box or circuit breaker.
- Are there enough flashlights on hand (at least one for each person in the house)? Are the batteries working? (Tip: Store batteries in the refrigerator for longer life.)
- Do not use candles. They are a fire hazard.
- Keep on hand ready-to-eat meals that don't require cooking or cooling.

CSU Forecasters Predict Three Major Hurricanes in Atlantic

Meteorologists at Colorado State University made a slight modification to their forecast for the rest of the 2013 Atlantic Basin hurricane season, but they still think three major hurricanes are likely to form before the season ends.

CSU forecasters Phil Klotzbach and William Gray had predicted four major hurricanes in the seasonal forecast they released in June. The updated forecast, released Aug. 2, predicted that 18 named storms will form before the hurricane season ends Nov. 30. That was the same number posted in the June forecast.

<http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2013/08/03/csu-forecasters-still-think-3-major-hurricanes-will-form-in-atlantic-this-summer/>



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It Doesn't Cost a Lot to Be Prepared

September Is National Preparedness Month

By Laura Southard

It's no secret that disasters, both natural and man-made, seem to be occurring frequently in the U.S. September is National Preparedness Month and the perfect time to get ready for whatever may come, including tropical storms. And being prepared doesn't have to cost a lot.

- **Make a plan.** This may be the single most important thing you can do, and it's free. Make sure everyone in your family understands where to go and what to do in case of an emergency. Update your contact information and post it in visible places in your home and workplace. For help, use the free emergency plan worksheet at www.ReadyVirginia.gov or get the Ready Virginia app from the App Store and Google Play.
- **Set aside emergency supplies.** Don't wait for a storm. Buy preparedness items throughout the year instead of all at once. Shop at sales and used goods stores. Choose the essentials that fit your needs and budget. If you don't have emergency supplies, September is a good time to get started. Get a list at www.ReadyVirginia.gov.
- **Request a gift.** We all get things we don't need. Suggest preparedness supplies as gifts from friends and family.
- **Store water.** You don't have to buy expensive bottled water. Just make sure your water containers are disinfected and airtight. Have at least a three-day supply of water on hand – that's one gallon per person per day.
- **Check your policy.** Take a few minutes to review your insurance policy during National Preparedness Month. Get with your agent to make any necessary changes. Consider adding flood insurance because most policies don't include it. Renters, you can get flood insurance, too. When a disaster strikes, you want to be sure that your coverage will get you back on your feet.

Encourage your loved ones to get ready for emergencies during National Preparedness Month. If you would like to join a national community of families and organizations that are preparing for emergencies, visit www.Ready.gov and click on the "Pledge to Prepare" banner.

Laura L. Southard is public outreach coordinator with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.



Make a difference for yourself, your community and our nation. Do one of the following:

- Learn your risks and responses**
- Make a family communications plan**
- Build an emergency supply kit**
- Get involved in preparedness in your community**

Register at: www.ready.gov/pledge



FEMA



citizen corps
UNITING COMMUNITIES. PREPARING THE NATION.



FEMA Mass Casualty Training

Emergency managers and administration in schools, higher education and religious establishments may receive online training to be prepared for mass casualty events. Available on FEMA's training website, the course is designed to help develop planning and response procedures to possible threats. The three-hour course offers 0.3 continuing education units (CEUs) and a course certification upon completion of the exam. To register for the course, go to <http://go.usa.gov/jxhG>.