

# Emergency Preparedness

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March 2014

## Community Collaboration Summit for Disaster Resiliency

It's time to register for the Fairfax County Community Collaboration Summit for Disaster Resiliency on Tuesday, March 25, 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., at Mount Olive Baptist Church, 6600 Old Centreville Road, Centreville.



Faith- and community-based organizations, disaster volunteer groups, residential management groups, civic associations and representatives from private, public and nonprofit sectors involved in disaster recovery should attend. Register online at <https://2014summit.eventbrite.com>.

For more info, contact Tracy Friend at 703-246-3553, TTY 711, or Sandy Chisholm at 703-324-5185, TTY 711. The summit is sponsored by Volunteer Fairfax, Fairfax County's Neighborhood and Community Services and Faith Communities in Action.

## Be a Force of Nature

*National Severe Weather Preparedness Week, March 2-8*

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have joined together in designating March 2-8, as National Severe Weather Preparedness Week.

The theme, "Be A Force of Nature," is an effort to motivate individuals and communities to take actions to prepare in the event of a weather disaster and to share preparedness steps with others. These actions can save lives – at home, in schools and in the workplace before tornadoes, hurricanes and other weather strikes.

Each year people in this country are killed or seriously injured by  
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Fairfax County  
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Management



## Statewide Tornado Drill, March 11

**M**ore than 391,000 Virginians have already registered to participate in the Statewide Tornado Drill, March 11 at 9:45 a.m. Have you signed up yet?

To start the tornado drill, at 9:45 a.m. Tuesday, March 11, the National Weather Service will send a test tornado warning that will trigger a tone alert and broadcast message on NOAA Weather Radio.

The message will be picked up by television and radio broadcasts, simulating what listeners will hear during an actual tornado warning.

When the test tornado warning is sounded, you should move as quickly as possible to a safe area in a sturdy building. Safe areas are basements and interior rooms on the lowest level of a building such as bathrooms, closets or hallways.



Dean Sherick sharing preparedness info in the expo area of Mount Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland's 27th Annual Town Hall Meeting at Mount Vernon High School on Feb. 1. Submitted Photo.

**1.**  **Statewide Tornado Drill**  
**March 11, 2014**  
**9:45 a.m.**  


**Listen**  
to local media & NOAA  
weather radios for warnings

**2.**  **3.** 

**Take Cover** **Stay**  
in the center of the lowest level, away from windows in your safe place until the warning has expired

When choosing a safe area, stay away from windows. Once in the safe area, you should crouch down or sit on the floor facing down and cover your head with hands.

With at least three tornadoes in Virginia in January alone, there's no better time to practice tornado safety.

Register today at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014TornadoDrill>.

*In case of widespread inclement weather on the day of the drill, it will be rescheduled for Thursday, March 13.*



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Fairfax County, Va., publication.

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

## Force of Nature

*continued from Page 1*

all types of extreme weather, despite advanced warning. Because we live in an area prone to tornadoes, flash floods, severe thunderstorms, snow and more, we are reminded that this weather can strike anywhere at any time. Knowing your risk of severe weather, taking action and being an example are just a few steps you can take to be better prepared to save your life and assist in saving the lives of others.

### Know Your Risk

The first step to becoming weather-ready is to understand the type of hazardous weather that can affect where you live and work, and how the weather could impact you and your family. Check the weather forecast regularly, obtain a NOAA Weather Radio and sign up for the Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN) at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean). Severe weather comes in many forms and your plan should include all types of local hazards.

### Take Action

Before storms strike, develop a family communication plan and create an emergency supplies kit. Make sure that you can receive emergency messages.

### Be an Example

Share your preparedness story with your friends and family on Facebook and Twitter. Letting others know that you're prepared will prompt them to prepare as well. Studies show that many people use social media in the event of a disaster to let relatives and friends know they are safe. This is an important trend because people are most likely to take preparedness steps if they observe the preparations taken by others. Social media provides the perfect platform to model preparedness actions for others.



Learn more about the games at [www.fairfax2015.com](http://www.fairfax2015.com)



Being weather-ready is a collective effort. It takes the whole community to effectively prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate against damages caused by tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and other severe weather.

The county's Office of Emergency Management is proud to support the goals of National Severe Weather Preparedness Week. By preparing our communities, we are able to build a weather-ready nation – one that is resilient in the face of extreme weather.

Learn more at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) and [www.ready.gov/severe-weather](http://www.ready.gov/severe-weather) or the Spanish-language website [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov).

Subscribe to the Fairfax County Emergency Information Blog at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog) and follow the National Weather Service @nws and FEMA @readygov on Twitter.

# Off The Grid: When the Power Goes Out

A winter storm has caused a power outage in your home. Now what do you do?

Since the length of the 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” ([http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/assets/14\\_GoingOffGrid.pdf](http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/assets/14_GoingOffGrid.pdf)), a free online activity module to reference simple steps to get prepared for an outage.

This module also provides a food safety reference chart so you can know when to save food or when to discard it. Some utility outage checklist items include:

- Document important phone numbers and vital power company information.
- Locate and label your utility shutoffs.
- Have your disaster kit ready and stocked.

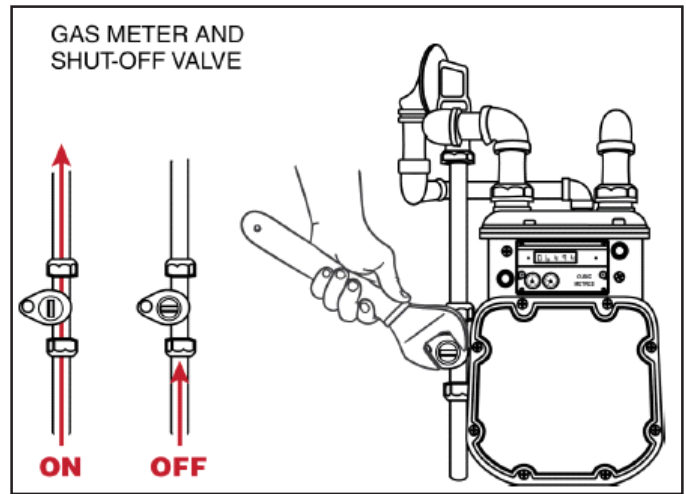
The “Going Off Grid: Utility Outages” activity module is part of FEMA’s “Preparedness Activities for Communities Everywhere” (<http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/CP0101150.htm>) that educate individuals about relatively easy steps to take to become prepared for all types of hazards. The tools are designed for anyone to use in coordination with local emergency preparedness partners to help better prepare for emergencies.

*Reprinted from FEMA’s “Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief,” Feb. 5 edition*

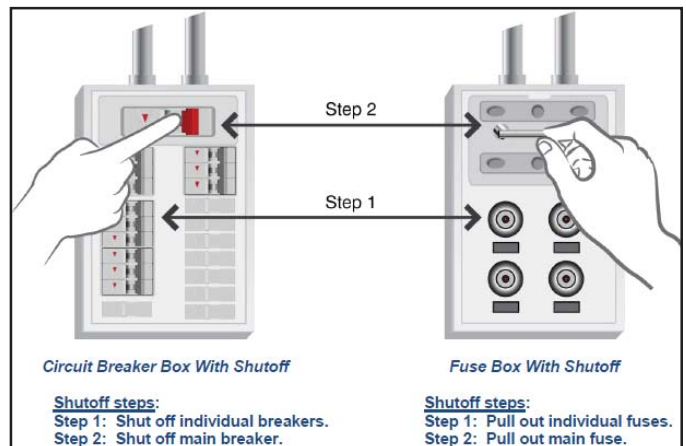
The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management is available to deliver emergency preparedness presentations to community organizations and homeowners associations. If interested, contact OEM at 571-350-1000, TTY 711, or via email at [oem@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:oem@fairfaxcounty.gov).



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



From the “Going Off the Grid: Utility Outages” guide; how to shut off your gas meter (above) and how to shut off your electricity (below).



The Office of Emergency Management regularly produces videos offering tips and information to stay safe and how to prepare for emergencies. Visit the county’s emergency preparedness playlist on YouTube for over 60 videos. <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL93DBD2AE7EED3BC1>

## Disaster Recovery

While recovering from a disaster is usually a gradual process, there are important financial decisions to make in the days immediately following it. Organizations like the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau ([www.consumerfinance.gov](http://www.consumerfinance.gov)) can guide you through some of those decisions.

Here's what you need to know regarding finances and your home:

- Take pictures of the damage and contact your insurance company to start the claims process.
- If your income is interrupted and you can't pay credit cards or other loans, contact the lenders before the next payment is due.
- Take a look at your bills and set priorities. Pay your mortgage, rent and insurance payments first.
- Ask your utility companies to suspend your service if you are unable to live in your home.

Remember, damage to your home does not stop your responsibility to pay your mortgage. Contact your mortgage servicer and let them know your situation. There are a number of options available that may help you delay or reduce your payments.

You may also qualify for FEMA disaster assistance if you are in a presidentially declared disaster area. Should an immediate need for food, shelter or water arise, the American Red Cross or United Way can also help.

*Reprinted from FEMA's "Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief," Feb. 13 edition.*

### Stay Connected to Emergency Information

-  Emergency Blog ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog))
-  Twitter ([www.twitter.com/fairfaxcounty](http://www.twitter.com/fairfaxcounty))
-  Facebook ([www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty](http://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty))
-  Fairfax County Government Radio ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio))

### 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/firecorps.htm)

## National Advisory Council Seeking Applications

The National Advisory Council (NAC) is an advisory council established to ensure effective and ongoing coordination of federal preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation for natural disasters, acts of terrorism and other man-made disasters.

The NAC advises the FEMA administrator on all aspects of emergency management while incorporating the whole community's input through appointed council members.

The NAC consists of up to 35 members, all of whom are experts and leaders in their respective fields. The members of the NAC are appointed by the FEMA

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) is a robust terrorism advisory system that provides timely information to the public about credible terrorist threats. Under NTAS, DHS will coordinate with other federal entities to issue detailed alerts when the federal government receives information about a credible terrorist threat. NTAS alerts provide a concise summary of the potential threat including geographic region, mode of transportation, or critical infrastructure potentially affected by the threat, actions being taken to ensure public safety, as well as recommended steps that individuals, communities, business and governments can take to help prevent, mitigate or respond to a threat.

NTAS Alerts will be defined in one of two ways:

- "Elevated Threat": Warns of a credible terrorist threat against the United States.
- "Imminent Threat": Warns of a credible, specific, and impending terrorist threat against the U.S.

Depending on the nature of the threat, alerts may be sent to law enforcement, distributed to affected areas of the private sector, or issued more broadly to the public through both official and social media channels – including a designated DHS webpage ([www.dhs.gov/alerts](http://www.dhs.gov/alerts)), Facebook and via Twitter @NTASAlerts.

For more information on the National Terrorism Advisory System or to receive NTAS alerts, visit [www.dhs.gov/alerts](http://www.dhs.gov/alerts).

administrator and are composed of federal, state, tribal, local, private sector and nonprofit leaders and subject matter experts in a wide range of disciplines. Appointments are for a three-year term.

The FEMA administrator also may appoint additional candidates to serve as a FEMA administrator selection.

The NAC will have one position open for applications and nominations in each of the following disciplines:

- Emergency Management
- Emergency Response
- Non-Elected Local Government Officials
- Elected Tribal Government Officials
- Non-Elected Tribal Government Officials
- Health Scientist
- Communications
- Infrastructure Protection
- Standards Settings and Accrediting
- Disabilities

Individuals interested in serving on the NAC are invited to apply for appointment by submitting a cover letter and a resume or curriculum vitae (CV) to the Office of the National Advisory Council by email, fax or mail. A complete application must be submitted to be considered for appointment; application criteria, submission information and contact information can be found on the NAC Web page.

Applications will be accepted until Friday, March 14, 11:59 p.m., EST.

Visit [www.oge.gov/Topics/Selected-Employee-Categories/Advisory-Committee-Members/](http://www.oge.gov/Topics/Selected-Employee-Categories/Advisory-Committee-Members/) for more information on NAC requirements. For more information on the NAC, visit [www.fema.gov/national-advisory-council](http://www.fema.gov/national-advisory-council).





OEM Outreach Coordinator Bruce McFarlane recently met with a local Boy Scout troop to discuss emergency management, the Office of Emergency Management and preparedness. Members of the Office of Emergency Management are available to speak at homeowners associations, civic organizations and other meetings about various topics related to emergency management and preparedness. Call OEM at 571-350-1000, TTY 711 for more details. Submitted photo.



Fairfax County and Northern Virginia residents can use the family and business emergency planners at [www.ReadyNOVA.org](http://www.ReadyNOVA.org).

## Outreach Events

### **The Apartment and Office Building Association of Washington, D.C.**

Emergency Management Coordinator David McKernan will be on a panel, "Working Effectively with Your Public Safety Officials."  
Thursday, March 6

### **George Mason University**

#### **"Shaping the Future of Healthcare: Readiness, Change and Innovation"**

Saturday, March 8  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

George Mason University, Arlington  
David McKernan will be on a panel, "Ensuring your community's emergency preparedness."

### **Community Collaboration for Disaster Resiliency Summit**

Tuesday, March 25; 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Mount Olive Baptist Church  
6600 Old Centreville Road, Centreville

Register at <https://2014summit.eventbrite.com/>

### **National Capital Region School Preparedness Seminar**

Wednesday, April 30; 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

George Mason University  
The Hub (Sub II) Ballroom  
4400 University Drive, Fairfax

[www.eventbrite.com/o/metropolitan-washington-council-of-governments-regional-planners-4914843753](http://www.eventbrite.com/o/metropolitan-washington-council-of-governments-regional-planners-4914843753)

To learn more about emergency preparedness or having an OEM representative attend your event or give a presentation at your homeowners association or civic association meeting, call 571-350-1000, TTY 711; email [oem@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:oem@fairfaxcounty.gov).

# Emergency News

## by email

# Subscribe



Receive emergency preparedness information and emergency news by email

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog)



## Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN)

Get emergency alerts by email, as well as by text or pager. Sign up at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean). Businesses can also register up to five people in their organizations – such as security officers – who can receive alerts and share that information.

## Budget for Preparedness

In a recent FEMA household survey, we learned more than a quarter of participants reported they believe getting prepared is too expensive.

Creating your disaster preparedness kit does not have to be costly! In fact, many of the items for your kit may be found around your home.

After you have built the majority of your kit from items already in your home, you can begin to build a list for the remaining items. Here are some additional tips for keeping your disaster kit cost-friendly:

- Shop at discount and dollar stores where appropriate.
- Trade extra supplies with friends or family.
- Check the newspaper or online listings for discounted products.

For more simple and cost-friendly disaster kit suggestions and easy steps to take if disaster strikes, you can access FEMA's free online "Preparedness on a Shoestring" activity module ([http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/assets/01\\_PreparednessOnAShoestring.pdf](http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/assets/01_PreparednessOnAShoestring.pdf)), part of FEMA's "Preparedness Activities for Communities Everywhere" tools (<http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/CP0101150.htm>), which educates individuals about relatively easy steps to take to become prepared for all types of hazards.

Reprinted from FEMA's "Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief," Feb. 13 edition.

Community Outreach Liaison Whitney Kazragis was recently featured in the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce weekly update email newsletter (Jan. 13 issue) offering advice to area businesses about why business preparedness makes good business sense. If you have any business contacts that need emergency preparedness information, including a presentation, Whitney and the OEM outreach team is available. Call OEM at 571-350-1000, TTY 711, to learn more.

## NCR School Preparedness Seminars

*\*Multiple Dates\**

**March 12** – George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

**March 25** – Silver Spring, Md.

**April 30** – George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG) is pleased to announce three National Capital Region School Preparedness Seminars taking place this spring – one in Maryland, one in D.C. and one in Virginia.

The seminars will feature a variety of topics in school preparedness and will help better prepare public, private and independent schools against a variety of hazards impacting today's schools.

Space for these events is limited. Those wishing to attend one or all of the seminars are asked to **register no later than March 5 for the D.C. seminar, March 18 for the Maryland Seminar and April 23 for the Virginia seminar**. Register online at <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/metropolitan-washington-council-of-governments-regional-planners-4914843753>.