

Emergency Preparedness

Published by the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management
November 2013

Winter Preparedness Week Is Dec. 1-7. Are You Ready?

Several record-breaking snowstorms have covered Virginia in recent years and winter is right around the corner again.

Winter Preparedness Week is Dec. 1-7. This is the time to get ready for bad weather by taking a few easy steps.

Get a Kit

Imagine that you can't leave your home for three days. You need these basic emergency supplies:

- Three days' food that doesn't need refrigeration or electricity to prepare it.
- Three days' water (a gallon per person per day).
- A battery-powered radio with extra batteries and/or hand-cranked radio.
- After you have these essentials, add a first-aid kit, supply of prescription medications, blankets and warm clothing, special supplies for members of your household and pet items.

Make a Plan

Everyone needs an emergency plan:

- Decide who your out-of-town emergency contact will be.
- Where will you meet up with family members if you can't return home?
- Get a worksheet at www.ReadyVirginia.gov or on the new Ready Virginia app.

Stay Informed

Before, during and after a winter storm, you should:

- Listen to local media for

information and instructions from emergency officials.

- Be aware of winter storm watches and warnings and road conditions.
- Get road condition information 24/7 by calling 511 or checking www.511Virginia.org.
- Download the Ready Virginia app. This emergency planning tool for iPhone and Android mobile devices features:
 - Location-specific weather watches and warnings issued by the National Weather Service.

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Fairfax County Government Radio Is Live Online

Streaming Live 24/7 to Keep You in Touch with Fairfax County

After the June 2012 derecho storm, we conducted a community survey about communications. Nearly 6,000 respondents answered questions and generated nearly 18,000 individual comments, which provided us with some great insight for communications during future emergencies.

For example, the second highest ranked way to access emergency information was radio, only behind mobile devices. In the feedback provided, it also was suggested by many respondents that we create our own radio station that we program ourselves, so they don't have to wait for commercial stations to get around to sharing Fairfax County-specific messages.

As an after-action item, we have created Fairfax County Government Radio, an online Internet station that will be programmed and run by the Office of Public Affairs. You can listen online as well as on your mobile device, meaning that you'll be able to hear Fairfax County Government Radio 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in multiple ways anywhere you may be.

During emergencies, we will use the station to share important emergency information in an audio format, the same way we currently use other platforms – like the

Registration Opens for 2014 Statewide Tornado Drill

Businesses, organizations, government agencies, colleges and schools, and families and individuals are encouraged to learn about tornado safety by participating in the next Statewide Tornado Drill, set for March 11, 2014.

There is no tornado season, so knowing what to do in a moment's notice could save lives. Get more information and register at www.vaemergency.gov/readyvirginia/stayinformed/tornadoes.



Fairfax County Government Radio

emergency information blog (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog) as well as our emergency alert system where you can get emergency alerts by both text and email.

The station is now live and we hope that you will tune in and listen. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio to listen and to get specific links for your mobile device.



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

World Police and Fire Games 2015

By Roy Shrout

With less than 21 months before the opening ceremonies of the 2015 World Police and Fire Games, planning activities are well underway throughout the National Capital Region.

It is expected that more than 12,000 athletes from over 70 countries will be represented in the many sporting events that will be held in Fairfax County and surrounding localities.

Many of the venue sites have already been identified and work continues to identify venue managers and sports coordinators for the various events.

Representatives from the World Police and Fire Games Federation will be in Fairfax County this month to look at several venues, receive briefings on transportation

planning, operation center management, marketing programs, security and medical planning as well as overall event and games management.

The visit will also include updates from representatives from the next two host cities for the World Police and Fire Games, which include Montreal, Canada, the 2017 games host, and Chengdu, China, the 2019 games host.



FAIRFAX ★ 2015

For more detailed information about the games taking place in 2015, visit www.fairfax2015.com.

Roy Shrout, deputy coordinator for the Office of Emergency Management, holds the certified emergency manager (CEM) credential from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM).

Before Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

To be ready for a winter storm you should take a few minutes to become better prepared. Before winter approaches, add the following supplies to your emergency kit:

- Rock salt or more environmentally safe products to melt ice on walkways. Visit the Environmental Protection Agency (www.epa.gov) for a complete list of recommended products.
- Sand to improve traction (under tires).
- Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment.
- Sufficient heating fuel. You may become isolated in your home and regular fuel sources may be cut off. Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.
- Adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm.

Learn more about getting ready for and staying safe during winter weather at www.ready.gov/winter-weather.

Virginia Department of Fire Programs Launches New App

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs has released a new home fire safety mobile application called FireSafe Family VA. It is available as a free download for your iPhone, iPad and Android mobile devices.



Visit www.vafire.com to learn more.



Fairfax County, Va., publication.

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

National Weather Service Introduces Owlie Skywarn

Online resources help kids learn about and prepare for severe weather

Who knows where to go when a flash flood hits? Who can tell you how many feet a hurricane storm surge is above normal high tide? Who knows how many times lightning can strike a person or thing?

Owlie knows; that's WHO!

Owlie Skywarn is a screech owl created by the National Weather Service to help kids learn about and get prepared for severe weather. Owlie is featured in a new online game Severe Weather Preparedness Adventure! as a junior data collector for the weather center. Those who play the game can earn a young meteorologist certificate.

To become a young meteorologist, players complete the game with five severe weather challenges: winter storms, lightning, flood, tornado and hurricane. The game and resources for educators, parents and meteorologists are available from NWS at www.youngmeteorologist.org.

In addition to his game, Owlie Skywarn is on Facebook and Twitter, where he shares weather facts, fun activities and safety messaging when major weather events are forecast.

Clean Up Safely After a Disaster

- Stay away from damaged buildings or structures that have not been examined and certified by an inspector.
- Wear hard hats, goggles, heavy work gloves, and watertight boots with steel toe and insole cleanup work.
- Carbon monoxide can cause illness and death.
- Remove and discard items that cannot be washed and disinfected.
- Never turn power on or off or use an electric tool or appliance while standing in water.

Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for more details, <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/cleanup/facts.asp>.

The young meteorologists program was developed by NOAA/National Weather Service and the National Education Association.



Additional information about how to prepare for severe weather threats is available at www.ReadyVirginia.gov.



Prevent Kitchen Fires

Did you know?

Cooking is the biggest cause of home fires and fire injuries.

You can prevent cooking fires.

Take these steps to keep your family safe!

✓ Stand by your pan:
If you leave the kitchen, turn the burner off.



✓ Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.
Then no one can bump them or pull them over.



✓ Watch what you are cooking:
Fires start when the heat is too high. If you see any smoke or the grease starts to boil, turn the burner off.



✓ Keep a pan lid or baking sheet nearby:
Use it to cover the pan if it catches on fire. This will put out the fire.



Learn more at www.fema.gov/FPW, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency.

**Mark your calendars for
Winter Preparedness Week
in Virginia
Dec. 1-7.**

Do You Smell Something?

When power outages occur after severe weather such as hurricanes or tornadoes, using alternative sources of power can cause carbon monoxide (CO) to build up in your home and poison your family. CO is a colorless, odorless gas created by burning fuel when using portable generators, gas ranges, burning wood or by running your car.

While hundreds of people die in the U.S. each year from accidental CO poisoning, this tragedy can be prevented. If you don't have a battery-powered or battery back-up CO detector in your home, install one as soon as possible and check it every six months.

You should also follow these safety tips:

- Do not run your car inside a garage that is attached to your home, even if the garage door is open to the outside.
- Have your heating system, water heater and other gas, oil or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician each year.
- Never heat your house with a gas oven.

Additional safety tips are available from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) online at www.cdc.gov/co/guidelines.htm.

Since you can't see or smell carbon monoxide, it is important to recognize the most common symptoms of CO poisoning. If you think you are experiencing CO poisoning, you should get fresh air and seek medical attention immediately!

Reprinted from FEMA's Oct. 29 issue of the "Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief" email newsletter

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



National Crime Prevention Month Served as a Reminder to Take Steps Toward Protecting Your Home and Personal Property

In 2012, nearly 9 million property crimes occurred in the United States alone. The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) marks each October as National Crime Prevention Month to remind communities to focus on safe behaviors and educate them on proactive crime prevention. To ensure security is always top of mind, experts at the NCPC are offering home safety tips.

- **Lock all doors and windows:** Lock your doors and windows, including garage doors, with heavy-duty locks even when you are at home. Secure windows and sliding doors with secondary blocking devices (e.g., a wood block or dowel) for added protection.
- **Crime-proof outside areas:** Use motion sensor lights around the exterior of your home that can be seen from the street. Good lighting makes it harder for criminals to hide under the cover of darkness. Also, maintain landscaping with security in mind – hedges should be trimmed away from windows so owners have a clear view of their property.
- **Enlist a team of monitoring experts:** A professionally installed security system with 24/7 monitoring support can add an extra layer of security to help guard against intruders. Home security systems can immediately alert authorities in the event of a burglary, fire or carbon monoxide leak even when family members are away from home.
- **Get to know your neighbors:** A friendly relationship with your neighbors can be beneficial for your home’s security. Neighbors who can pick up mail and park in

your driveway to give the appearance of occupancy while you’re on vacation may help to deter burglars.

- **Establish an emergency plan:** Have important phone numbers listed near the phone and establish a meeting place for family members – one near your home and one outside your neighborhood. If you think you hear someone breaking in, leave safely if you can, then call the police.

“Daily security measures for some don’t go much further than locking doors,” said Ann M. Harkins, president and CEO of the National Crime Prevention Council. “Since 1984, we’ve used National Crime Prevention Month to create a movement where communities work together to encourage safe behaviors, and urge families to take their home safety seriously.”

For more information on National Crime Prevention Month and other advice to encourage safe habits, visit NCPC’s website at www.ncpc.org.

Product Safety Tip: Turkey Fryers

‘T is the season for fried turkeys.

However, according to the U.S. Fire Administration, while those delicious deep-fried turkeys have



quickly grown in popularity, safety experts are concerned that backyard chefs may be sacrificing fire safety for good taste. Learn more online from Underwriters Laboratories at www.ul.com/global/eng/pages/offering/perspectives/consumer/productsafety/turkeys.

ReadyNOVA
Family & Business Preparedness Planners

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

Weather the Storm

With hurricane season still in full swing, it is possible one of these powerful storms could be in your area. Could you weather the storm? It's one thing to be prepared but knowing how to respond during and after a hurricane requires a different set of actions.

During a hurricane you should:

- Stay indoors and away from windows and glass doors.
- Take refuge in a small interior room, closet or hallway on the lowest level.
- Turn the refrigerator thermostat to the coldest setting and keep the door closed.
- Evacuate if necessary per local authority instructions.
- Listen to the radio or TV for information.

Dangers from a hurricane do not end with the storm.

Follow these tips after the disaster to ensure your safety and that of others:

- Avoid downed power lines and roads covered by water or debris.
- Use flashlights in the dark instead of candles.
- Return home when instructed by authorities to do so.
- Inspect your home and take pictures.
- Watch for wild animals especially poisonous snakes.

For more ways to stay safe during and after a hurricane, visit www.ready.gov/hurricanes.

Winter Preparedness

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- Disaster news from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.
- A customizable family emergency plan that can be easily shared.
- A checklist for gathering emergency supplies.
- Contact information for local emergency managers.
- Links to register for local emergency alerts and more.

It's time to get ready for winter weather now! Get more information at www.ReadyVirginia.gov and www.ready.gov/winter-weather.



Virginia Volunteers Receive FEMA Region III NPM Awards

Due to record-setting participation by local volunteers and emergency agencies in planning public education and engagement events for National Preparedness Month, Virginia received three of the four FEMA Region III NPM Challenge Awards.

Virginia Citizen Corps, which helps facilitate local volunteer efforts and the statewide Ready Virginia program, was honored with the **2013 Pursuit of Excellence Award** for the greatest increase in the number of NPM events from the previous year. Virginia increased the number of events held by 43.2 percent.

The 2013 United We Stand Award was given for displaying the most improvement in participation from the previous year. Virginia increased participation in NPM activities over 2012 by 710.6 percent. The third award, the **2013 FEMA Region III Together We Succeed Award**, was for extraordinary leadership in executing the preparedness event with the most participants during the month of September.

“Most importantly, I want to thank you for your continued efforts to maintain robust preparedness initiatives year-round for Virginians,” said MaryAnn Tierney, FEMA Region III regional administrator, in making the awards.

Congratulations to all the volunteers, agencies and organizations who worked so hard to encourage Virginians to get ready for emergencies during National Preparedness Month.



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Watch What You Heat

Fire is one of the most common disasters in the United States. Each year thousands are killed or injured in house fires. Most house fires happen in the kitchen and are caused by carelessness.

If you take precaution, fires can be prevented! When cooking, follow these tips to prevent a tragedy:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling or broiling food. Do not leave food unattended.
- Keep anything that can catch fire away from the stovetop.
- Choose the right cookware and use it properly.
- Wear short sleeves or clothes that are close-fitting.
- Keep children at least 3 feet away from the cooking area.

The U.S Fire Administration offers more information on cooking fire safety at www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/home_fire_prev/cooking.shtm.

Watch video clips, read about product safety and learn safe cooking behaviors, then download the FEMA activity guide, "Ounce of Fire Prevention" (http://emilms.fema.gov/IS909/assets/08_FirePrevention.pdf) to test your knowledge.



**Fairfax County
Government Radio**

Get the details at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio

Listen online and stay in-the-know with news about Fairfax County. Get the details and listen live at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio.

See Page 2 for complete details on the new online radio station.



This winter, and anytime the weather is expected to be bad, remember to get where you need to be before the weather gets bad.

By staying off the roads during the worst of the weather, you'll help keep roadways clear for snowplows and emergency response vehicles to respond to accidents and other emergencies. Buy your emergency supplies ahead of time and stay off the roads – not out in the weather – when it snows!

This winter, remember **SNOW... Stay off the roads, Not Out in the Weather!**



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.

If Your Clothes Catch Fire

If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop and roll. Stop immediately, drop to the ground and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over or back and forth to put out the fire. Immediately cool the burn with cool water for 3 to 5 minutes and cover with a clean, dry cloth. Don't apply creams, ointments, sprays or other home remedies.