

# Emergency Preparedness

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## Statewide Tornado Drill Recap

The annual statewide tornado drill was held March 17. The tornado drill is a staple of preparedness in the state. Fairfax County has led the state in the number of registered participants for the past two years, although our percentage of participation was down from 2014.

2015 Top 10 localities		2014 Top 10 localities	
Locality	%	Locality	%
Fairfax County	6.3	Fairfax County	8.8
Chesapeake City of	5.8	Loudon County	4.1
Richmond City of	5.1	Henrico County	3.5
Loudon County	4.8	Chesapeake City of	3.2
Norfolk City of	3.8	Richmond City of	3.1
Virginia Beach City of	3.7	Norfolk City of	2.8
Spotsylvania County	2.7	Virginia Beach City of	2.7
Hanover County	2.6	Prince William County	2.6
Augusta County	2.4	Augusta County	2.3
Prince William County	2	Chesterfield County	2.3

Starting in 2010, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) formally began collecting tornado drill participation via an online survey.

While the registration survey is open in the month of October, it's normally not until February and March that an increase in registrations are seen.

This year, VDEM received 1,203 registrations for a total of 1,022,136 participants; a total of 1,131 registrations (255,474 participants) less than 2014.

When asked how many times they had participated in the drill, the majority 25.5 percent (37 percent in 2014) said this was their first time; 24.8 percent (22.7 percent in 2014) said they had participated between two to four years; and 17.4 percent (12.5 percent in 2014) more than 10 years. More than 50 percent of the participants are fairly new to this practice.

Learn more in the statewide tornado drill participation report at <http://bit.ly/1NMCE8Q>.

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## FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards Applications Are Now Being Accepted

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has announced that the application period for the 2015 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards is open.

The awards highlight innovative local practices and achievements by recognizing individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions toward making their communities safer, stronger, better prepared and more resilient.

Emergency management is most effective when the whole community is engaged and involved. Faith-based organizations, voluntary agencies, the private sector, tribal organizations, youth, older adults, people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs and all individual citizens can make a difference in their communities before, during and after disasters.

FEMA will review all entries and select the finalists.

A distinguished panel of representatives from the emergency management community will then select winners in each of the following categories:

- Outstanding Citizen Corps Council.
- Community Preparedness Heroes.
- Awareness to Action.
- Technological Innovation.
- Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness.
- Preparing the Whole Community.
- Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team Initiatives.
- Outstanding Citizen Corps Partner Program.
- Excellence in Volunteer Sustainability.

Winners are announced in the fall and will be FEMA's honored guests at a community preparedness roundtable event. The winner of the Preparing the Whole Community category will receive the John D. Solomon Whole Community Preparedness Award.

These awards are an opportunity to acknowledge the work an individual or organization has done to build a more resilient nation.

More information about the awards is available at [www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/citizen-corps-awards](http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/citizen-corps-awards).

To be considered for this year's awards, all submissions must be received by April 10, at 11:59 P.M. EST and must feature program activities taking place between Jan. 1, 2014, and April 10, 2015. Applications should be submitted to [citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov).



Members of the Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and a local AmeriCorps rallied together to distribute emergency preparedness information in the Burke area on Saturday, March 21, with the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management and Volunteer Fairfax. The volunteers talked with residents about Fairfax Alerts, emergency kits and making an emergency plan. If you're interested in participating in the next emergency preparedness canvassing day on Saturday, May 16, send an email to [oem-outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:oem-outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov). Training, breakfast and lunch are provided.



# National Preparedness Goal: National Engagement Period

The National Integration Center (NIC) is currently soliciting public feedback for the refresh of the National Preparedness Goal.

This national engagement period concludes at 5 p.m. (EDT) on Thursday, April 16. National engagement provides an opportunity for interested parties to comment and provide feedback on the National Preparedness Goal.

As called for under PPD-8, the first edition of the goal sets the vision for preparedness, “a secure and resilient nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.” It also identifies the core capabilities necessary to achieve the goal.

The whole community will have the opportunity to support the refresh effort and submit their comments and ideas for consideration.

This refresh of the National Preparedness Goal focuses on discrete, critical content revisions. The changes in the current draft of the goal are the result of the lessons from implementing the goal and recent events, as well as the findings of the National Preparedness Report.

These revisions also draw from lessons learned during the development of the National Planning Frameworks and Federal Interagency Operational Plans.

To review the draft, visit [www.fema.gov/learn-about-presidential-policy-directive-8](http://www.fema.gov/learn-about-presidential-policy-directive-8). To provide comments,

complete the feedback form and email it to [PPD8-Engagement@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:PPD8-Engagement@fema.dhs.gov).

Questions can be directed to FEMA’s NIC by email at [PPD8-Engagement@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:PPD8-Engagement@fema.dhs.gov).

The national planning frameworks and federal interagency operational plans also will be refreshed to reflect the changes to the National Preparedness Goal.

For more information on national preparedness efforts, visit [www.fema.gov/national-preparedness](http://www.fema.gov/national-preparedness).

## Outreach Events

- **April 11** – Vienna Health and Wellness Fair
- **April 16** – Faith Communities in Action Meeting
- **April 20** – Emergency Preparedness Childcare Training Workshop
- **April 20** – Fairfax County Public Schools teacher workshop for STEP program
- **April 21** – Braddock District Neighborhood College, Pinn Community Center
- **April 22** – United Way forum, George Mason University, Fairfax
- **April 22** – USGS Earth Day Event, Reston
- **April 23** – King of Kings Lutheran Church Presentation
- **April 24** – Reston Community Center Senior Health and Safety Fair
- **April 25** – Culmore Cleanup, Falls Church

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-outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:oem-outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov).



Fairfax County, Va., publication.

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



## Get “Petpared” for Disasters

Calling all pet owners. The likelihood your pet will survive a disaster such as a flood or tornado depends largely on proper emergency planning.

In support of America’s PrepareAthon!, FEMA Region III is hosting a national **#Petpared Challenge** to prepare pets for emergencies.

Take action and join in this activity through May 8. There are several ways to participate:

- Download a pet preparedness mobile application (for example the American Red Cross Pet First Aid App or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals App).
- Build a pet emergency supply kit.
- ID your pet with a collar and tag or consider micro chipping.
- Determine where you would evacuate with your pet as some public shelters may not accommodate animals.
- Create a buddy system with a relative or friend to help each other’s pets if one of you is away from home during an emergency.



Once you’ve completed an action, take a picture (or a selfie) of your #petpared pet and share it on Twitter or Instagram using hashtag **#Petpared** to help spread the word.

### Links

Ready Program

[www.ready.gov/caring-animals](http://www.ready.gov/caring-animals)

Red Cross

[www.redcross.org/mobile-apps/pet-first-aid-app](http://www.redcross.org/mobile-apps/pet-first-aid-app)

ASPCA

[www.aspc.org/pet-care/disaster-preparedness/aspc-launches-mobile-app-pet-parents](http://www.aspc.org/pet-care/disaster-preparedness/aspc-launches-mobile-app-pet-parents)

## Fairfax County Emergency Management Staff Attend National Hurricane Conference

Representatives from the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management attended the National Hurricane Conference in Austin, Texas, March 30-April 2. The forum brought together educators, media, meteorologists, emergency managers and more for professional training about hurricane preparedness issues.



Whitney Kazragis, community outreach liaison, and Sulayman Brown, Emergency Operations Center manager, with Fairfax County’s Office of Emergency Management met Craig W. Fugate (center), administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) while at the national hurricane conference.

## Stay Connected to Emergency Information



Fairfax County Emergency Alerts  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts)



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



Fairfax County Government Radio  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio)



Fairfax County on Twitter  
[www.twitter.com/fairfaxcounty](http://www.twitter.com/fairfaxcounty)



Fairfax County on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty](http://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty)



Fairfax County on YouTube  
[www.youtube.com/fairfaxcountygov](http://www.youtube.com/fairfaxcountygov)

# Fairfax County Citizen Corps Council March Meeting

The Fairfax County Citizen Corps Council met on Thursday, March 26, in the Fairfax County Government Center with over 20 members, guests and representatives present.

An updated presentation on the 2015 World Police and Fire Games (June 26 - July 6) was given by Roseann Kuryla of Volunteer Fairfax. She stressed the need for additional volunteers to assist making this international sporting event of firefighters, law enforcement and emergency medical services personnel a great success.

There is a need for approximately 4,000 volunteers and it is hoped that 1,800 of those individuals will be able to provide assistance as medical staff. Anyone interested in volunteering can find more information at [www.fairfax2015.com/volunteer](http://www.fairfax2015.com/volunteer).

There was a discussion on conducting Ready-Set-Know Festival events for 2015 with a focus on being able to participate in community events such as the Burke Centre Fall Festival as well as other locations. The Ready-Set-Know Festival event shares information on emergency preparedness for the whole family and utilizes people from all the different organizations associated with the Citizen Corps Council.

Various council members will be checking their districts for opportunities to conduct this activity. An opportunity to participate during the Celebrate Fairfax Festival was also a part of the discussion.

An overview of the life of Al Bornmann, Mount Vernon District representative to the Citizen Corps Council, was read as Al died in February. A discussion took place about how to appropriately recognize Bornmann and several other members who had served the council over a significant number of years. Staff will work with council leadership to ensure this recognition is completed.

The next Citizen Corps Council meeting will be held Thursday, May 28, at 6:45 p.m. in the Government Center. The meeting is open to the public.

## 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/fr/cert](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/cert)

### 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 Small Business Week

By Kayla Slater

Since 1963, the president of the U.S. has recognized small businesses across the nation every year for their essential contributions to the national economy. The purpose of National Small Business Week, May 4-8, is to highlight the efforts of small business owners to create jobs, drive innovation and increase competitiveness. Find out more at [www.sba.gov/nsbw](http://www.sba.gov/nsbw).

Over half of Americans own or work for a small business, and small businesses create approximately two out of every three jobs each year.

Over 90 percent of businesses in Fairfax County are small businesses with fewer than 50 employees. It is crucial that we as a county take steps to protect small businesses in the event of a natural or man-made disaster because up to 40 percent of businesses affected by a disaster never reopen.

The impact of even a minor disaster could ripple through the entire National Capital Region's economy. Without a viable plan, some businesses may never recover. An Ad Council survey reported that nearly two-thirds of small businesses nationwide do not have an emergency plan in place.

For the sake of safeguarding the backbone of Fairfax County's economy, the Office of Emergency Management encourages business owners to invest in their preparedness through the following:

- Write a preparedness policy consistent with the mission and vision of your business that identifies preparedness goals and objectives, then share it with your employees. Consider authorizing a few employees to develop, manage and maintain a preparedness program.
- Gather information about hazards, assess risks and consider conducting a business impact analysis to help determine ways to reduce risks.
- Identify critical business functions in your business. Critical functions are those that are vital to the survival and resumption of operations and may be characterized by sensitivity to delay, duties that fulfill legal/financial obligations or maintain cash flow, protecting your



businesses market share or reputation, or safeguarding an irreplaceable asset.

- Consider backing up or transferring business records to a digital database. After Hurricane Katrina, most businesses struggled with reopening because the paper records they needed were damaged from flooding.
- Work with employees to develop an emergency response plan outlining steps your organization will take before, during and after an emergency to protect the business and its employees. Implement your plan and preparedness policy by making preparedness part of your business's culture.
- Develop methods of testing your preparedness plan, such as talking through disaster scenarios with staff or participating in biannual drills.
- Enroll in the Red Cross Ready Rating Program, which provides free access to one-of-a-kind tools, resources and information to help your business withstand disasters, maintain operations and protect lives and property.
- Recognize that a business is only as resilient as its employees and encourage them to prepare for disasters in their own homes so that they can return to work as soon as possible.

The Office of Emergency Management is committed to strengthening our community's resilience to disasters and hopes that you'll join us in protecting our vital small business sector.

Want more information? Check out our emergency page at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency), or [www.readyrating.org](http://www.readyrating.org) or [www.ready.gov/business](http://www.ready.gov/business). And to make an emergency plan for your business – for free – visit Ready NOVA at [www.ReadyNOVA.org](http://www.ReadyNOVA.org).

*Kayla Slater, an intern with OEM, is completing her Master of Professional Studies in emergency and disaster management at Georgetown University.*





## A habit **worth breaking**

**The ringing of a phone or pinging of a text creates irresistible urges for many people to answer the call, read the message or respond.**

### **To avoid these temptations:**

- Turn off your cell phone, or put it on silent, before driving
- Toss your cell phone in the trunk or glove box to avoid temptation
- Pre-set your navigation system and music playlists before driving
- Schedule stops to check voicemails, emails and texts
- Set special ring tones for important incoming calls, and pull off to a safe place to take them
- Tell coworkers, family and friends not to call or text you when they know you're driving
- Start all conference calls by asking if anyone is driving, and have them call back when they are in a safe location
- Install an app on your phone that disables it while your vehicle is in motion
- Ask a passenger to answer incoming calls and say "You'll call back when not driving"
- Change your voicemail greeting to tell people that you may be driving and you'll call them back when you can safely do so

### **Positive side effects of not using a phone while driving:**

- ✓ More likely to arrive safely at your destination
- ✓ Feeling more relaxed; some of our best ideas and solutions come when we are at ease
- ✓ Not letting your phone control you
- ✓ Being able to have a conversation with your passengers
- ✓ Avoiding crashes and their associated costs – doctor visits, auto repairs, court fees

Take the "Focused Driver" Challenge today. You can find more information on the risks of using cell phones while driving at [nsc.org/cellfree](http://nsc.org/cellfree).

**#CallsKill**

It feels good to take back control.

### **Check out the story of Debbie Z. on breaking the habit:**

I had a long commute. To keep from being bored, I often used my drive to call friends and catch up.

I was then educated by my employer on the risks of distracted driving, and it began to make sense. I realized when talking on the phone I could get home and not remember seeing any of my usual roadside milestones. My mind wasn't focused on driving – kinda scary.

I also realized I wasn't a quality participant in the phone conversations I was having. I never talked about anything so important that it was worth putting someone's life – including my own – at risk.

Armed with this knowledge, I decided to quit cold turkey. Before each drive, I put my phone on silent in my purse. I put my purse in the back seat and out of reach to avoid temptation.

Sure, this caused me a little anxiety the first few days, but pretty soon it just became my new routine. Now my phone doesn't control me, and I'm a safer driver for it.

**Calls kill**  
Hands-free is not risk-free

## Family Preparedness Webinar April 16

**G**et ready for an exciting conversation on emergency preparedness for the entire family, presented by four women who have one title in common — mother.

These moms and well-known bloggers will offer tips, actions and insights on how to get your family prepared for disasters. Join the conversation via webinar on Thursday, April 16, at 2 p.m. Eastern time.

The webinar, “Easy Ways to Help Prepare Your Family for Disasters,” will feature preparedness information from:

- Shelle Wells, blogger for Preparedness Mama.
- Erica Mueller, blogger for Mom Prepares.
- Tanya Ferraro, blogger for Bigger than Myself.
- Shelly Lopez-Gray, blogger for Adventures of a Labor Nurse.

Register for the webinar at <http://bit.ly/1DuOd38>. This webinar will offer closed captioning.

### The Small Business Toolkit

Tools and Resources to Plan, Prepare, and Protect

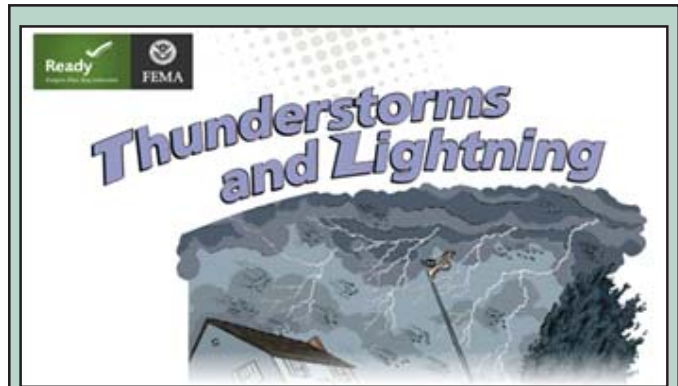
[www.fema.gov/small-business-tools-resources](http://www.fema.gov/small-business-tools-resources)

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management is available to deliver emergency preparedness presentations to community organizations and homeowners associations.

If you or your organization is interested in a presentation, contact OEM at 571-350-1000, TTY 711, or via email at [oem-outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:oem-outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov).



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



## Thunderstorms and Lightning

Did you know lightning continues to be one of the top three storm-related killers in the United States? And did you know that all thunderstorms produce lightning?

### Before

- If you hear thunder roar, go indoors!

### During

- Don't touch anything metal outside.
- Stay away from open fields, hills, or beaches.
- Don't lie on concrete floors or lean against concrete walls – they conduct electricity.

### After

- Stay away from loose or dangling power lines.
- Stay away from areas damaged by the storm or flood waters.

Get tips to be prepared before, during and after thunderstorms and lightning.

[www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning](http://www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning)



If we can't reach you,  
we can't alert you!



Fairfax County's FREE alert system sends you important information during an emergency

In the know,  
on the go.

[fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts)