

# Emergency Preparedness

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## Governor Encourages Everyone to Help Virginia's Tornado-Impacted Residents

Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell is encouraging private companies, nonprofit organizations, volunteers, faith-based organizations and residents to rally to provide additional aid to communities across Virginia that were impacted by April's devastating tornadoes.

While requests by the commonwealth to obtain aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have been denied, McDonnell has pledged state resources to localities who are rebuilding following the outbreak of storms from April 8 through April 28. The storms left 10 dead, more than 100 injured and destroyed 212 homes and damaged more than 1,050 homes and businesses.

Individual aid efforts and those sponsored by many other private and faith-based organizations have

contributed significant resources or funds toward rebuilding efforts.

The governor has also pledged to contribute state Disaster Recovery Funding to assist localities in their efforts to rebuild. McDonnell requested federal disaster assistance for the counties of

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### Tornado Relief Fund

During April, at least 30 tornadoes were recorded in Virginia (2 in Pulaski, 11 from mid-April, 17 from late April). Ten people lost their lives, and more than 100 were injured. An estimated 212 homes were destroyed and more than 1,000 were damaged. Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell has started a fund for tornado relief. Make checks payable to Treasurer of Virginia and note "tornado relief" in the memo line. Send to Comptroller's Office, P.O. Box 1971, Richmond, VA 23218-1971. Donations are tax deductible.

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## NOAA Hurricane Outlook Indicates an Above-Normal Atlantic Season

The Atlantic basin is expected to see an above-normal hurricane season this year, according to the seasonal outlook issued by NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center – a division of the National Weather Service.

Across the entire Atlantic basin for the six-month season, which began June 1, NOAA is predicting the following ranges:

- 12 to 18 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which:
  - 6 to 10 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including:
    - 3 to 6 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of 111 mph or higher)



Hurricanes Karl, Igor and Julia (from left to right on Sept. 16, 2010) were part of the onslaught of Atlantic storms last hurricane season. Photo credit NOAA.

Each of these ranges has a 70 percent likelihood, and indicate that activity will exceed the seasonal average of 11 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes.

[www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2011/20110519\\_atlantichurricaneoutlook.html](http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2011/20110519_atlantichurricaneoutlook.html)

### Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale for the Continental United States

Scale Number (Category)	Sustained Winds (MPH)	Types of Damage Due to Hurricane Winds	Hurricanes
1	74-95	<b>Very dangerous winds will produce some damage:</b> Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding and gutters. Large branches of trees will snap and shallowly rooted trees may be toppled. Extensive damage to power lines and poles likely will result in power outages that could last a few to several days.	<b>Dolly (2008) on South Padre Island, Texas</b>
2	96-110	<b>Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage:</b> Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many shallowly rooted trees will be snapped or uprooted and block numerous roads. Near-total power loss is expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks.	<b>Frances (2004) in coastal Port St. Lucie, Florida</b>
3	111-130	<b>Devastating damage will occur:</b> Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking and gable ends. Many trees will be snapped or uprooted, blocking numerous roads. Electricity and water will be unavailable for several days to weeks after the storm passes.	<b>Ivan (2004) in coastal Gulf Shores, Alabama</b>
4	131-155	<b>Catastrophic damage will occur:</b> Well-built framed homes can sustain severe damage with loss of most of the roof structure and/or some exterior walls. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.	<b>Charley (2004) in coastal Punta Gorda, Florida</b>
5	>155	<b>Catastrophic damage will occur:</b> A high percentage of framed homes will be destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.	<b>Andrew (1992) in coastal parts of Cutler Ridge, Florida</b>

Source: [www.weather.gov/os/hurricane/resources/TropicalCyclones11.pdf](http://www.weather.gov/os/hurricane/resources/TropicalCyclones11.pdf)

## Tornadoes

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Halifax, Pulaski and Washington. He also requested FEMA include April 8-28 as one incident period so other localities, such as Gloucester and Middlesex, could be added later.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency denied Virginia's request for federal disaster assistance for those affected by the April tornadoes. Governor McDonnell is appealing that decision. In the meantime, McDonnell has

announced that \$600,000 in anticipated state agency savings will go toward helping

Virginians who were affected by the severe weather and tornadoes. The money is the latest addition to a fund the governor established to collect donations from companies, nonprofit organizations, volunteer organizations, faith-based groups and residents. The state contribution and all donated money will go toward the Virginia Disaster Relief Fund. Charitable organizations and faith-based groups can request resources from this fund for specific cases that will assist individuals to recover from the April severe weather. Long-Term Recovery Groups (local government and voluntary group partnerships) established in the hardest hit communities can also apply for funds.

Local officials will validate each request and then submit them to a management committee of technical experts for review. Members of the committee include representatives from the Virginia departments of Emergency Management, Housing and Community Development and Social Services, as well as Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD).

There are two ways to donate. A new website has been created to collect credit card payments at <http://disasterrelief.vi.virginia.gov/>. Those who wish to write a check can make checks payable to the Treasurer of Virginia with "Tornado Relief" noted in the memo line. Please send checks to the Comptroller's Office, P.O. Box 1971, Richmond, VA 23218-1971. All donations are tax deductible.

Additional information is at [www.vaemergency.com](http://www.vaemergency.com).



## Marcelo's Minute

### Summer Safety

Summer hasn't yet arrived, but extreme heat has already caught our attention along with the addition of summer storms.

Extreme heat can produce a number of ill effects including:

- **Heat cramps** – the first sign that the body is being affected by heat. It produces muscular pains and spasms.
- **Heat exhaustion** – a form of mild shock, which is caused by exercising heavily in hot and humid places and may lead to severe conditions if not treated.
- **Heat/sun stroke** – a life-threatening condition that may cause brain damage and even death due to a breakdown of the body's temperature control system.



Marcelo Ferreira

Follow these tips to help avoid the hazardous effects of extreme heat:

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Keep cool indoors.
- Plan outdoor activities around the heat (go before noon or at night when it's cooler).
- Eat light meals. Avoid high-protein foods because they increase metabolic heat.
- Never leave children or pets in the car.

For more, visit:

- [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/prepare/summer](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/prepare/summer)
- [www.fema.gov/areyouready/heat.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/heat.shtm)

Receive notifications about weather-related events and notices by email, pager and text. Register for the Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN) at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean).

If you need additional information or an emergency preparedness related presentation, contact me at 571-350-1013, TTY 711, or by email at [marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov).

*Marcelo Ferreira, OEM community liaison, holds the Associate Emergency Manager (AEM) credential from the Virginia Emergency Management Association (VEMA).*

# Volunteer Fairfax Responds to Storm Damage in Halifax County

By Chris Copley

In response to the recent effects of a storm that blasted through seven states, Volunteer Fairfax was asked by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) to respond to the need for spontaneous volunteer coordination in Halifax County.

Matt Lyttle, emergency response program manager, and Todd Damren, emergency response program intern, organized a volunteer reception center (VRC) on behalf of the Halifax County Office of Emergency Management on April 30 and May 1. A total of 164 volunteers were recruited, trained and deployed to four sites in the area. The work of registered volunteers was valued at more than \$6,000.



Todd Damren, emergency response program intern with Volunteer Fairfax, helped organized a volunteer reception center on behalf of the Halifax County Office of Emergency Management.

Photo by Volunteer Fairfax

“A major disaster, and the ensuing response of volunteers, can overwhelm the capacity of small emergency management organizations,” says Lyttle. “Our expertise in volunteer management can help organize people’s good intentions into worthwhile contributions. When properly managed, volunteers are a crucial resource and help ensure that a community recovers quickly and effectively after a disaster.”

Among the volunteers who gave their time were a chain



Some of the devastation. Photo by Volunteer Fairfax.

saw crew from a local church, a resident who provided his own dump truck and local volunteer firemen on their day off.

“During a disaster, everyone has skills that can be used in helping to rebuild lives and rebuild the community. The residents of Halifax were a true testament to this,” says Damren.

Volunteer Fairfax is the lead agency for volunteer and donations management in Fairfax County. For more information about Volunteer Fairfax’s emergency response program, contact Matt Lyttle or visit Volunteer Fairfax online at [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org).

Chris Copley is communications director for Volunteer Fairfax.

"Are You Ready?" Hurricane Widget

Copy and Paste the following code to place the "Are You Ready?" Hurricane Widget on your website.

```
<iframe width="240" height="450"
scrolling="no" marginheight="0"
marginwidth="0" frameborder="0"
src="http://www.fema.gov/help/
widgets/prepared_hurricane.html"
title="Are you prepared for
hurricanes?"></iframe>
```

[www.fema.gov/help/widgets/index.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/help/widgets/index.shtm)

## What Motivates People to Prepare, or Not Prepare, for Natural Disasters?

An article published May 11 in Knowledge@Wharton, an online resource from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton Business School, looks at the question "What motivates individuals to listen to warnings and act?" It uses the virtual world as a laboratory.

Robert Meyer, a Wharton marketing professor who is co-director of the Risk Management and Decision Processes Center, developed an interactive simulation to study such factors as news media reports, storm warnings and the level of concern expressed by friends and neighbors that motivate people to act before an impending disaster.

Excerpts from the article include:

- "The group that was bombarded with news about very bad storms actually prepared less in the simulation that followed than the other group. 'You have a crowding out effect with disasters,' according to Meyer. 'As you have one after another, people care less about the next one.'"
- "...the group that viewed a graphic showing the most likely path of the hurricane along with a 'cone of uncertainty' prepared more – not less – than the group that was only shown the uncertainty cone ... including a center-line forecast helped increase mean levels of preparation over the entire threatened region."

Read more at <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=2772>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has launched a new Facebook page for Emergency Preparedness and Response. This page will keep you informed about how to be prepared for public health emergencies and disasters, as well as provide information needed to protect and save lives during an event. Become a fan today! "Like" the page on [www.facebook.com/cdcemergency](http://www.facebook.com/cdcemergency) to receive updates, participate in future conversations and more.



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The Fairfax County Citizen Corps harnesses the power of individuals through education, training and volunteer service to make communities safe, stronger and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues and disasters of all kinds. There are five core programs:

### Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)

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



[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/vips.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem/citizencorps/vips.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)

Operated by the Health Department, MRC is composed of medical and non-medical volunteers trained to assist the community in dispensing medication during public health 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)

## Rocking Springtime Safety, Exercising Safely

Now that you can go outside and exercise when the sun is out, trees are blossoming, and you can spend time outside without wearing a 30 pound winter jacket, the National Crime Prevention Council has put together some tips for you to keep in mind for your personal safety.

Before you start your workout:

- Stick with trails you know so you can find your way back.
- Avoid exercising alone or in unpopulated areas. If something happens, the other person will be able to get help.
- Carry a noise-maker like a whistle in case you need to draw attention to yourself.
- Avoid exercising at night. If you do prefer to work out at night, bring a friend or stay in well-lighted areas like an outside track.
- Stay in tune with your surroundings. It may seem impossible to work out without your iPod or MP3 player, but having headphones on prevents you from hearing any potential threats.
- Trust your intuition. If something doesn't feel right about a person or place, leave immediately.

It's also time for outside events. Whether you live in the city or a rural area, festivals, concerts, movies or just lazy days at the park (and hopefully some crime prevention events) are most likely happening in your community. To keep the fun going without any trouble, follow these safety tips to ensure an enjoyable time:

- Carry only the money you will need with you on that particular day.
- Make sure your purse is closed or zipped up.
- Avoid keeping your wallet in your back pocket where people can easily snatch it.
- If out at night, bring some friends along to avoid being alone in the dark.
- Be aware of your surroundings; know what's going on around you.

[http://ncpc.typepad.com/prevention\\_works\\_blog/2011/04/rocking-springtime-safety.html](http://ncpc.typepad.com/prevention_works_blog/2011/04/rocking-springtime-safety.html)

## Study Shows Evacuation Plans Need To Account for "Human" Interruptions

How people leave a devastated area such as the World Trade Center (WTC) after the 9/11 attacks is critical to their ability to cope with the risks they face while evacuating, thus affecting their chances of survival, according to new research funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A survey of WTC evacuees after the 9/11 attacks found when they were leaving the buildings, they stopped to seek information and to connect with co-workers or friends. Approximately one-half of the respondents immediately departed the area and one-half did not evacuate quickly. Almost 73 percent of those who had not left immediately said they "stopped to see what was happening and/or get more information or assistance," and 53 percent said they "stopped to look for friends or co-workers."

One of the major findings of the survey is that people's comfort level and ability to take action during uncertain situations is apparently higher in the presence of people they know, a conclusion that emergency planners may increasingly need to take into account.

The paper, entitled "To Leave an Area after Disaster: How Evacuees from the World Trade Center Buildings Left the WTC Area Following the Attacks," was authored by Rae Zimmerman of New York University's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and Martin F. Sherman of Loyola University Maryland.

The research was funded by the CDC through the Association of Schools of Public Health, and presents an analysis of Columbia University's WTC Evacuation Study (WTCEs) data that focused on 1,444 evacuees to evaluate the factors affecting the length of time to initiate and complete the evacuation of occupants from the Towers.

More online at [www.emsworld.com/article/article.jsp?id=17061&siteSection=1](http://www.emsworld.com/article/article.jsp?id=17061&siteSection=1).

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management is available to deliver emergency preparedness presentations to community organizations. Contact Marcelo Ferreira at 571-350-1013, TTY 711, or via e-mail at [marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:marcelo.ferreira@fairfaxcounty.gov).

## Flooding Safety

Follow these steps to stay safe before, during and after severe weather, particularly flooding:

- Follow the instructions of state and local officials.
- Listen to local radio or TV stations for updated emergency information.
- Make sure you have a safe place to go in case severe weather approaches.
- Do not drive or walk through floodwater. Turn around and find an alternate route if a road is flooded; it is almost always more dangerous than it appears.
- Create an evacuation plan before flooding occurs.
- Discuss flood plans with your family; everyone should know what to do in case family members are not together when a flood occurs.
- Evacuate immediately if advised to do so.
- Keep emergency supplies on hand, such as non-perishable food, medicine, maps, a flashlight and first-aid kit.
- Use extreme caution when returning to flood damaged homes or businesses.
- Familiarize yourself with severe weather watch/warning terms such as those used to identify flooding hazards:



*Hurricane Floyd left the downtown section of Franklin, Va., under six feet of water. Photo from FEMA.*

- **Flood Watch:** Flooding is possible. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television for information.
- **Flood Warning:** Flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- **Flash Flood Watch:** Rapid rises on streams and rivers are possible. Be prepared to move to higher ground; listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television for information.
- **Flash Flood Warning:** Rapid rises on streams and rivers are occurring; seek higher ground on foot immediately.

For more visit [www.Reddy.gov](http://www.Reddy.gov) or FEMA's mobile website, [m.fema.gov](http://m.fema.gov).

## Red Cross Launches National Ready Rating Program

The American Red Cross earlier this month launched a newly designed website, [www.ReddyRating.org](http://www.ReddyRating.org), to help businesses, schools and other organizations better prepare for emergencies. The announcement was made at an event involving business, education and government leaders at Red Cross national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Ready Rating is a free, self-paced, Web-based membership program that helps a business or school measure how ready they are to deal with emergencies, and gives customized feedback on how they can improve their efforts.

Schools and businesses may face a number of emergencies that could disrupt their operations, ranging from natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods to outbreaks of illness such as the flu. The Ready Rating Program can help them feel more confident about the safety of employees or students.

Ready Rating begins with a comprehensive assessment of whether a business or organization is prepared to handle a disaster. Members score themselves on how prepared they are and receive steps they can take to improve their readiness planning. The assessment covers items from hazard vulnerability to continuity of operations and employee readiness.



Ready Rating is also consistent with Private Sector or PS-Prep Standards developed by the Department of Homeland Security. The program began with a successful pilot in nine cities with a \$2.1 million grant from Anheuser-Busch. Sam's Club is now supporting Ready Rating by providing \$500,000 to help bring the program to additional cities. The program has been revised with an enhanced website that can be used across the country by schools, businesses and other organizations.

More information is online at [www.ReddyRating.org](http://www.ReddyRating.org).

The CDC provides information and resources for preparing for and responding to public health emergencies. CDC has created four badges that you can copy and paste into your website, social network profile, blog or email to provide people with access to information on how to prepare for a zombie take over... and real emergencies like hurricanes or floods. Check out CDC Social Media for badges, widgets, content syndication, and more: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/socialmedia/zombies.asp>.

## Is Your Business Registered on CEAN?

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management has expanded CEAN for businesses. The additional information now requested may allow for the distribution of "sector-specific" alerts during the recovery of a disaster and may facilitate the ability of emergency management to find localized resources.

Take a brief moment to log on to your CEAN for businesses account at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean) and answer a few quick questions relating to your business.

Once you have logged in:

- Click "Edit Profile."
- Fill in the additional fields that relate to your business.
- While you're logged on you can also edit the alerts that you receive via the "My Alerts" tab.
- That's it, you're done.

Forgot your password? Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alert/sendpassword.php](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alert/sendpassword.php).

If you have any questions about CEAN for business, contact the Office of Emergency Management at 571-350-1000, or email [AlertSupport@Fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:AlertSupport@Fairfaxcounty.gov).

The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry is hosting the 16th annual Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Conference, Oct. 4-7, in Portsmouth, Va., to help educate employers and employees in developing safe and healthy work environments and to provide affordable safety and health training opportunities to employers, employees and safety and health professionals. Details are available at [www.doli.virginia.gov/vosh\\_conference/vosh\\_conference.html](http://www.doli.virginia.gov/vosh_conference/vosh_conference.html).

## Attention Mobile Phone Users!

By Bryan Jackson

Did you know that the National Weather Service offers a simplified version of its website, geared for use on cellphones with browsing capability? Visit <http://mobile.weather.gov> for a quick loading page to access basic weather and forecast information. Once there, you can enter your ZIP code for your county's zone forecast, scaled down images of radar and satellite, see any headlines in effect for your county and even read the area forecast discussion from the local forecast office. Also from the mobile page, you can access observations by site or by state, outlooks and discussions from both the Storm Prediction Center and the National Hurricane Center, and marine forecasts and observations.

While now prevalent 3G and 4G phones can easily handle the main <http://weather.gov> site, it is nice to have a simple website to access, particularly in areas of low connectivity. Also, the mobile page may work better in those rare instances that the main site is bogged down with particularly high traffic during large-scale weather events.

Check out <http://mobile.weather.gov> today!

*Bryan Jackson is a general forecaster with the National Weather Service Baltimore, Md./Washington, D.C. Forecast Office in Sterling, Va. Reprinted from the Spring 2011 issue of the "Sterling Reporter" newsletter.*



Online Q&A  
Hurricane  
Preparedness  
May 24

### Hurricane Preparedness Online Chat

On Tuesday, May 24, Marcelo Ferreira, community liaison with the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management, held an online chat about hurricanes, how to prepare for hurricane season and how to save money on emergency preparedness supplies during the annual Virginia Hurricane Sales Tax Holiday, May 25-31. If you missed it, check out the transcript online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/askfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/askfairfax).



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