

Emergency Preparedness

Published by the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management
June 2015

Donating in Times of Disaster

The Nepal earthquake news reported over 8,000 dead, 18,000 injured and over a half-million homes damaged or destroyed. Area photographs show piles of rubble that once were homes, the injured waiting for treatment, tarps being used for shelter in fields and views of widespread devastation.

These reports often generate concern for the well-being of the survivors and a desire to assist in some manner. This desire may lead to the purchasing of blankets, first-aid supplies, food, water and other basic materials that one would believe could provide relief to the victims in that foreign land.

While the thoughts and actions are positive, the full measure of making a difference is not often reached as all of these purchased items still need to be collected and transported to the disaster site, and these costs often are much more than the original purchase price.

So, what is the best way to share?

The United States Agency for International Development began the Center for International Disaster Information (CIDI) in 1988 after Hurricane Gilbert, a Category 5 storm, made landfall impacting 10 countries. Donations poured into the impacted areas but took up space and response personnel in order to manage the materials. CIDI was established to help educate the public how to best give when disasters strike overseas.

CIDI (www.cidi.org) recommends contributions should be monetary donations that can be used to purchase supplies locally. This not only reduces the cost of shipping but can also enhance local merchants. Additionally, monetary donations can be used to provide

additional services such as medical clinics, help reunite family members as well as provide shelter and other services.

A check of the CIDI website provides a listing of organizations that are engaged in disaster relief actions following an overseas event. You often can select from a

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Older Americans Month

May was Older Americans Month. But any time of the year there are simple measures older Americans can take to start preparing for emergencies before they happen.

For instance, create a network of neighbors, relatives, friends and co-workers to aid you in an emergency. Discuss your needs and make sure everyone knows how to operate necessary equipment. And if appropriate, discuss your needs with your employer.

Seniors should keep specialized items ready, including extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters, medication, food for service animals and any other items you might need. Keep a list of the type and model numbers of the medical devices you require. Be sure to make provisions for medications that require refrigeration. Make arrangements for any assistance to get to a shelter.

Here's some additional tips to remember:

- Make a kit to fit your needs. Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer. If you take medicine or receive medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer. Keep a copy of your prescriptions as well as dosage or treatment information.
- If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital or if you receive regular services such as home health care, treatment or transportation, talk to your service provider about their emergency plans.
- Include Emergency Documents: Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kit such as family records, medical records, wills, deeds, Social Security number, charge and bank accounts information

and tax records. It is best to keep these documents in a waterproof container.

- If there is any information related to operating equipment or lifesaving devices that you rely on, include those in your emergency kit as well.
- If you have a communication disability, make sure your emergency information list notes the best way to communicate with you. If you use eyeglasses, hearing aids and hearing-aid batteries, wheelchair batteries or oxygen, be sure you always have extras in your kit.
- Have copies of your medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards readily available.
- If you have a service animal, be sure to include food, water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other emergency pet supplies. Also, include a photograph of you with your service animal to help identify ownership.
- Develop a family emergency plan. Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in disaster.
- Create a personal support network. If you anticipate needing assistance during a disaster, ask family, friends and others to be part of your plan. Share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your group, including a friend or relative in another area who would not be impacted by the same emergency who can help if necessary.
- Include the names and numbers of everyone in your personal support network, as well as your medical providers, in your emergency supply kit.
- Make sure that someone in your personal support network has an extra key to your home and knows where you are so they can move you if necessary. Teach them how to use any lifesaving equipment or administer medicine in case of an emergency.
- Practice your plan with those who have agreed to be part of your personal support network.
- Be informed. Knowing what to do before, during and after an emergency is a critical part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Projections, the projected population of people 65 and older in 2060 is estimated at 92 million. People in this age group would comprise just over one in five U.S. residents at that time. Of this number, 18.2 million would be 85 or older.

www.census.gov/population/projections/data/national/2012.html



Hurricane Season Is Underway

The Atlantic hurricane season began June 1 and continues through Nov. 30. Now is a good time to become familiar with the hurricane-related notifications issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) – www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutgloss.shtml – including watches and warnings.

Hurricane Watch

An announcement that sustained winds of 74 mph or higher are possible within a specified area. Watches are issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds.

During a watch, tune in to your NOAA Weather Radio, local radio or television for information and conduct outside preparedness activities. You can use the America's PrepareAthon! "How to Prepare for a Hurricane" guide for help with storm preparations. <http://1.usa.gov/IPvh9Zi>

Hurricane Warning

An announcement that sustained winds of 74 mph or higher are expected within a specified area. Warnings are issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds.

During a warning, complete storm preparations and immediately leave the threatened area if directed by local officials.

Threats from hurricanes include high winds, heavy rainfall, tornadoes, coastal and inland flooding and storm surge. According to NWS, storm surge produced by hurricanes is one of the greatest threats to life and property along the coast.

To learn more about storm surge, visit the National Hurricane Center at www.nhc.noaa.gov/.

Whether it's a hurricane, tornado, severe thunderstorm or other weather event, you can stay informed about the latest weather with alerts from Fairfax Alerts. Learn more about weather alerts and sign up to receive alerts in your inbox and on your smartphone at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts.

Outreach Events

- **June 4:** VOAD meeting, 10 a.m.
- **June 5:** Community Chaplain Corp graduation, 10 a.m.
- **June 5-7:** Celebrate Fairfax at the GC, OEM Booth
- **June 8:** Tall Oaks Assistive Living Center, Summer Preparedness, 10:30 a.m.
- **June 8:** Disability Services Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
- **June 11:** LEPC Meeting, 10 a.m.
- **June 11:** Mt. Olive Baptist Church, emergency plan review, 7 p.m.
- **June 13:** Taste of Annandale
- **June 26-July 5:** World Police & Fire Games

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.



Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) member Richard Harmon joined the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to teach a group of Cub Scouts about emergency first aid as a part of their emergency preparedness badge. The Cub Scouts also toured the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and caught a glimpse of the Department of Public Safety Communications (DPSC) to learn about the appropriate times to call 9-1-1 and how to call the non-emergency line.



Fairfax County, Va., publication.

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

Five Easy Ways to Prepare Your Pet

If you are like millions of animal owners nationwide, your pet is an important member of your household. Unfortunately, animals are also affected by disaster. The likelihood that you and your animals will survive an emergency such as a fire, flood or tornado depends largely on emergency planning done today.

Here are five easy ways to prepare your pet for an emergency.

Identify a Shelter

Before disaster hits call your local office of emergency management to see if you will be allowed to evacuate with your pets and that there will be shelters that take people and their pets in your area. And just to be safe, track down a pet-friendly safe place for your family and pets. Most boarding kennels, veterinarians and animal shelters will need your pet's medical records to make sure all vaccinations are current.



Pack a Pet Kit

Take pet food, bottled water, medications, veterinary records, cat litter/pan, manual can opener, food dishes, first-aid kit and other supplies with you in case they're not available later. Each pet is unique, but each pet needs the basics in case of an emergency.

Update Your Pet's ID

Make sure identification tags are up-to-date and securely fastened to your pet's collar. If possible, attach the address and/or phone number of your evacuation site. If your pet gets lost, his tag is his ticket home.

Protect Your Pet During a Disaster

Animals have instincts about severe weather changes and will often isolate themselves if they are afraid. Bringing them inside early can stop them from running away. Even if your dogs and cats normally get along, the anxiety of an emergency situation can cause pets to act irrationally. Understanding what to expect during a disaster is crucial.

Keep an Eye on Your Pet After an Emergency

The behavior of your pets may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become aggressive or defensive. Watch animals closely. Leash dogs and place them in a fenced yard with access to shelter and water. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may become confused and lost. Remember to keep taking care of them even after the disaster.

Reprinted from FEMA's "Ready" campaign newsletter, May 8 edition.

<http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDHSRC/bulletins/102953d>

Stay Connected to Emergency Information



Fairfax County Emergency Alerts
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts



Emergency Information Blog
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog



Fairfax County Government Radio
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/radio



Fairfax County on Twitter
www.twitter.com/fairfaxcounty



Fairfax County on Facebook
www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty



Fairfax County on YouTube
www.youtube.com/fairfaxcountygov



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

ASPCA Mobile App

Make pet preparedness easy with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) mobile app.

With the start of hurricane season, the ASPCA mobile app shows pet owners exactly what to do in case of a natural disaster.

Available for free download in the App Store and Google Play, users are able to access critical advice on what to do with your pet before, during and after a major storm – even if there's no data connectivity. It also includes a section to store and manage a pet's personal health records, as well as step-by-step instructions on how to search for a lost animal in a variety of circumstances.



Get the app by visiting www.bit.ly/ASPCAapp.

Learn more about pet preparedness from the Ready campaign at www.ready.gov/caring-animals. Additionally, pet owners can order a free rescue alert sticker at www.aspc.org/form/free-pet-safety-pack.



**FAIRFAX 2015
WORLD
POLICE & FIRE
GAMES**

June 26-July 5
<http://fairfax2015.com>



CAPITALERT.gov
Emergency Warnings: When and Where You Need Them
www.capitalert.gov

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/citizen corps/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/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/citizen corps/firecorps.htm



U.S. Coast Guard Mobile App

As the nation's recreational boating safety coordinator, the Coast Guard works to minimize loss of life, personal injury, property damage and environmental harm.

The Coast Guard's boating safety program involves public education programs, regulation of boat design and construction, approval of boating safety equipment and vessel safety checks for compliance with federal and state safety requirements.

The Coast Guard mobile app supports these missions by providing the essential services and information most commonly requested by boaters.

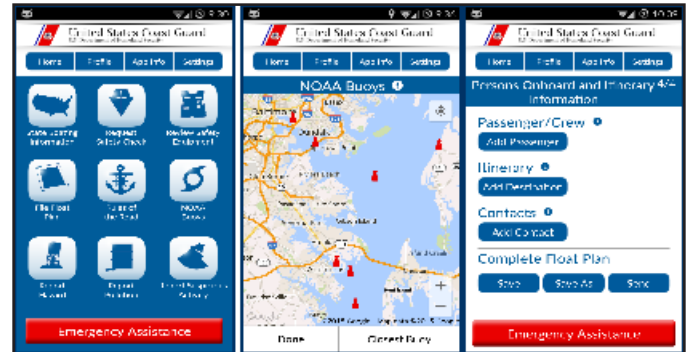
Features of the app include:

- State boating information.
- Safety equipment checklist.
- Free boating safety check requests.
- Navigation rules.
- Float plans.
- Calling features to report pollution or suspicious activity.

When location services are enabled, users can receive the latest weather reports from the closest National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather buoys as well as report the location of a hazard on the water.

The app also features an emergency assistance button which, with locations services enabled, will call the closest Coast Guard command center.

The Boating Safety mobile app was not designed to replace a boater's marine VHF radio, which the Coast Guard strongly recommends all boaters have aboard their vessels. The app was mainly designed to provide



additional boating safety resources for mobile device users.

The app is self-contained, so personal information is stored on the phone and is not sent to the Coast Guard unless the user chooses to send it. The Coast Guard does not track a user's location, and the app does not track a user's location unless the app is being used.

Learn more about the new app online at www.uscg.mil/mobile.



Twenty-one volunteers from Volunteer Fairfax, Medical Reserve Corps, Community Emergency Response Team and others joined the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to share emergency preparedness and Hurricane Sales Tax Holiday information with over 600 homes in the Providence District. Be on the lookout for more volunteer opportunities with OEM this fall after the 2015 World Police & Fire Games June 26-July 5.

Plan to be Prepared

Ready NOVA

Preparedness Planners

Plan to be Prepared

Use the family and business emergency planners at www.ReadyNOVA.org.

Family Emergency Communication Plan

You may not be with your family when a disaster strikes so it's important to make your family communication plans now. Do you know how you will get to a safe place, how you will contact each other and how you will get back together?

Creating a family emergency communication plan will help keep everyone accounted for during an emergency.

Download and complete the Ready campaign's "Family Emergency Communications Plan for Parents and Kids" (www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/34330). Fill out the documents online and print or email to family and friends.

The Ready website also offers these tips to make communicating during a disaster easier:

- Identify a contact such as a friend or relative who lives out-of-state for household members to notify that they are safe.
- Be sure every member of your family knows the phone number and has a cellphone, coins for a pay phone or prepaid phone card to call the emergency contact.
- Teach family members how to use text messaging. Text messages can often get around network disruptions when phone calls might not go through.
- Subscribe to local emergency alert services. Sign up online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts.

For more information about emergency alerts, review the "Be Smart. Know Your Alerts and Warnings" guide (<http://1.usa.gov/1mfBplB>) from America's PrepareAthon!

Reprinted from FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief, May 14 edition.



Disaster Donations

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number of different relief organizations and, if you are not familiar with a specific group, visit the website for more information on specific activities.

If you want to check on the efficiency of a particular charity, websites such as www.charitynaviagtor.org or www.guidestar.org can provide that information. And, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Office of Charitable and Regulatory programs has a Web page of Virginia registered organizations at http://cos.va-vdacs.com/cgi-bin/char_search.cgi. It is always a good idea to verify an organization is legitimate so your donation will be used to the fullest extent possible. Fairfax County's Consumer Affairs Branch also has guidelines available online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/education.

Also remember here in the United States there have been a significant number of deadly tornadoes and flooding events and there are numerous volunteer organizations that have responded to assist along with governmental agencies. As with the international response, it is always good to verify the legitimacy of the organization before providing monetary support.

If you would like to contribute your time instead of money, it is never a good idea to self-deploy to a disaster event. The impacted area's resources are already strained and showing up without support would just not be a good idea.

Learn what organizations in your area have disaster relief operational units and become affiliated with one of them. The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (www.NVOAD.org) has a complete listing of disaster response groups who will welcome you and may even provide the training you need to be a contributing disaster response person.

Take the time now to learn what organizations are actively engaged in disaster relief activities so when the next disaster occurs, you don't start going through your personal items or pantry to amass a bag of materials to donate. All organizations will accept your monetary donation whether there is a disaster or not but take the time to ensure that your hard earned cash is going to make the impact you desire.

Cellphones Can Save Lives

With severe spring weather and the hurricane season that began June 1, FEMA reminds the public that severe weather can happen anywhere and at any time. Being aware of severe weather conditions in the area is an essential component of knowing how to prepare for the unexpected.

When severe weather occurs, imminent threat weather alerts can be sent directly to your personal cellphones and can provide a critical window of time to find safety.

Imminent threat weather alerts are one type of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) that are sent directly to cellular devices. The National Weather Service forecast offices send imminent threat weather alerts for tornadoes, flash floods, extreme wind, tsunamis, hurricane, typhoon and dust storms. Local public safety officials – including Fairfax County’s Office of Emergency Management – may also send WEAs for a wide range of threats to public safety.

WEA capable cellphones use a unique tone and vibration designed to grab attention when an imminent threat is in the area.

All that is needed is a wireless device that receives the 90-character WEA messages.

WEA alerts are free and do not require you to register to receive them. WEAs are sent from cell towers in a warning area and resemble text messages, but they are not the same as text messages. WEAs use one-way cell broadcast technology that ensures the alerts will not get backlogged during times of emergency when networks are highly congested.

The WEA is a “heads up” that there is dangerous weather or other imminent threats in the area – local radio and TV sources can provide detailed warning information about the threat.

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-outreach@fairfaxcounty.gov.



The availability of WEA alerts will depend on a wireless carrier’s network availability and if the handset can receive WEAs. To determine if a wireless device can receive WEA alerts contact the wireless carrier for more information or visit www.ctia.org/Wea.

State AMBER coordinators in coordination with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children can also send WEAs for missing children. If ever an extreme national emergency were to occur, a presidential WEA could be sent to wireless devices.

To learn more about WEA alerts, go to the FEMA website at www.ready.gov and search for wireless emergency alerts or go to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) WEA Web page at www.fcc.gov/guides/wireless-emergency-alerts-wea.

Reprinted from FEMA’s External Affairs Bulletin, week of May 11 edition; online at <http://bit.ly/1PgZ2LW>.

