

Emergency Preparedness

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Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday, May 25-31

By Laura Southard

Before the tropical storms arrive, you can get ready and save money, too. Shop during Virginia's Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday, May 25-31, and you won't pay sales tax on many supplies for protecting your home and business. Many useful items qualify.

Shop for items on this list that have a price of \$60 or less:

- Artificial ice, blue ice, ice packs, reusable ice.
- Batteries, excluding car or boat batteries.
- Portable self-powered light sources, including flashlights and lanterns and glow sticks.
- First-aid kits.
- Cellphone chargers.
- Weather Band radios and NOAA Weather Radios.
- Portable self-powered radios, including radios with electrical power capability.
- Bottled water of any size, including flavored and carbonated.
- Two-way radios.
- Manual can openers.
- Tarps, plastic sheeting, plastic drop cloths.
- Bungee cords and rope.
- Ground anchor systems or tie-down kits.
- Ratchet straps.
- Duct tape.
- Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, fire extinguishers.
- Empty gas, propane or diesel fuel tanks or containers.
- Water storage containers such as

Continued on Page 3

In This Issue

Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday

Page 1

Arson Awareness Week | Safe Digging Month

Page 2

Outreach Events | Hurricane Graphic

Page 3

FEMA Awards | Active Shooter Response | Free Preparedness Exercises

Page 4

Home Flood Repairs

Page 5

State Bill | Food Safety During Power Outages

Page 6

9-1-1 Education Month

Page 7

Hurricane Sales Tax Holiday

Page 8

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Arson Awareness Week, May 4-10

Each year during the first full week in May, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and its partners work to raise awareness of arson and provide individuals with strategies to combat it in their community.

This year, Arson Awareness Week is May 4-10 and focuses on vehicle arson.

Here are some interesting vehicle arson statistics:

- From 2008-2010, 14 percent of all fires were vehicle fires. Of these fires, 7 percent were intentionally set. *Source: USFA*
- From 2004-2006, an estimated 27,900 intentionally set vehicle fires occurred each year in the U.S. These intentionally set fires resulted in an average of approximately 40 deaths, 75 injuries and \$169 million in property loss each year. *Source: USFA*
- During 2007-2011, local fire departments responded to an average of 20,400 intentionally set vehicle fires, accounting for 7 percent of intentionally set fires and resulting in an average of 32 civilian deaths, 67 civilian injuries and \$176 million in direct property damage. *Source: National Fire Protection Association*
- Two-thirds of intentionally set vehicle fires occur under the cloak of darkness (9 p.m.-6 a.m.). *Source: National Fire Protection Association*
- Over the last 10 years (2003-2012), there have been an average of 14,737 vehicle arsons reported, accounting for 26.5 percent of total arsons annually. *Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation*

www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/arson



Fairfax County, Va., publication.

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

Safe Digging Month

The Virginia Utility Protection Service, commonly called Miss Utility of Virginia, is the not-for-profit organization created by Virginia's utilities to protect their underground facilities.

Virginia 811 is the free "one call" Virginia communications center for excavators, contractors, property owners and those planning any kind of excavation, digging or demolition.

Miss Utility of Virginia notifies participating utilities of the upcoming excavation work so they can locate and mark their underground facilities in advance to prevent possible damage to underground utility lines, injury, property damage and service outages.



Calling before you dig is a simple step, but one that can make your construction, planting or home improvement project safer while preventing utility outages that can be inconvenient or even dangerous for your neighbors. In addition, calling 811 before you dig is the law.

April was National Safe Digging Month in Virginia and across the country, and even though recognition of the month is over, residents are encouraged to call before you dig – any time of the year! To learn more visit www.va811.com.



Sales Tax Holiday

continued from Page 1

buckets, barrels, canteens, coolers.

Shop for items on this list that have a sales price of \$1,000 or less:

- Portable generators and generator power cords.
- Inverters and inverter power cables.

Retail outlets will have information about the tax holiday. For more, visit www.tax.virginia.gov/site.cfm?alias=STHoliday. For information about getting ready for hurricane and flooding season in Virginia, visit www.ReadyVirginia.gov and www.ListoVirginia.gov.

Laura L. Southard is public outreach coordinator with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

Editor's Note: See Page 8 for an infographic that visually demonstrates what can – and should – be purchased during the hurricane preparedness sales tax holiday, May 25-31.



The North Atlantic hurricane season begins June 1 and lasts through Nov. 30. The U.S. Census Bureau infographic (above) is part of the bureau's "facts for features" series for special events during the year. www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb14-ff09.html

Outreach Events

- Thursday, May 8 – Pet Emergency Preparedness Booth for National Pet Preparedness Day at the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (good video: www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/videos/75356)
- Monday, May 12 – Safety in Our Community: Preventing the 9-1-1 Call Health and Safety Seminar at the Mason District Office of Supervisor Penny Gross. Learn more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mason
- Monday, May 12 – Disaster Behavioral Health Conference at GMU-Fairfax <http://chhs.gmu.edu/events/disaster-behavioral-health/upload/DBH-Flyer.pdf>
- Saturday, May 17 – Neighborhood Day Canvassing in Mount Vernon with OEM and RSVP-Northern Virginia; 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Volunteer opportunity, sign up: <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07e92pauvbhsxj7upq/a015mhuoh43fw/questions>
- Saturday, May 17 – Booth at McLean Day at the McLean Community Center www.mcleancenter.org/calendar/icalrepeat.detail/2014/05/17/2059/79/mclean-day-2014
- Thursday, May 22 – CEPS Family Child Care Workshop series on emergency preparedness at the Pennino Building, Rooms 206 and 200, 7-9 p.m.
- Thursday, May 22 – Emergency preparedness presentation at Braddock District Supervisor John Cook's Neighborhood College; David R. Pinn Community Center, 7-9 p.m.
- Thursday, May 29 – Citizen Corps Council meeting, McConnell Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center, 6:45-9 p.m.
- Saturday, May 31 – Pet Emergency Preparedness Demo and Booth at Springfield Days PetFest, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. at South Run Park.

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

2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards

FEMA has announced that the application period for the 2014 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards is now 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.

To be considered for this year’s awards, all submissions must be received by May 30, at 11:59 p.m. EDT, and must feature program activities taking place between Jan. 1, 2013, and May 30, 2014. Winners will be announced this 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.

Visit www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/citizen-corps-awards for more information and instructions for submitting an application.

Free Preparedness Exercises

Points of Light and the HandsOn Network are offering free Web-based exercises in May to help with disaster volunteer and preparedness needs. The “Operation Volunteer Placement” exercise will be held on May 21, and is intended for local agencies and organizations tasked with volunteer coordination during an emergency. Exercise participants will work through different scenarios dealing with the numerous challenges associated with screening and placing spontaneous volunteers with various response agencies and organizations. For more information and to register, visit www.drc-group.com/project/vrc.html. The “Resilient Response” exercise is a disaster readiness and response activity discussing different scenarios related to natural disasters and how to respond. The next exercise is scheduled for May 30. For additional information and to register yourself or your organization to participate, visit www.resilientresponseexercise.org.

Reprinted from FEMA’s “Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief,” April 4 edition

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

HOW TO RESPOND

WHEN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER IS IN YOUR VICINITY

QUICKLY DETERMINE THE MOST REASONABLE WAY TO PROTECT YOUR OWN LIFE. CUSTOMERS AND CLIENTS ARE LIKELY TO FOLLOW THE LEAD OF EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS DURING AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. EVACUATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an escape route and plan in mind • Leave your belongings behind • Keep your hands visible | <p>2. HIDE OUT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hide in an area out of the active shooter's view. • Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors | <p>3. TAKE ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger. • Attempt to incapacitate the active shooter • Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter |
|--|--|--|

CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO

HOW TO RESPOND

WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES ON THE SCENE

- 1. HOW YOU SHOULD REACT WHEN LAW ENFORCEMENT ARRIVES:**
- Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions
 - Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
 - Keep hands visible at all times
 - Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as attempting to hold on to them for safety
 - Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
 - Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises
- 2. INFORMATION YOU SHOULD PROVIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR 911 OPERATOR:**
- Location of the active shooter
 - Number of shooters, if more than one
 - Physical description of shooter/s
 - Number and type of weapons held by the shooter/s
 - Number of potential victims at the location

RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF POTENTIAL WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

AN ACTIVE SHOOTER MAY BE A CURRENT OR FORMER EMPLOYEE. ALERT YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT IF YOU BELIEVE AN EMPLOYEE EXHIBITS POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR. INDICATORS OF POTENTIALLY VIOLENT BEHAVIOR MAY INCLUDE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism, and/or vague physical complaints
- Depression/Withdrawal
- Increased severe mood swings, and noticeably unstable or emotional responses
- Increasingly talks of problems at home
- Increase in unsolicited comments about violence, firearms, and other dangerous weapons and violent crimes



Contact your building management or human resources department for more information and training on active shooter response in your workplace.

Last month’s Ft. Hood shootings is a good reminder that an active shooter incident can occur anywhere. Get copies of the Department of Homeland Security’s active shooter response poster for your worksite online at www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_poster.pdf.



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

Home Flood Repairs

Repairing your home after a flood can be a stressful endeavor. That's why FEMA and the American Red Cross developed a comprehensive book to help get you started on the road to recovery.

"Repairing Your Flooded Home" (www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4540081_repairingFloodedHome.pdf) gives step-by-step advice to make the process less overwhelming.

Your home and its contents may look beyond repair, but many of your belongings can be restored. If you do things correctly, your flooded home can be cleaned up, dried out, rebuilt and reoccupied sooner than you think.

Copies of this book are also available at your local Red Cross or by sending a written request to FEMA at P.O. Box 2012 Jessup, MD 20794-2012.

The document explains how to protect yourself and your property, and details the steps to take now so that you can act quickly when you, your home, or your business is in danger.

Reprinted from FEMA's "Individual and Community Preparedness e-Brief," April 4 edition

Stay Connected to Emergency Information



Fairfax County Emergency Alerts
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean



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

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/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



Governor McAuliffe Signs State Bill Transferring Homeland Security Responsibilities

In early April, at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management’s Emergency Operations Center, Gov. Terry McAuliffe signed State Bill 381, which transfers the responsibility for overseeing and coordinating efforts to strengthen homeland security from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security to the Secretary of Public Safety. The legislation renames the secretariats the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs and the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, and enables Virginia to better prepare for, evaluate, and respond to emergencies and disasters.

The governor’s office, Secretary of Public Safety Brian Moran and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Admiral John Harvey worked closely with a bipartisan coalition in the General Assembly to develop this legislation, which originated from recommendations from the Joint Legislative and Review Committee (JLARC). The bill, patroned by Senators Lynwood Lewis and Bryce Reeves, and its companion bill, HB730, patroned by Delegate Scott Lingamfelter, passed with unanimous support through both chambers of the General Assembly.

“This legislation streamlines Virginia’s ability to keep our communities safe by putting our homeland security planning and preparedness functions in the same place as our emergency and disaster response functions,” said McAuliffe as he signed the bill.

Under the new law, the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security is charged with:

- Assigning planning responsibilities among state agencies and local jurisdictions to elevate the state of readiness in Virginia.
- Integrating the state homeland security strategy into

- the Secure Commonwealth Plan.
- Developing the annual Commonwealth Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Report.
- Ensuring development and implementation of plans for protecting public critical infrastructure.
- Directing the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) to assist localities and state agencies to develop top quality, realistic disaster plans.
- Directing VDEM to oversee all shelter, evacuation, traffic, and refuge of last resort plans to ensure they will work when our citizens need them.

Food Safety During Power Outages




Weather emergencies can happen. When they do, the best strategy is to already have a plan in place. This includes knowing the proper food safety precautions to take if the power goes out. A video from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration offers several tips to remember in case you lose power: <http://youtu.be/GkFqAbqO38Q>.

Boating Safety

Most boating fatalities are drownings and 85 percent of those who drown, while boating, are not wearing a life jacket. May 17-23 is National Safe Boating Week, a great reminder to always wear your life jacket at all times while you are boating. And ask your friends and family to do the same anytime you’re on the water. www.safeboatingcampaign.com/





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

National 9-1-1 Education Month

The National 9-1-1 Education Coalition recognized April as National 9-1-1 Education Month. April was first recognized as National 9-1-1 Education Month by the U.S. Congress in 2008, in support of the National 9-1-1 Education Coalition, an alliance of eight national organizations committed to advancing 9-1-1 public education across the country.

Even though the special month is over, there are several key points to remember when calling 9-1-1:

- **Know Where You Are:** Where are you right now? Can you tell 9-1-1 exactly where to find you?
- **Use a Landline:** Whenever possible, use a landline to call 9-1-1. Cellphone calls aren't always routed to the closest call center and the time it takes to transfer your call to the call center is important in an emergency.
- **Stay Calm and Ready to Listen:** 9-1-1 will stay on the line to help you until help arrives. Be ready to listen and follow directions.

Fairfax County 9-1-1

Fairfax County's 9-1-1 Center is the primary 9-1-1 public safety answering point for Fairfax County, as well as the City of Fairfax and the towns of Herndon and Vienna. The center provides the dispatch for all units of the Fairfax County Police Department and Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, including the City of Fairfax Fire Department and the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office.



Fairfax County's 9-1-1 Call Center – located at the McConnell Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center (MPSTOC) and collocated on the operations floor with call takers and dispatchers from Virginia State Police and the Virginia Department of Transportation – is one of the 50 largest in the U.S. and the largest in Virginia.

Call takers and dispatchers in Fairfax County's 9-1-1 Center answer approximately 2,200 calls for assistance daily; some 830,000 annually from the public, both 9-1-1 and non-emergency.

For more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/911.



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by email

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SAVE MONEY

VIRGINIA'S HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS SALES TAX HOLIDAY MAY 25 - 31



Sales Tax-Exempt Products for \$60 or Less:

- | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice packs
artificial ice, blue ice, reusable ice | <input type="checkbox"/> Batteries
AAA, AA, C & D 6-&9-volt, cell (excludes auto/boat) | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kits | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlights
lanterns, glow sticks (excludes candles) | <input type="checkbox"/> Radios
battery-powered, hand-crank & electric | <input type="checkbox"/> Two-Way Radios | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguishers |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smoke Detectors
& carbon monoxide detectors | <input type="checkbox"/> Ratchet Straps | <input type="checkbox"/> Bottled Water
any size & number, including flavored & carbonated | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual Can Openers | <input type="checkbox"/> Fuel Containers
gas, propane or diesel | <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Anchor Systems
or tie down kits | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Electric Food Storage Coolers |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone Chargers | <input type="checkbox"/> NOAA Weather Radios
& weather band radios | <input type="checkbox"/> Duct Tape | <input type="checkbox"/> Tarps
waterproof plastic sheeting & drop cloths | <input type="checkbox"/> Buckets
barrels, canteens, coolers | <input type="checkbox"/> Rope & bungee cords | <input type="checkbox"/> Storm Shutters
specific for storms, excludes plywood |

\$ Portable generators, generator power cords, inverters & inverter power cables for \$1,000 or less are also tax-free.

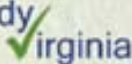


Gas-powered chainsaws for \$350 or less and chainsaw accessories for \$60 or less also qualify.

The Virginia Department of Taxation's Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday Guidelines and Rules are available online at go.usa.gov/TmGR.

For detailed information about how to prepare your family for hurricanes and other emergencies, visit www.ReadyVirginia.gov.



Ready 
www.ReadyVirginia.gov