

# Courier

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## DPWES Celebrates Week

A proclamation, picnic and stormwater pond planting were a few of the ways that the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) celebrated Public Works Week, May 20-26.

The Board of Supervisors presented DPWES representatives including, **Jimmie Jenkins**, agency director, and **Bob Estadt**, Public Works Week coordinator, with a proclamation at the board meeting on Monday, May 21.

On Tuesday, May 22, staff from the Wastewater Collection Division and the Stormwater Management Division, led by ecologist **Gayle England**, worked



*Ecologist Gayle England (right, kneeling) gives directions for the stormwater planting to Wastewater Collection Division employees (standing left to right) Horace Heywood, Zach Scott, Van Critzer, Jontae Spinner and (also kneeling) Anthony Jennings.*

together to plant a truck full of native Virginia wetlands plants by a stormwater drain on the north side of the Government Center. The plants will help to slow the runoff into the drain, which eventu-



*Lu Wright (left) helps Abby Movahed, a colleague from Land Development Services, through the labyrinth of picnic food.*

*DPWES, see page 2*

## CRiS: Small, Quiet and Powerful

Sometime today, you may have walked past one of the busiest customer service representatives in the county. Although it's rather small and quiet, every month the CRiS (Community Resident Information Services) kiosk provides thousands of residents with convenient and easy access to a long menu of county, state and regional services and information.

Coordinated by the Department of Information Technology, the 11-year-old CRiS kiosk program is in 26 locations, both in and outside the county, and a CRiS is expected to be installed at Fair Oaks Mall before the end of the year. The locations include county libraries, the Adult Detention Center, Government Center Complex buildings, district gov-

*CRiS, see page 2*

DPWES, from page 1

ally flows into the Chesapeake Bay, as well as absorbing some of the excess fertilizer that is common in residential lawns.

A national motivational speaker known as "Brian, the Safety Guy" was the highlight for Wednesday, May 23.

It was the next day, however, when blue skies and the smell of hot dogs and burgers on the grill lured many of the more than 1,200 DPWES employees to the annual picnic on the Government Center grounds. ■



**Robin Patton** (second from right), director, Land Acquisition Division, records comments from the three "celebrity" judges who lent their taste buds to the dessert contest at the DPWES picnic, including (left to right) **Rob Stalzer**, deputy county executive; **Jeff Smithberger**, director, Solid Waste Collection and Recycling; and (far right) **Merni Fitzgerald**, director of the Office of Public Affairs.

CRiS, from page 1

ernment centers, the Fairfax City Museum, the Warrenton Library, Tysons West Park Transit Station and the Inova HealthPlex in Alexandria.

At CRiS kiosks, employees, residents and

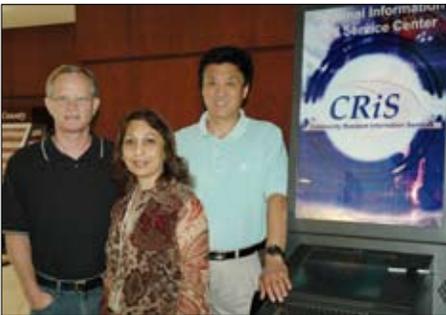
Burke Lake Park or look up library services information on one of the several kiosks located in the libraries.

The top 12 CRiS page visits to date are:

- ◆ Exploring the County
- ◆ Fairfax County Public Library
- ◆ Fairfax County Job Listings
- ◆ Living Here
- ◆ Book Reviews
- ◆ Information About Using the Library
- ◆ Library Services A-Z
- ◆ Entertainment
- ◆ Attractions
- ◆ Library Branches
- ◆ Fairfax County Public Schools
- ◆ e-Services

The kiosks are ADA (American with Disabilities Act) compliant and are uniquely engineered to house the widest possible range of components such as an LCD touch screen monitor, speakers, phone, credit card reader, scanner, thermal printer, check processing reader, and other features. They are Web enabled, which means that the county and its partners can easily deploy Web information and services through a browser.

Comprehensive information about the CRiS kiosk program can be found at <http://CRiS/fairfaxcounty.gov>. Kalra also encourages county agencies to ensure that the information on CRiS is up-to-date and complete. If you have questions about your CRiS information, send her an e-mail at [sudesh.kalra@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:sudesh.kalra@fairfaxcounty.gov). ■



Department of Information Technology CRiS project team members **Neal Campion**, **Sudesh Kalra** and **Fengming Chen**. Not pictured is **Greg Scott**.

visitors can access most information provided through the county's public Web site, as well as services and information from Metro, Virginia Rail Express, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and the Inova Health System, among many other partners.

"The CRiS kiosks are popular with our customers, because they actually allow

you to conduct business with the county as well as look up information and get print-outs on the spot," explained Deputy County Executive **David Molchany**. "CRiS is one of the few successful municipal kiosk programs in the world, because a customer can complete government-related tasks right at the kiosk. The kiosk extends government to where the customer is standing."

According to CRiS Project Manager **Sudesh Kalra**, the topics and uses of the kiosks can vary by the time of year and location of the CRiS. She noted that many residents use the kiosk to pay their taxes in the fall, find directions to other parks at the CRiS located at

# Air Quality Is Everyone's Responsibility

Good air quality is important to everyone. Although the air quality in this region has improved significantly during the last several decades, it still does not meet the federal standards for ozone and fine particulate matter.

Last year there were 21 days forecast as Code Orange and above for ozone pollution. If everyone contributes by taking a few air quality actions, it will be a tremendous step toward meeting the standards.

There are several easy ways you can make a positive impact this summer:

- ◆ Follow the recommended steps listed on the Air Quality Action Guide on this page.
- ◆ Turn your engine off instead of idling. The major cause of air pollution in this region is vehicles and their exhaust fumes. If you will be idling longer than 30 seconds waiting in line at school, the bank, the gas station, or drive-up restaurants, you can save gas, in addition to reducing exhaust, by turning your engine off and restarting it.
- ◆ Change to energy-efficient, compact fluorescent light bulbs. Replacing a single 100-watt incandescent light bulb with a fluorescent one can save \$30, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. And fluorescent last 10 times longer. If every household used five fluorescent light bulbs, they could prevent greenhouse gas emissions equal to more than 8 million cars, according to the EPA.

◆ Take the bus. This year, Northern Virginia bus lines, including Fairfax Connector, will offer free rides on Code Orange days, in addition to Code Red and Purple days. For information, go to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector).

Fairfax County also is doing its share. It is partnering with a select group of counties across the United States and the Sierra Club in a "Cool Counties" initiative to create a template for local governments to begin reducing their greenhouse gas emissions in favor of more environmentally friendly practices.

A number of strategies already have been implemented in the county, including the purchase of hybrid vehicles (now totaling 90); the promotion of green buildings for

both public and private facilities (the Fairfax Center and Crosspointe Fire and Rescue stations, for example); expanding the purchase of wind power; and promoting telework (Fairfax County was the first jurisdiction in the metropolitan region to achieve the goal of having 20 percent of its work force teleworking one day a week).

Additional information is available at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/airquality](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/airquality).

The Board of Supervisors' environmental agenda is outlined in "Environmental Excellence for Fairfax County - A 20-Year Vision." Information about the plan and the FY 2008 environmental improvement program is available at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/eip](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/eip).

Are you and/or your family taking steps to improve air quality? If so, Courier wants to hear about it! Send an e-mail to [courier@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:courier@fairfaxcounty.gov) with details about what you and/or your family are doing; include your name, agency and phone number. ■

By Ellen O'Brien, Office of Public Affairs

Take steps to keep it Code Green!



## FAIRFAX COUNTY GUIDE to cleaner, healthier air in the region

| Air Quality Index Codes                         | Action Steps for Everyone  |
|---|--|
| <b>GOOD</b><br>GREEN                            | <b>Enjoy outdoor activities!</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Carpool, use public transit, bike or walk</li> <li>◆ Keep engines tuned</li> <li>◆ Use environmentally friendly products</li> </ul>  |
| <b>MODERATE</b><br>YELLOW                       | <b>Some pollution in the air</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Limit driving, consolidate trips</li> <li>◆ Reduce car idling</li> <li>◆ Conserve electricity, set A/C to 78°F</li> </ul>  |
| <b>UNHEALTHY for Sensitive Groups</b><br>ORANGE | <b>Children and adults with respiratory and heart sensitivity should limit outdoor activity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Refuel after dusk, use fuel-efficient vehicles</li> <li>◆ Avoid driving, use transit, telework</li> <li>◆ Avoid using aerosol products</li> </ul> |
| <b>UNHEALTHY</b><br>RED                         | <b>Unhealthy for everyone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Avoid lawn mowing or use electric mowers</li> <li>◆ Put off painting until air quality improves</li> <li>◆ Limit strenuous outdoor activities</li> </ul>  |
| <b>VERY UNHEALTHY</b><br>PURPLE                 | <b>Very unhealthy for everyone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Avoid outdoor physical activities, especially sensitive groups</li> </ul>  |

Ride FREE on Fairfax Connector on ORANGE, RED and PURPLE days: [www.fairfaxconnector.com](http://www.fairfaxconnector.com)



For daily air quality index forecasts  
Call - 703-FAIRFAX (703-324-7329), TTY 711  
Visit - [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/airquality](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/airquality)



# Everything Bad Is Good For You

You can use new technologies to get people more engaged and to get people to contribute to the overall shape of the city, the environment, the community or the county, according to Steven Johnson, author of "Everything Bad Is Good For You: How Today's Popular Culture Is Actually Making Us Smarter." Johnson was the featured speaker for the Millennium Forum held on May 23 in the Government Center Auditorium.

Johnson believes that video games, TV and the Internet actually develop more complex ways of thinking – a phenomenon he calls "the Sleeper curve," a reference to the 1973 Woody Allen film in which the actor is transported to the future where things once thought to be bad – i.e. coffee – are now considered good. These new ways of thinking encourage engagement,

he believes.

Jurisdictions can harness new cognitive skills in programs such as New York City's 3-1-1 program. As an alternative to 9-1-1, residents of the city can call in minor problems or just ask for information. Responses are mapped on a huge "dashboard" to determine patterns.

"You are extending the eyes and ears of the government," Johnson told the audience. "In a sense you are outsourcing to anyone who can dial three numbers on a phone. It's a powerful tool for tapping the collective intelligence."

The more intricate ways of thinking that contribute to such initiatives develop from playing complex video and online games, such as SimCity, or keeping track of the multiple mysteries and characters in TV shows such as "Lost." These activities help develop skills, such as system thinking, that allow

individuals to understand complex organizations. They help people quickly adapt to new interfaces.

"There is no longer a learning curve for adapting to new ways of organizing things," Johnson said, referring to new tools, such as blogs or social media sites like MySpace and Facebook. These new communication tools are almost immediately adopted, as opposed to e-mail, which took several decades to catch on. Other elements of the Sleeper curve include the ability to interact with larger groups of people and keep track of them, a skill he refers to as social network mapping. There is also collaboration, as evident at sites such as Wikipedia, which foster collective authorship, as well as the notion that entertainment equals engagement – that entertainment should be a challenge. "The worst criticism of an online game," Johnson said, "is that it is too easy."

In the real world these five skills: system thinking, interface adaptation, social network mapping, collaboration and equating entertainment with engagement translate into a younger work force that is adept in jobs that require mastering new technology and communicating and collaborating with large groups of people.

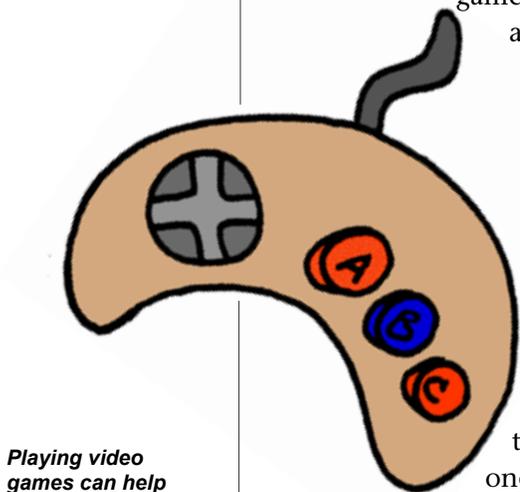
Johnson cautioned, however that while mastering new interfaces and new forms of communicating is more and more central to our popular culture, there must be a balance.

Older forms of communication, including books must also be part of the mix.

"What we should be striving for as parents or educators or people interested in public policy is a kind of balanced diet of the media," he said. "We have to be fluent in all these forms."

To borrow a videotape or DVD of Johnson's presentation, call ELLVIS at 703-324-8318, TTY 703-324-8365, or e-mail [john.kiefman@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:john.kiefman@fairfaxcounty.gov). For more information on Millennium Forum events, go to <http://infoweb/mfs>. ■

By Patricia Bangs, Library  
Millennium Forum Planning Committee



Playing video games can help develop more complex ways of thinking, according to Johnson.

## Meet Edie Beitzel, Fire and Rescue Department

# People Like Us...

**E**die Beitzel, a 26-year veteran of the County work force, is a management analyst in the Planning Section for the Fire and Rescue Department's Capital Improvement Program. A colleague said of Beitzel, "In addition to being an asset to the department and county for her wealth of knowledge, she is always a bright and cheery person willing to lend a hand or flash a great Edie smile to brighten a day. Everyone ought to have the opportunity to meet Edie."

### **What I do...**

... I oversee projects funded by the Capital Improvement Program including design and construction of new fire stations, major additions/renovations to existing fire stations, installations of Opticom preemption systems, and maintaining and updating our Fire Station Design Manual.

### **I began working for the county...**

... In 1981 in the now-defunct Department of Environmental Management (DEM is now part of the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services), and then moved to the Fire and Rescue Department in 1990. I've been in my current position for about 10 years.

### **Favorite part of my job...**

... Completing a new fire station and interacting with my co-workers.

### **Favorite spot in Fairfax County...**

... My yard at my home in Clifton! I'm a flower and plant freak, and I always have something blooming during the growing season.

### **Favorite food...**

... Crab cakes from Lowery's in Tappahannock, or the "Jim Bowie" filet mignon from the Border Café in Centreville.

### **Work colleagues would be surprised to learn...**

... That I would like to take landscaping design classes when I retire, or maybe "clown" classes. I haven't decided yet.



**Edie Beitzel (far right) at the construction site for the recently opened Crosspointe Fire and Rescue Station. Photo provided by Beitzel.**

### **If I could be a superhero or cartoon character, I would be...**

... Wonder Woman, so I could keep up with my four grandchildren!

### **When I was a child, I thought I would grow up to be...**

... an acrobat – I know, I can't explain it, I just liked to climb trees, and hang upside down from the limbs.

### **Who has had the biggest influence in your career with the county?**

... I would say **Henry Schenke** (retired), my last supervisor at DEM. A compassionate, caring, unbelievably conscientious person, who encouraged people to perform at their highest level, but always reminded us that work should also be enjoyed.

### **Words of wisdom...**

... Come to this job prepared to work hard! You need to be passionate and have a good work ethic with the reward being a job well done. Also, be prepared to enjoy and appreciate the numerous people that you interact with on a daily basis in the many county agencies! ■

People Like Us is a recurring feature in Courier about some of the interesting people with interesting jobs who work for Fairfax County. Know someone like that? Send your nomination for People Like Us to [courier@fairfax-county.gov](mailto:courier@fairfax-county.gov).

## Focus on Benefits



**HR Central  
has benefit  
information.  
703-324-4900,  
TTY 703-222-7314**

# Keep Your Beneficiary Designation Current for Group Term Life Insurance

Do you know who your beneficiary is for your county group term life insurance coverage? If you're a new employee who has recently enrolled in county benefits, you probably do. If you're a long-term county employee, however, it probably has been some time since you've made or reviewed your beneficiary designation for this important program.

Many employees have had changes in their marital and/or family status during their employment with the county. You may have either added family members to, or removed them from, your health, dental and life insurance coverage.

However, since the county does not automatically make changes to your beneficiary designations when you add family members to or remove them from health, dental and life insurance coverage, these important designations may not be as current as you might think.

The selection of a beneficiary is just as important as keeping your designation current since it will determine who will receive the benefit and when the benefit will be paid. If you elect an individual(s) as your beneficiary(ies), your benefit will be paid to that person(s) shortly after the county receives required documentation.

However, if you designate your estate as your beneficiary, the benefits will not be paid until the estate is settled. If there is no beneficiary designation on record, the courts will determine who will receive the death benefit. This can be a long process and the courts may not pay benefits to the person(s) you intended.

Checking your current group term life insurance beneficiary is easy. You can review your 2006 Annual Statement of Earnings and Benefit Report distributed in February 2007 or check the PRISM system. To check your beneficiary designation on the PRISM system:

- ♦ Logon to Online Time.
- ♦ Select transaction 017 (Benefits Inquiry) and enter either your name or Social Security number.
- ♦ Go to the middle of the next screen and look for "Beneficiary Name."

If the life insurance beneficiary shown in the PRISM system is not current, you can change your beneficiary by following these steps:

- ♦ On the Infoweb, go to the Benefits home page and select "Forms" from the drop-down box at the top of the page.
- ♦ Select "Life Insurance" from the list on this page.
- ♦ Select "Beneficiary Change Form" from the list of life insurance forms.
- ♦ Download and complete the online form to request a beneficiary designation card.

Remember that your beneficiary designation(s) for other assets and benefit programs, such as deferred compensation, retirement benefits and bank accounts, may be different than your designated life insurance beneficiary. You should also verify your beneficiary designations for these programs and other assets.

If you have questions about the beneficiary designation, contact HR Central at 703-324-4900, TTY 703-222-7314. ■

## Tuition Assistance Program Deadline for Grades is June 15

To meet the end of the fiscal year processing deadlines, all TAP and LTAP grades must be submitted to HR Central by close of business on June 15 in order to receive reimbursement.

It is recommended that employees who have reserved funds, as well as employees on the wait list, send in their grade. Any unclaimed

TAP/LTAP funds will be distributed to those employees on the wait list who have submitted their grades.

Submit grades to HR Central, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 270, Fairfax, VA 22035 or fax to 703-324-3945. For more information contact HR Central at 703-324-3311, TTY 703-222-7314. ■

## Police Department Receives Awards

The Fairfax Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP) and the Northern Virginia Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) presented the 16th Annual Awards for Excellence in Community Service and Public Safety on Friday, May 18, at the Tysons Westpark Hotel in Tysons Corner.

The keynote speaker for the ceremony was Virginia Secretary of Public Safety John W. Marshall. Speakers and special guests included Board of Supervisors Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly**, Dranesville District Supervisor **Joan DuBois**, Hunter Mill District Supervisor **Catherine Hudgins**, WJLA reporter Gail Pennybacker, Fairfax ASAP Director **Elwood Jones** and MADD Executive Director Mike Green.

The awards ceremony recognized the dedicated work of law enforcement personnel and others in the community who have been diligent in their efforts to combat drinking and driving in the past year. Fairfax County police officers from each of the eight district stations were honored, as well as officers from 17 other jurisdictions.

The following Fairfax County police officers received awards:

**Sergeant Shawn Martin**  
**PFC Alfredo Cerna**  
**PFC George Danzer**  
**PFC Jason Krull**  
**PFC David Parker**  
**PFC Ryan Fisher**  
**PFC John Spata III**  
**PFC Jared Priset**  
**PFC Patrick Nolan**  
**PFC Elizabeth Melendez**  
**Emily Yance-Houser**



*Fairfax ASAP Director Elwood Jones (left) with Virginia Secretary of Public Safety John W. Marshall at the awards ceremony. Photo provided by Jones.*

## Tattoo Removal Program

Former gang members who live in Fairfax County or the cities of Fairfax or Falls Church are eligible to have their gang tattoos removed (with certain specific limitations and requirements) through a free county program called the Skindeep Tattoo Removal Clinic.

The purpose of the clinic is to remove gang-related tattoos to enable area youth to disassociate themselves from gang life. Eligibility requirements, referral sources, frequently asked questions and other information is available at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/tattoo](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/tattoo).

The program is a collaborative effort of the Health Department, Community Services Board (alcohol and drug services and mental health services), Family Services, Juvenile Court (probation and parole officers), Police Department, county public school representatives and volunteer plastic surgeons.

Youth can be self-referred or may enter the clinic through an adult sponsor.

For more information about the Fairfax County Skindeep Tattoo Removal Clinic, contact **Irene Haske**, program coordinator, at [irene.haske@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:irene.haske@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-237-6053, TTY 711.

## Stay Alert to Air Quality

Code Orange and Red air quality alerts are sent to county employees by the Emergency Alert Network (EAN).

If you are not signed up to receive this valuable information, in addition to other emergency alerts and notices about major traffic disruptions, go to <http://infoweb/emergency/eand/> and register as a "new user."

If you already receive EAN messages, recheck your EAN profile online to see if any information needs to be updated.

## Calling All Agency Volunteer Coordinators

Does your county agency use volunteers? Have you heard about the county's new volunteer leave benefit?

The Department of Family Services Area Agency on Aging's Volunteer Unit and the Employee Assistance Council are hosting a roundtable discussion on Wednesday, June 20, from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Pennino Building, Room 705, 12011 Government Center Parkway.

The roundtable will explore how to inform employees about volunteer opportunities within county agencies. Contact **Ruth Reagan**, 703-324-5492, TTY 703-449-1186, if you plan to attend or to request reasonable ADA accommodations.

Due to space limitations, one representative per agency is requested.

## Stay Safe in the Sun!

Spending time outdoors during the summer can be enjoyable. However, everyone should exercise caution when working or exercising outdoors in the summer heat.

There are several steps you can take to protect yourself outdoors against ultraviolet radiation (UV), which is known to damage the skin and to cause cancer.

**Cover up:** Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing and a hat to protect as much of your skin as possible, and wear sunglasses that block UV rays. Ideal glasses block 99-100 percent of the UV rays.

**Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher:** The number of the SPF represents the level of sunburn protection provided. An SPF 15 blocks out

93 percent of the burning UV rays. Apply at least 15 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or more frequently if you are swimming or exercising.

**Limit direct exposure:** UV rays are most intense when the sun is high, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Limit time outdoors during these hours and seek shade whenever possible.

Remember that the best defense is prevention. Prepare yourself for time outdoors with a simple defense plan to include the following:

**Drink fluids:** Drink plenty of fluids regardless of your activity level.

Water or sports beverages are recommended. Stay away from beverages that contain caffeine, alcohol or large quantities of sugar.

**Stay indoors:** Stay in an air conditioned environment, i.e., your home, shopping center or library. A few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler before you go back into the heat.

Also, keep an eye on family, friends and neighbors. Pay close attention and check regularly on –

- ◆ Infants and young children.
- ◆ Those 65 or older.
- ◆ Mentally or physically challenged people.

Contact **Robert Johnson**, safety analyst, at 703-324-3043, TTY 711, or [robert.johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:robert.johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov) if you have any questions regarding summer-related safety issues. ■

## Be Prepared for Hurricanes

Hurricane season officially began last Friday, June 1. An active year is predicted by experts. Employees and residents should take steps now to prepare for any hurricanes or tropical systems that may affect this area.

“It may not be something we think we will have to deal with here in Fairfax County, but as we saw in 2003, Hurricane Isabel caused major power outages and flooding in the county,” said **C. Douglas Bass**, emergency management coordinator. “Being prepared just in case of a hurricane is an important safety precaution everyone should take.”

The Office of Emergency Management encourages employees and residents to prepare for the upcoming season by reviewing hurricane safety tips and preparing an emergency supply kit.

Be prepared for at least three days and include essential items such as

a battery-powered radio and extra batteries, food and water, flashlights, a first-aid kit and medications.

One precaution that can be taken now is to register for alerts from the EAN (Emergency Alert Network) at <http://infoweb/emergency/ean/>. The EAN will deliver emergency alerts, notifications and updates during a major crisis or emergency to e-mail accounts, cell phones, text pagers, satellite phones and wireless PDAs registered on the system.

For more information, contact the Office of Emergency Management at 703-324-2362, TTY 711, or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency).

There are podcasts on hurricane safety and preparedness at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/podcasts](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/podcasts). Look for the Health and Safety podcasts dated May 8 and 22. ■

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