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National Preparedness Month Toolkit

for local health departments

September 2024

National Preparedness Month

Now that we’re in September, it is time to celebrate [National Preparedness Month](https://www.ready.gov/september#weekly) (NPM). National Preparedness Month (NPM) is a time to promote family and community disaster and emergency planning. It’s an opportunity to remind our community members that to be ready for disasters, we must make sure we have personal plans in place to care for ourselves, and our loved ones, including our pets!

The goal of NPM is to increase the overall number of individuals, families, and communities that engage in preparedness actions at home, work, school…wherever! As our threat landscape continues to evolve due to the impacts of climate change, it’s more important now than ever that we take steps needed to be ready when disaster strikes. Each week in September, a different aspect of preparedness is highlighted. The weekly highlights this year may include:

**Week 1: MAKE A PLAN**

It may help to ask yourself a few questions as you create your emergency plan and discuss them with the other members of your household. They include:

1. How will I receive [emergency alerts and warnings](http://www.ready.gov/alerts)?
2. What is my [shelter](http://www.ready.gov/shelter) plan?
3. What is my [evacuation](http://www.ready.gov/evacuation) route?
4. What is my [family/household communication plan](https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/create-your-family-emergency-communication-plan.pdf)?
5. Check with the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) and update my emergency plans due to COVID-19.
6. Talk to your friends and family about how you will communicate before, during, and after a disaster. Make sure to update your plan based on the CDC recommendations due to the coronavirus.

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Once you’ve [made your emergency plan](https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/create-your-family-emergency-communication-plan.pdf), practice it! Try testing your communications plan and meeting at your agreed-upon shelter if you get separated. For guidance on making an emergency plan, visit the Connecticut Department of Public Health’s site [here](https://portal.ct.gov/dph/public-health-preparedness/main-page/personal-preparedness-guide).

**Week 2: BUILD A KIT**

Gather supplies that will last for several days after a disaster for everyone living in your home. **Don’t forget to consider the unique needs each person or pet may have in case you have to evacuate quickly.** To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

* [Water](https://www.ready.gov/water) (one gallon per person per day for several days, for drinking and sanitation)
* [Food](https://www.ready.gov/food) (at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food)
* Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert
* Flashlight
* First aid kit
* Extra batteries
* Whistle (to signal for help)
* Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)
* Plastic sheeting and duct tape (to [shelter in place](https://www.ready.gov/shelter))
* Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties (for personal sanitation)
* Wrench or pliers (to [turn off utilities](https://www.ready.gov/safety-skills))
* Manual can opener (for food)
* Local maps
* Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery

For more guidance on building an emergency kit, download your free preparedness guide [here](https://portal.ct.gov/dph/public-health-preparedness/main-page/personal-preparedness-guide)

**Week 3: BE INFORMED through LOW-COST, NO-COST PREPAREDNESS**

Limit the impact that disasters have on you and your family. Know the risk of disasters in your area. Learn how to make your home stronger in the face of storms and other common hazards.

Download the state's FREE [CTPrepares app](https://portal.ct.gov/CTPrepares) on your mobile device. This app provides Connecticut residents with information that is useful in emergency situations and also gives preparedness tips in advance of an emergency. Additional preparedness tips can be found online at [ct.gov/ctprepares](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fct.gov%2Fctprepares&data=05%7C01%7CJessica.Ciparelli%40cga.ct.gov%7C5be332011b134a423c5d08dbaeeba5db%7C3ec76714b1b4418a883232c46ec84226%7C0%7C0%7C638296099343015993%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=UwiNIgcmTo0eRCvBHEl%2BBPEVc62%2BsN1RiOTtxKPBO9U%3D&reserved=0).

Check your insurance coverage to make sure it is up-to-date. For information on ensuring your property, visit the ct.gov website: [CT Flood Information](https://portal.ct.gov/deep/water/flood-management/national-flood-insurance-program-nfip)

**Week 4: TEACH YOUTH ABOUT PREPAREDNESS**

Talk to your kids about preparing for emergencies and what to do in case you are separated. Reassure them by providing information about how they can get involved.

Establish a family meeting place that’s familiar and easy to find, and don’t forget to think about specific needs in your family. **Your family’s needs change over time, so update your plan regularly.** For guidance on emergency plans for families with children, visit FEMA: [Youth and Emergency Planning](https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/youth)

National Preparedness Month: Press Release

September marks National Preparedness Month, the annual recognition to remind everyone in America how important it is for individuals, families and communities to prepare for disasters and emergencies that can happen at any time.

[Insert LHD name] wants to remind residents how important it is that we build a community that is more prepared and resilient in the face of more frequent and severe disasters that we have seen in the last few years. “September is National Preparedness Month, and during our month-long campaign to emphasize the importance of being ready when disaster strikes, [insert LHD name] is focused this year on providing information and resources to empower our residents to make their own preparations,” said [DoH}.

During National Preparedness Month, the [insert LHD name] is promoting community preparedness through several different activities. Residents who are interested in helping during disasters can volunteer through [insert LHD name and details if CERT or MRC related]. The health department is also hosting [insert any promotional campaigns being carried out at local libraries or public venues or include the Local Public Health Department website and where materials can be found.]

Personal Preparedness starts with family and loved ones, who can take simple steps in advance of disasters to be prepared, including the following three steps:

* **Make a Plan.** Everyone has unique needs. There are several factors that can affect the steps you need to take to prepare yourself and those you care for. Whether you care for pets, have children, have a medical condition or a disability, it is important to know what your family will need to stay safe.

Get to know your neighbors because they, along with your family and friends, can be a support network before, during and after a disaster by providing emotional and practical support.

**Gather Supplies.** Once you’ve assessed your needs, you can plan for what you’d do, where you’d go and what to bring if a disaster strikes. Your emergency supply kit should include items that [meet your individual needs](https://www.ready.gov/disability#kit).

* **Get Informed.** Different emergencies can impact you and your family in different ways. Be informed about weather alerts and warnings, and other disasters that can impact you and your loved ones. Being aware before, during and after a disaster helps you to make informed decisions.

Sign up for Connecticut State Alerts at ctalert.gov. Download a copy of the [Personal Preparedness Guide](https://portal.ct.gov/dph/public-health-preparedness/main-page/personal-preparedness-guide), or ask your local health department for a hard copy that you can provide to family and neighbors.

For more information on how to prepare yourself, your loved ones and your community, visit [Ready.gov](https://ready.gov/).

**Social Media Posts**

Individuals with disabilities may need extra help during and after an emergency. Consider these tips to keep them safe:

* *Have a contact list of your support network on their phone.*
* *Put medical alert tags or bracelets on them.*
* *Add medical information to their electronic devices.*
* *More: ready.gov/disability* #N*PM2024*

Protect your finances by reviewing your insurance policy every year. Make sure the insurance policy covers hurricane-related hazards like flooding and high winds.

* *If you have questions, talk to an agent or visit: floodsmart.gov.* *#NPM2024*

Questions to keep in mind if you rely on medication or devices:

1. *Do you rely on essential medical devices?*
2. *How would you evacuate with those devices in an emergency?*
3. *Do you have an alternate plan for refrigerating medicines if you lose power?* *#NPM2024*

Do you take care of an older adult? Make sure they are ready in case of an emergency:

1. *Have a copy of their house key*
2. *Know where they keep emergency supplies*
3. *Learn how to use lifesaving equipment and administer medicine* *#NPM2024*

Download the state's FREE [CTPrepares app](https://portal.ct.gov/CTPrepares) on your mobile device. This app provides Connecticut residents with information that is useful in emergency situations and also gives preparedness tips in advance of an emergency. Additional preparedness tips can be found online at [ct.gov/ctprepares](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fct.gov%2Fctprepares&data=05%7C01%7CJessica.Ciparelli%40cga.ct.gov%7C5be332011b134a423c5d08dbaeeba5db%7C3ec76714b1b4418a883232c46ec84226%7C0%7C0%7C638296099343015993%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=UwiNIgcmTo0eRCvBHEl%2BBPEVc62%2BsN1RiOTtxKPBO9U%3D&reserved=0).

**September is National Preparedness Month but** disasters can happen anytime, anywhere. Make a plan, build a kit, and stay informed to protect your health and safety. #PreparednessMonth #Ready2024

Whether it’s hurricanes, wildfires, or power outages, understanding your local risks is the first step to preparedness. Learn more at Ready.gov. #StaySafe #EmergencyPreparedness

Ensure everyone knows what to do and where to go in case of an emergency. Practice makes perfect! Create your family preparedness plan today, download the FREE [Preparedness Guide](https://portal.ct.gov/dph/public-health-preparedness/main-page/personal-preparedness-guide) #FamilyPreparedness #Ready2024

From water and food to medications and important documents, having a well-stocked emergency kit can make all the difference. #BuildYourKit #PreparednessMonth

**Stay informed!** Sign up for local alerts and warnings to keep up-to-date with the latest emergency information. Don’t wait until it’s too late. #StayAlert #Ready2024

Don’t forget to plan for pets, elderly family members, and those with special needs. Tailor your emergency plan to fit everyone. #InclusivePreparedness #Ready2024

Conduct regular drills for your emergency plans at home, work, and school. The more you practice, the more confident you’ll be in a real emergency. #DrillAndPractice #PreparednessMonth

Join your community’s preparedness efforts. Volunteer with local organizations or participate in preparedness training. Together, we’re stronger. #CommunityPreparedness #Ready2024

As intensity of disasters escalate, its time to breakdown barriers to preparedness. Find information that fits your language and culture to stay safe: [Ready in Your Language](https://www.ready.gov/ready-your-language)

**Newsletter / PSA / Website language**

September marks National Preparedness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of being prepared for all types of disasters and emergencies. Whether it’s a natural disaster, a public health crisis, or any unforeseen event, preparedness is key to protecting our communities and ensuring a swift and effective response.

**How to Be Prepared**

Being prepared starts with understanding the risks we face and taking proactive steps to mitigate them. Here are some essential tips for personal and community preparedness:

* **Make a Plan:** Develop a family emergency plan that includes communication strategies, meeting locations, and procedures for various scenarios. Ensure everyone in your household is familiar with the plan.
* **Build an Emergency Kit:** Stock up on essential items such as water, non-perishable food, medications, and important documents. A well-prepared kit can make all the difference during an emergency.
* **Stay Informed:** Sign up for local alerts and warnings to receive timely information during a disaster. Staying informed helps you make the best decisions for your safety and well-being.

At (Insert LHD), we are committed to ensuring that Connecticut is fully prepared to face any public health emergency. Our team is continuously working to enhance the state’s readiness through the following initiatives:

* **Developing Comprehensive Plans:** We are constantly updating and refining our emergency response plans to address a wide range of potential threats. These plans are designed to ensure a coordinated and effective response across all levels of government.
* **Planning Tabletop Exercises and Drills:** We conduct regular tabletop exercises and full-scale drills to test and refine our States response capabilities. These exercises help identify gaps in our plans and ensure that all partners are ready to act when needed.
* **Enhancing Training Programs:** OPHPR is committed to providing ongoing training for public health workers, first responders, and volunteers. These training programs are designed to equip our teams with the skills and knowledge needed to respond effectively to any emergency.

Want to enhance your families preparedness plan but don’t know where to start? CT offers free personal preparedness guides! Download your free copy [here](https://portal.ct.gov/dph/public-health-preparedness/main-page/personal-preparedness-guide).

Together, we can continue to build a resilient Connecticut, ready to face any emergency with confidence and strength. Let’s make this September a reminder of our commitment to preparedness and the crucial work done every day to keep our state safe.

**Resources**

* Child and Youth Preparedness Social Media Toolkit: <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/youth>
* 2024 National Preparedness Month: [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov/september)
* Ready in your language: <https://www.ready.gov/ready-your-language>
* DEMHS Child Disaster resources: <https://portal.ct.gov/demhs/emergency-management/resources-for-officials/child-emergency-preparedness--resource-page>
* CT DPH Weather Fact Sheets: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/communications/crisis-and-emergency-risk-communication/weather>
* CT Ready! Guide: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/public-health-preparedness/main-page/personal-preparedness-guide>