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Disaster News

BE READY PENNSYLVANIA

HARRISBURG, Pa. – Disaster preparedness is one of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) main messages. As FEMA and the Commonwealth continue their recovery efforts in response to the late-June floods, it is a good time for individuals, families and businesses to begin thinking about how they will prepare for future disasters. There are four important steps to take when preparing your home or business for disasters:

1. Prepare a Disaster Kit:

- A disaster kit should have essential supplies needed to sustain yourself and your family during and after a disaster. The most essential supplies for a kit are water, non-perishable food, a radio, a first aid kit, extra batteries, and unique family needs such as prescription medications and important family documents.

2. Make a Plan:

- Essential components should include a communication plan, an out-of-town contact, an evacuation plan, a shelter-in-place plan, and knowledge of emergency plans at work, school, and other areas of your community.

3. Be Informed:

- Keep informed about all the different types of disasters that could affect your home and community. Remember, some of the things you do to prepare are the same for both natural and man-made disasters. To become more familiar with how to react in an emergency, go to www.ready.gov or call **1-800-BE-READY (1-800-237-3239)**. The Ready website provides helpful information about disaster preparedness. It is a valuable resource that places the tools and knowledge in a central location, accessible to all Americans. Even those without Internet access can call the 800 number for information.

4. Get Involved:

- Once you have your home and family prepared, reach out to your neighbors and make them aware of the importance of preparedness. Encourage your kids to take information to school, or volunteer your time at the school, your community center, or a civic club to do a short presentation about preparedness that can help your community. A valuable resource that can help you reach out to your neighbors is the Citizen Corps. Citizen Corps helps people prepare, train, and volunteer in their communities. Visit www.citizencorps.gov for more information.

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To learn more about getting your home, family, business, or community ready, call **1-800-BE-READY** or visit www.ready.gov. In addition to general disaster preparedness tips, the website has information specific to different groups such as children and the disabled, and provides links to some local resources. There are also brochures and booklets available that can provide you with more tips on disaster preparedness that are downloadable from the website, or can be mailed to your home or business by ordering through the toll-free number or online.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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More disaster information is available on the Internet at www.fema.gov, www.paflooding.state.pa.us, or www.sba.gov. Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability or economic status. Anyone who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact the federal or commonwealth coordinating officer.