

September is National Preparedness Month

Prepare for the unique needs of your family members, friends and neighbors. September is recognized as National Preparedness Month (NPM) which serves as a reminder that we all must take action to prepare, now and throughout the year, for the types of emergencies that could affect us where we live, work, and also where we visit. “*Don’t Wait, Communicate. Make Your Emergency Plan Today,*” will be this year’s theme.

Week #1 September 4 - 10:

- Contact family and friends before, during, and after an emergency.
 - Consider that your entire family may not be together during a disaster- make a plan of how you will reunite after an emergency.
 - [Make a family emergency communication plan](#)
 - Creating your *Family Emergency Communication Plan* starts with one simple question: “What if?”
 - “What if something happens and I’m not with my family?” “Will I be able to reach them?” “How will I know they are safe?” “How can I let them know I’m OK?” During a disaster, you will need to send and receive information from your family.
 - Communication networks, such as mobile phones and computers, could be unreliable during disasters, and electricity could be disrupted. Planning in advance will help ensure that all the members of your household—including children and people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, as well as outside caregivers—know how to reach each other and where to meet up in an emergency. Be sure to include a contact that lives outside your area, in another state. Planning starts with three easy steps:
- 1. COLLECT**
 - a. Create a paper copy of the contact information for your family and other important people/offices, such as medical facilities, doctors, schools, or service providers.
 - 2. SHARE**
 - a. Make sure everyone carries a copy in his or her backpack, purse, or wallet. If you complete your *Family Emergency Communication Plan* online at ready.gov/make-a-plan, you can print it onto a wallet-sized card. You should also post a copy in a central location in your home, such as your refrigerator or family bulletin board.
 - 3. PRACTICE**
 - a. Have regular household meetings to review and practice your plan.
 - 4. TEXT IS BEST**
 - a. If you are using a mobile phone, a text message may get through when a phone call will not. This is because a text message requires far less bandwidth than a phone call. Text messages may also save and then send automatically as soon as capacity becomes available.

