



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Emergency Management Agency

Ohio Emergency Management Agency • Sima Merick, Executive  
[www.ema.ohio.gov](http://www.ema.ohio.gov)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Kelli Blackwell, Ohio EMA (614) 799-3694

### **Disasters Don't Plan Ahead. You Can. *September is National Preparedness Month***

**Columbus, OH** – This September, National Preparedness Month (NPM) and the *Ready* campaign are focusing on Planning, with its theme: ***Disasters Don't Plan Ahead. You Can.*** Everyone can take actions to prepare. And everyone should be able to help first responders in our community by training how to respond during an emergency and knowing what to do before, and when, disaster strikes.

The goal of NPM is to increase the overall number of individuals, families and communities that engage in preparedness actions at home, work, businesses, schools and places of worship.

“There is no better time than now to make sure that your family, pets and home are safe, in the event of a disaster,” said Ohio Emergency Management Agency Executive Director Sima Merick. “There are a lot of things you can do to maximize your protection against danger and loss, like having a preparedness plan for severe storms, high winds, flooding, and extended power outages. It’s also important to keep your home stocked with essential supplies in the event of an emergency.”

How can you prepare for disasters?

- **Be Informed.** Know what disasters could affect your area, how to get emergency alerts, and where you would go if you need to evacuate your home.
- **Make a Plan.** Your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, so it’s important to know how you’ll contact one another and reconnect, if separated. Establish a family meeting place that’s familiar and easy to find.
- **Build a Kit.** A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items your household may need, in the event of an emergency. Most of the items in a basic kit are inexpensive and easy to find. You might already have a lot of the items in your home. After an emergency, you may need to survive on your own for several days. Your basic disaster supplies kit should have enough food, water and other supplies to sustain everyone in your home (including pets) for at least three days.
- **Get Involved.** There are many ways to get involved before a disaster happens. Volunteer. Take community preparedness training. Community leaders agree – the formula for ensuring a safer homeland consists of trained volunteers and informed individuals taking action to increase the support of emergency response agencies during disasters.

“Also, if you’re caring for elder relatives, you’ll want to make sure that your emergency and escape plans reflect their care, as well,” said Merick. “Ensure that they have easy access to a safe space to wait out the emergency and have emergency contact information, such as your personal and work phone numbers, as well as phone numbers to the nearest hospital – updating contact numbers in their cell phone might be ideal.”

**-more-**

## National Preparedness Month

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In coordination with the Ready campaign, Ohio EMA and ReadyOhio encourage households, county EMAs, businesses, schools, and places of worship to Plan Ahead for Disasters and participate in NPM's weekly themes for 2017:

- Week 1 (September 1-9) Make a Plan for Yourself, Family & Friends
- Week 2 (September 10-16) Plan to Help Your Neighbor & Community
- Week 3 (September 17-23) Practice & Build Out Your Plans
- Week 4 (September 24-30) Get Involved! Be a Part of Something Larger

Info Sheets highlighting the weekly themes are available on the [ReadyOhio](#) website. Follow [Ohio EMA](#) on Facebook and Twitter for additional messages on National Preparedness Month and emergency preparedness.

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