

Georgia Emergency Management Agency



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NEWS RELEASE

Governor Declares September as Preparedness Month

(ATLANTA) -- Governor Sonny Perdue has designated September as National Preparedness Month in Georgia. The state's Office of Homeland Security and the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) are working in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to encourage Georgians to be prepared for whatever emergency might occur.

"Federal, state and local officials, as well as the private sector and volunteer community, are working hard to prevent and respond to all types of emergencies," said Governor Perdue. "Every Georgian can support these efforts by developing their own family disaster plan and volunteering to be trained in disaster preparedness and response."

"The threats to our security have intensified in recent years, and better public awareness strengthens our defense," says Georgia Homeland Security Director Terry Nesbitt.

"Complacency is our greatest enemy," says GEMA Director Charley English. "Emergencies or disasters can occur at any time, and our citizens need to be ready. National Preparedness Month is a time to focus on that personal responsibility."

Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort intended to enhance public awareness and encourage Georgians to step up and learn more about ways they can prepare for a natural or man-made emergency or disaster. Citizens should learn about the threats to their community and take some simple, but potentially life-saving, steps to prepare.

The most basic step is to develop a family disaster plan that includes evacuation and reunification plans. Families should also create a family disaster kit with at least a three-day supply of essential items including bottled water, non-perishable food, a change of clothing, medical supplies, and a battery-powered NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather radio.

Georgians can also help their communities in times of disaster by joining Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) or Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The CERT teams educate people about disaster preparedness and train them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. Using their training, CERT or MRC volunteers can assist others in their community or workplace following a disaster. There are currently 40 active CERT programs and 12 active Medical Reserve Corps programs around the state.

For more information on emergency preparedness go online to www.gema.state.ga.us or www.ready.gov. In Spanish, visit www.listo.gov. During emergencies, up-to-the-minute information can be found at www.georgia911.org. People interested in creating a CERT team should contact their local emergency management agency.

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