



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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New Jersey Volunteers and Officials to Celebrate National Preparedness Month

Hamilton, N.J. – New Jersey's Citizen Corps groups, other volunteer groups and state and local officials will be holding events throughout September to observe National Preparedness Month, Governor Jon S. Corzine, Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness Director Richard L. Cañas and State Police Superintendent Col. Rick Fuentes announced today.

"New Jersey is working hard to become better prepared to keep its residents safe and secure from catastrophic events, whether natural or man-made," Governor Corzine said. "This month we work to remind our citizens that they too have a role to play in keeping themselves safe from harm."

The State Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the State Citizens Corps and its Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program members and other volunteer groups will observe the month with a statewide effort to educate residents about the emergency preparedness measures they should take for their homes, schools and businesses.

"National and state polls continue to tell us that not enough citizens take personal preparedness seriously," Director Cañas said. "Whether it is a power outage, flood, massive snowstorm or hurricane, it may very well be hours or days before emergency personnel can respond, so it is incumbent on each of us to know how to provide for and protect oneself and one's family."

"The keys to preparedness and the basics for survival remain the same," said Colonel Fuentes, who also serves as State Director of New Jersey's OEM. "'Get a Kit,' 'Make a Plan,' 'Be Informed' and 'Get Involved' are the watchwords for citizen preparedness."

As part of the month's events, New Jersey Network will be airing a series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs), including a new PSA focusing on preparedness for citizens with special needs (including those with sight, hearing and mobility impairments, as well as seniors) featuring Secretary of State Nina Mitchell Wells, MRC and CERT volunteers.

"NJN is proud to partner with New Jersey Citizen Corps to connect our citizens to important information and resources," said Elizabeth Christopherson, Executive Director of the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority. "Throughout the month, NJN will broadcast messages to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies as well as about the training and educational opportunities available to ensure that families and communities are better prepared."

Residents can prepare now by keeping, at a minimum, the following items in a safe place:

- Three days' supply of non-perishable food and water.
- Several days' supply of needed medications.
- Diapers, prescription drugs and other specialty items.
- A battery-powered radio and extra batteries. When services are cut off, the radio will provide information about recovery efforts.
- A supply of cash. If power is out, ATMs may not be working.

Citizens can find additional reliable information on preparedness at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security website www.ready.gov and NJOEM website www.ready.nj.gov. New Jersey leads the nation in Citizen Corps emergency preparedness events planned for 2007, and a list can be found at <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cc/showEvent.do?submitCalendar>. For more information on National Preparedness Month, see DHS's Web site at www.ready.gov/america/npm07/index.html

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