

National Preparedness Month Messaging Toolkit

September is National Preparedness Month. National Preparedness Month serves as a reminder to take action to prepare, now and throughout the year, for the types of emergencies that could affect us where we live, work, learn, and worship.

While disasters happen, you can prepare now and learn how. Now is the time to take steps to be ready and preparing for the unexpected.

Website

NYC Emergency Management's National Preparedness Month website:

[NYC.gov/nationalpreparednessmonth](http://nyc.gov/nationalpreparednessmonth); [NYC.gov/npm](http://nyc.gov/npm)

National Preparedness Month Weekly Themes

- **Week 1: September 1-8 — Make and Practice Your Plan**
Focus on taking the necessary steps in making a plan that will keep you, your family, friends, and communities safe in the event of an emergency.
- **Week 2: September 9-15 — Learn Life-Saving Skills**
When a disaster occurs, become a leader. Plan accordingly, so you can take a role in helping your neighbors and community.
- **Week 3: September 16-22 — Check Your Insurance Coverage**
Find out why having the right insurance can help you in a disaster.
- **Week 4: September 23-30 — Save For an Emergency**
Learn how “saving for a rainy day” could go a long way in a disaster.

Social Media Channels

- Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/nycemergencymanagement>
- Twitter <https://twitter.com/nycemergencymgt>
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/nycemergencymanagement>
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/nyc-emergency-management>
- YouTube www.youtube.com/nycoem

Hashtags: #NPM2018, #NPM18, #NatlPrep

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Week 1: Make and Practice Your Plan

- Disasters happen. Prepare now and learn how.
 - Use the Ready New York: My Emergency Plan workbook as a guide to establish a support network, record important health information, plan evacuations, and gather emergency supplies. Visit nyc.gov/myemergencyplan to prepare now.
 - You can also make your plan on your mobile device! Download the Ready NYC app for iOS and Android to make (and keep) your plan on the go: <http://on.nyc.gov/readynycapp>
- Information is key before, after, and during a disaster. Sign up for Notify NYC, the City's official emergency communications program. Register for emergency notifications by getting the free Notify NYC mobile application, visiting nyc.gov/notifynyc, contacting 311 (212-639-9675 for Video Relay Service, or TTY: 212-504-4115) or following @NotifyNYC on Twitter.
- Practice your plan BEFORE a disaster strikes. Develop a support network of family, friends and neighbors.
 - Pick someone near your home that family or friends can call for support during a disaster.
 - Pick an out-of-area friend or relative who family or friends can call during a disaster. If local phone lines are busy, long-distance calls may be easier to make. This out-of-area contact can help you communicate with those in your network.
- Make your plan by gathering supplies you would need in an emergency, such as copies of important documents, cash in small bills, and a first-aid kit. Find out what to pack if you have to stay (evacuate) or go (shelter in place): <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/ready/get-prepared.page>.

Have a Plan: Disabilities, Access and Functional Needs

- If you have a disability, access or functional need, develop a support network that can assist you during an emergency. If you have a home health aide, nurse, or a social worker who visits your home regularly, they should be a part of your emergency support network. Make sure that they know what your emergency plan is. Record the ways you prefer to communicate with them so that first responders can contact your support network if you are unable to communicate.
- Are you a care provider for people with disabilities or access and functional needs? Practice your plan with your clients, and find out how you can best prepare them for an emergency by signing up for the Advance Warning System: www.advancewarningsystemnyc.org

Have a Plan: Seniors

- Make sure you create a plan that best suits your needs. Prepare now by creating an emergency support network. Ask at least two people to be in your network: family, friends, neighbors, caregivers, home attendants, and members of community groups or your senior center. Practice your plan with your network so you don't have to go through an emergency alone.
- If you rely on oxygen, medical equipment, or dialysis, talk to your provider(s) about back-up medical equipment and their emergency protocols.
- Have copies of your prescription medications. Make a list of your medications, why you take them and their dosage. Don't wait till the last minute to refill your prescription medications. Remember: emergencies can affect your ability to access medications.

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Have a Plan: Kids

- Every child should know his or her family name, address and phone number, and know where to meet in case of an emergency. Children too young to memorize this could carry a small index card in their backpack that lists emergency information.
- Practice your household disaster plan with your children and quiz them about preparedness information.
- Find out what your child's school does in the event of an emergency and know the school's emergency plans.
- Have no fear because Ready Girl — New York City's very own preparedness superhero — is here! You can prepare your kids or classroom for an emergency by requesting Ready Girl to come to your school, or by reading her comic book: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/ready/ready-girl.page>.

Have a Plan: Pets

- Make and practice a plan with your pet or service animal by using the [Ready New York: My Pet's Emergency Plan](#). Be sure to consider what to do if you cannot get home to them during an emergency. Identify a trusted friend, neighbor, or dog-walker to care for your pet in your absence.
- Talk to your veterinarian, visit NYC.gov or call 311 about microchipping your pet or service animal.

Have a Plan: Communities & Community Organizations

- Disasters happen. Prepare your community now and learn how by using the Community Emergency Planning in NYC toolkit: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/ready/community-preparedness.page>.
- Build a community emergency network to share information during all phases of emergencies. They also help identify community needs and gaps in services and offer a structure for community-based emergency planning.
- Help your community by becoming a volunteer with the NYC Community Emergency Response Team program (NYC CERT). NYC CERT members undergo a training program that provides basic response skills. Members are affiliated with a community team by their legal residence.
- Disasters happen. Prepare now by sharing your space. If you manage or own a large space, you may be able to support the City's emergency operations, or be used for community outreach events. Visit [NYC.gov/shareyourspacepage](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/ready/shareyourspacepage.page) for more information on how you can assist your neighbors and community.

Have a Plan: Businesses

- Make and practice your emergency plan with your employees. Use the Ready New York for Business guide and toolkit so you can protect your employees, and learn how to stay in business during and after an emergency: https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/ready/guides-resources.page#business_guide.
- Set up a call tree, an email alert, or a call-in voice recording to communicate with employees.
- Encourage employees to prepare for emergencies at home. Remember: one of the best methods to ensure your company's recovery is to provide for your staff's well-being.

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Week 2: Learn Life-Saving Skills

- One way you can save a life during National Preparedness Month is by donating blood! New York City needs approximately 2,000 people to donate blood every day to maintain its supply. Blood reserves are perishable and constantly need to be replenished. Donating blood is a great way to contribute to the emergency preparedness of the City as a whole. Learn more about how you can donate by visiting the New York Blood Center: <https://www.nybloodcenter.org/>.
- Disasters happen. Prepare now and learn how by joining the New York City Community Emergency Response Team program (NYC CERT). NYC CERT volunteers are trained to support the efforts of New York City's first responders. Apply today to make a difference in your community: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/volunteer/nyc-cert.page>.
- NYC CERT members participate in community preparedness and disaster response activities, including:
 - Traffic and crowd control at planned and unplanned events.
 - Escorting New York City residents of evacuated buildings to retrieve personal belongings.
 - Staffing assistance centers and interpreting for New Yorkers affected by emergencies.
 - Emergency food and supply distribution during power outages and water main breaks.
 - Presenting Ready New York preparedness information to communities and building community disaster networks.
- Learn life-saving skills by signing up for training courses like CPR and fire safety training that can help you and others before emergency responders arrive. Learn more from FDNY: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/fdny/education/cpr/cpr.page>
- When a disaster happens, you can prepare now and learn how to protect your property:
 - Reduce your risk of flood damage by building with flood damage-resistant materials, such as cast-in-place concrete, concrete blocks, or solid structural wood.
 - Trim branches and/or remove trees on your property that could potentially fall on homes or power lines.

Prepare Now for Fires

- Disasters happen. Prepare your home by installing smoke/carbon monoxide alarms to protect your loved ones from a fire or carbon monoxide poisoning. You can request a free smoke alarm for your home through the [Sound the Alarm program](#).
- Some life-saving skills are as easy as closing a door. Remember: if there is a fire in your home and you are evacuating, make sure to CLOSE the door behind you. Visit <http://www.fdnysmart.org/safetytips/close-door-escaping-fire/> for more fire safety tips.

Prepare Now for Earthquakes

- During an earthquake, stay INSIDE. DROP to the floor, COVER yourself with sturdy furniture, and HOLD ON until the earthquake and any tremors stop.
- After an earthquake, inspect utilities. If you smell gas, leave immediately and call 911.

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Prepare Now for Coastal Storms & Hurricanes

- Find out if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone by visiting [NYC.gov/knowyourzone](https://www.nyc.gov/knowyourzone) or calling 311. If you live in an evacuation zone, have a plan for where you will go if an [evacuation order is issued for your area](#).
- Anchor objects that will be unsafe to bring inside, like gas grills or propane tanks. These objects can become deadly projectiles during a hurricane or coastal storm.

Prepare Now for Extreme Heat

- Extreme heat can take a significant toll on the body. Seniors, children, and those with chronic health conditions are most at risk. Learn how to prepare for the heat by visiting [NYC.gov/beattheheat](https://www.nyc.gov/beattheheat) for tips on how to keep cool, and safe, during extreme heat.
- Stay safe during extreme heat by staying hydrated. Drink water, even if you are not thirsty.

Prepare Now for Winter Weather

- Stay indoors during a winter storm. If you need to leave your home, wear a hat, hood, or scarf, as most heat is lost through the head.
- Check on neighbors, friends, and relatives — especially the elderly and those with disabilities and access and functional needs — during periods of extreme cold.

Prepare Now for No-Notice Events

- Disasters – including no-notice emergencies – happen. Learn life-saving skills, including how to stop bleeding, and how to survive a shooter with PlanNowNYC: [NYC.gov/plannow](https://www.nyc.gov/plannow).

Week 3: Check Your Insurance Coverage

- Disasters happen. Prepare now and learn how by buying the right insurance. If you rent your home, renter's insurance will insure the items inside your apartment. If you are a homeowner, make sure your home is properly insured — flood and wind damage are not covered in a basic homeowner's policy.
- Check your insurance coverage and protect your home by considering flood insurance. Floods are the most common natural disaster in the U.S. Visit www.floodsmart.gov for more information.
- Do you know your risk for a flood? More than 20 percent of flood claims come from properties OUTSIDE of high-risk flood zones. Visit <https://www.floodhelpny.org/> to find out if you need flood protection.
- Prepare now and learn whether you live in a flood zone. Visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/floodmaps/index.page> to find out, and check your insurance coverage today.
- Identify important documents you may need in an emergency, including social security cards, mortgages or leases, bank and credit card statements, investment papers, tax returns, and insurance information. Review this information at least once a year to keep it current.
- Tip: protect your home by making a video inventory of your home. Take photos and video of your property. (If an emergency affects you, this will help simplify your insurance.)
- Check your insurance coverage if you own a business. Consider expanding your insurance to include coverage for direct and indirect costs associated with a disaster.
 - Examples of direct costs include hazard-specific property insurance (e.g., fire, flood), and data breach and cyber liability insurance.
 - Examples of indirect costs include business interruption/continuation policy insurance, business income insurance, and extra expense insurance.

Week 4: Save for an Emergency

- Disasters happen. Prepare now by organizing your finances BEFORE disaster strikes.
- Save for an emergency by safely storing important financial documents in a waterproof, fireproof container you may need when a disaster strikes. This includes mortgages or leases, bank and credit card statements, investment papers, tax returns, and insurance information. Review this information at least once a year to keep it current.
- Make sure you don't come up short: stash some cash! Prepare now by keeping cash (in small bills) on hand. ATMs may not work during an emergency.
- Disasters happen. Prepare by keeping copies of your last two paystubs, and have proof of your income in case an emergency interrupts your income.
- Look for bargain sales, and separate items for immediate use from emergency ones.
- Emergency savings tip: One way to save for an emergency is by saving extra cans of nonperishable food items, so you'll be prepared in case you need to shelter in place. You can also refill two-liter soda and soft drink bottles with tap water for portable water storage.
- Become a coupon queen (or king!), and save extra dollars by using coupons towards items to use towards your emergency supply kit.
- Disasters happen. Prepare now and reuse emergency supplies instead of purchasing new ones, such as a flashlight or AM/FM radio.
- Buy basic: the easiest way to save money for your Go Bag or emergency supply kit is to buy generic products.
- Emergency savings tip: government employees do not solicit or accept money. Safeguard your personal information, such as your Social Security number, and be cautious about providing it to people or organizations you do not know.
- Beware of people going door-to-door to damaged homes, or contacting you and claiming to be building contractors. They could be scam artists.
- Save AFTER an emergency by protecting your income. Beware of those who may try to take advantage of those affected by a disaster. This can include attempting to gather personal information to commit identity theft or collect payments for disaster assistance services that they do not provide.
- For September 30: It may be the **last day of National Preparedness Month**, but that doesn't mean you should stop being ready. Be prepared throughout the year by visiting [NYC.gov/emergencymanagement](https://www.nyc.gov/emergencymanagement) any time!