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**KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT**  
**Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff**

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701 Ball Avenue, N.E. • Grand Rapids • Michigan • 49503



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Lisa LaPlante – 616.632.7567

**Emergency Management Division Reminds Residents to Be Prepared!**  
**September is National Preparedness Month**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – Kent County has its share of severe weather: storms, flooding, tornadoes, and blizzards can pack a powerful punch with little or no warning. Where should your family meet if disaster strikes when everyone is in school or at work? What if the power goes out? What should you take if you need to evacuate your home? During National Preparedness Month, the Kent County Emergency Management Division reminds you to create or update an emergency plan for you and your loved ones.

“How you respond to the conditions of disasters, whether it’s an act of terror or an act of nature, can make the difference in the outcomes for you and your family,” said Jack Stewart, Emergency Management Coordinator for Kent County. “Create a plan, talk about it regularly, and share it with family or friends who may be able to help in times of crisis.”

You should always be sure to rotate your basic emergency kit to keep it fresh and up-to-date. A good way to prepare is to think about what you would need for camping at a rustic campground where there is no electricity. Keep up to fourteen days of water and non-perishable food for your household and pets, a first aid kit, an all-weather radio, a flashlight, extra batteries, a one week supply of medications and personal hygiene items in your home at all times. Make sure your vehicle emergency kit is updated as well.

In addition, keep a list of all of your medications in case you need to leave home in a hurry, and remember to back up important documents and files and keep them where they can be accessed immediately if needed. While thinking about your family, also remember to check on your neighbors and friends, especially those with special needs, such as those who are elderly or non-ambulatory. Pets should also be a part of your emergency plan; be sure to keep dog licenses updated, microchip all pets and have a place where they can stay if you can’t remain in your home.

**Websites for more information on preparedness, including plan ideas and supply lists:**

[www.getReadyKent.com](http://www.getReadyKent.com)  
[www.AccessKent.com/GETREADY](http://www.AccessKent.com/GETREADY)  
[www.AccessKent.com/emergencymanagement](http://www.AccessKent.com/emergencymanagement)  
[www.BeMittenReady.com](http://www.BeMittenReady.com)

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