



KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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September is National Preparedness Month

After August Storms, Emergency Management Suggests that you Review your Emergency Plan

GRAND RAPIDS – Less than two weeks ago, Kent County was hit by several tornadoes causing property damage in a number of communities. Fortunately, no one was hurt. In the past year, we have also seen severe cold weather, snow and ice storms, minor flooding and extreme heat.

Whether it is natural disaster or a man-made situation, you should have an emergency plan: Where should your family meet if disaster strikes? What if the power goes out? What should you take if you need to evacuate your home? September is National Preparedness Month and the Kent County Emergency Management Division reminds you to create or update an emergency plan for you and your loved ones.

“When the tornadoes hit us on August 20, we were fortunate that communication lines were well-maintained, our residents received timely alerts and first responders were ready to go,” said Jack Stewart, Emergency Management Coordinator for Kent County. “Severe weather serves as an excellent reminder to us all to create a plan, talk about it regularly, and share it with family or friends who may be able to help in times of crisis.”

Several apps are available for electronic devices to help you receive weather alerts or build an emergency plan. Select an out-of-town contact, in case local phone lines are out and you need to let family know where you are. Talk to friends and family so that if you need to evacuate your home, you have a temporary place to stay (and vice versa). Keep a list of all of your medications in case you need to leave home in a hurry, and make sure you are up-to-date on vaccinations. Check on your neighbors and friends, especially those with special needs and the elderly. Back up important documents and files, and keep them where they can be accessed immediately if needed.

Rotate your basic emergency kit every six to 12 months. Your kit should contain what you would need for camping at a rustic campground where there is no electricity. Keep up to 14 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 kit at all times. Make sure your vehicle emergency kit is updated and have a cell phone charger in your car.

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.ready.gov

www.accessKent.com/GETREADY

www.getReadyKent.com

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