

Press Release

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**HUNDREDS OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED, MILLIONS REACHED
DURING NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH**
*Coalition of More Than 80 Organizations and all 56 States and Territories
To Promote Emergency Preparedness during September*

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Throughout the month of September, hundreds of activities are planned across the country to highlight the importance of individual emergency preparedness. The National Preparedness Month coalition, which includes the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, more than 80 organizations and all 56 states and territories, will encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare themselves and their families for any possible emergencies.

“National Preparedness Month will give everyone an opportunity to work toward a better prepared America,” said Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge. “This broad coalition and vast number of activities and events will allow us to reach millions of individuals and inform them about ways they can prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools.”

State and territorial activities range from preparedness booths at the state capitol or state fairs; to proclamations, press conferences or town hall meetings on preparedness issues; to statewide public service announcements and emergency trainings. The more than 80 National Preparedness Month partner organizations will help reach millions of Americans by communicating the simple ways that individuals can prepare for emergencies. Partner activities include:

- The American Red Cross will organize *Together We Prepare Saturday*, September 18 with its chapters nationwide. Chapters are encouraged to sponsor events in their communities such as first aid trainings and preparedness fairs. The organization’s website, www.redcross.org will also launch an online store in September with new pre-packaged products to compliment the wide range of preparedness resources.
- The America Prepared Campaign has galvanized the private sector in support of National Preparedness Month by providing preparedness information and tools at some of the nation’s largest retailers, including HomeDepot, Starbucks, Walmart, Costco and Sam’s Club. The Campaign has also developed public service announcements, which seek to raise awareness about the importance of preparedness and will distribute these starting in September through broadcast, print and outdoor vehicles. In addition, the organization has sponsored two contests to encourage individuals to get prepared, a short film contest

judged by Miramax Co-chairman Harvey Weinstein and a cash-prize contest for the school that gets the most families prepared.

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation, is participating in National Preparedness Month to help get the business community prepared. The Chamber will distribute emergency preparedness information to its employees nationwide and encourage its members, which include businesses, state and local chambers of commerce, and trade and professional associations, to do the same. In addition, the organization will join with Homeland Security to launch *Ready for Business*, and encourage all businesses to take practical steps to prepare for any possible emergency.
- The National Association of Broadcasters has partnered with the Department of Homeland Security to create *Are You Ready?*, a step-by-step emergency preparedness guidebook for local broadcasters. The guide provides detailed instructions about how broadcasters can prepare their stations for emergencies and get involved in promoting preparedness in their communities. The NAB will make this valuable resource available to all television and radio broadcast stations during September. Additionally, NAB will promote and distribute emergency preparedness public service advertisements as well as develop and host a *Ready* section on their website.
- The Public Discourse Project (formerly the 9/11 Commission) will continue to make emergency preparedness a priority. Particularly, its members will work to educate the private sector that preparedness for rescue, restart, and recovery of operations should include a plan for evacuation, adequate communications capabilities, and a plan for continuity of operations, as outlined in the Commission's report.
- The Department of Homeland Security's National Preparedness Month activities will include initiatives related to the *Ready* campaign as well as events hosted by Citizen Corps. In September, DHS will build on its *Ready* campaign, a national public education effort launched in 2003 in partnership with the Ad Council designed to educate and empower individuals to prepare for emergencies by getting a kit, making a family communications plan and being informed about potential threats. *Ready for Business* will be launched to educate small and medium-sized businesses about safeguarding their employees and assets while preparing for business continuity in the event of a disaster. In addition, Citizen Corps, the Department's community-based organization that encourages Americans to volunteer to make their communities safer and better prepared for emergencies, will organize events through its 1,400 state and local Councils across the country.

A full listing of National Preparedness Month coalition members and activities is attached.

While events will be held across the country throughout the month, all National Preparedness Month partner organizations will join together for a launch on September 9 in Washington, D.C. The event, co-chaired by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) and Representatives Christopher Cox (R-CA) and Jane Harman (D-CA), will be held on the grounds of the United States Capitol at 11:00 a.m.

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