



<http://www.pima.gov/oemhs>

ARE YOU READY? September is National Preparedness Month

According to Key Findings from the 2007 Readiness Quotient by the American Red Cross and the Council for Excellence in Government, “Only 8% of the American public has done everything they should to be ready for a natural disaster or a terrorist attack and 32% have done absolutely nothing to prepare for an emergency.” The study was replicated in Pima County by the Pima County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security in 2008. The local study found even less residents of Pima County are prepared than the nation as a whole.

Being prepared for a small emergency is just as important as being prepared for a catastrophic event. Regardless of the size or type of emergency, Ready.gov, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Citizen Corps readiness site, says that “Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.”

While residents of Pima County may not be at risk for a tornado or a hurricane, we are definitely at risk for extreme weather, microbursts, wildfires, and flash floods. In the past six months, we have felt three earthquakes, had a funnel cloud near Sonoita (and a tornado west of Phoenix), damaging winds, a gas leak, and hazardous material spill. Would you and your family know what to do? Have you made a plan? Have you practiced your plan?

The Pima County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security works to prevent the loss of life and reduce property damage due to man-made, technological and natural disasters. They team up with organizations such as the American Red Cross, Citizen Corps Councils and Community Emergency Response Teams, (CERT), along with other organizations to protect you and your property. But, they need your help to prepare before an emergency occurs. Remember, you may need to survive on your own for a period of time after an emergency. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. It may take hours, or it might take days for emergency workers to reach everyone. In addition, basic services such as electricity, water, sewers, telephones –both land lines and cell phones, gas, and grocery stores, banks, etc., may be cut off for days, or even a week or longer. This means you need to have your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least three days.

You can learn how to become prepared at <http://www.ready.gov>, which is a free online emergency preparedness toolkit that will take you through the steps of preparedness to improve your survival during an emergency. Considerations should be addressed when

planning for the elderly, family with special needs, and pets. The online toolkit will walk you through the details and important points to improve the safety and survival of everyone. Furthermore, the website points out that good preparedness does not end with the safety of your family and home, but that businesses need to make an emergency plan too so everyone can get back to work as soon as the emergency is over.

As soon as you begin preparing--you begin reducing the risk of negative effects a disaster can have and increases your survivability.

To get your free downloadable preparedness kit visit <http://www.ready.gov>

For a .pdf brochure on preparing your business for emergency, visit [http://www.ready.gov/america/downloads/quadfold\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.ready.gov/america/downloads/quadfold_brochure.pdf)