



**American
Red Cross**

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News Release
NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Today is Start of Atlantic Hurricane Season; Prepare Now.

PIEDMONT TRIAD, June 1, 2007 – With the 2007 Atlantic Hurricane Season officially starting today and lasting until November 30, the Greensboro and Northwest North Carolina Chapters of the American Red Cross urges people in hurricane-prone areas and those further inland to begin making preparations for this year's hurricane season now.

Everyone can follow the same basic emergency preparedness strategy, whether in a hurricane-prone area or elsewhere. The predictions already for this hurricane season are a call to action: check family emergency plans and restock disaster supplies kits," said MoAna Crompton, the NWNC Chapter's Associate Director of Community Disaster Education. She goes on to say that there are three things to remember to help you prepare for this hurricane season:

- 1) **Get a kit**, build a disaster supplies kit that includes enough supplies for each family member for three days. Remember to check your kit every six months.

There are basic items you should stock in an easy to grab container or bag that you would need during an evacuation or emergency situation: bottled water; nonperishable food; first aid supplies including medication; flashlight with extra batteries; hand-crank or battery-operated radio with extra batteries; cash and copies of important documents; and certain items for special needs populations or those with medical conditions. You may purchase a basic disaster supplies kit that you can customize to meet your needs. These items are available at RedCross.org through our online store or can be purchased at both of the chapters.

- 2) **Make a plan**, which includes a family communications plan and evacuation plan. Coordinate your plan with your child's school, your work and community communication plans. Practice this plan with your entire family.

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Pick two places to meet:

- 1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.*
- 2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.*

Also, ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number.

Develop several options for re-establishing communication during times of emergency (phone contact, sending email to a distribution list of family members, use of the Safe and Well Web site at www.redcross.org, etc.) Write down all of these contact numbers and information on the family emergency contact card. Discuss what to do in an evacuation and plan how to take care of your pets. You can download a contact card and other guidance for an emergency plan are available at RedCross.org.

- 3) Be informed,** Get to know the types of disasters that can happen in your community. Stay informed.

Local government officials, not the Red Cross, issue orders such as evacuations or sheltering in-place when certain disasters threaten. Listen to local radio and television reports when disaster threatens and follow the guidance of your local officials.

Preparing for a disaster, such as a hurricane, ahead of time can help alleviate the stress you may face during the storm, and ease the burden on your family and loved ones. For more information regarding how individuals and families can prepare for disasters visit www.redcross.org or contact your local Red Cross chapter.

The American Red Cross helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Last year, almost a million volunteers and 35,000 employees helped victims of almost 75,000 disasters; taught lifesaving skills to millions; and helped U.S. service members separated from their families stay connected. Almost 4 million people gave blood through the Red Cross, the largest supplier of blood and blood products in the United States. The American Red Cross is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. An average of 91 cents of every dollar the Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs. The Red Cross is not a government agency; it relies on donations of time, money, and blood to do its work.

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