

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio is Better Prepared for All Natural Disasters National Hurricane Preparedness Week is May 24-30

COLUMBUS, OH – This week’s observance of National Hurricane Preparedness Week brings to mind memories of the Category 1-force winds Ohioans experienced during last September’s landfall of Hurricane Ike, the state’s first “dry hurricane” that toppled trees, destroyed roofs and caused major power outages that left nearly 5 million Ohioans without electricity for an extended period.

While Ohio and many Midwest states may not be considered serious impact zones in the direct path of Atlantic and Gulf coast tropical storms and hurricanes, last year’s wind storm and state emergency taught all Ohioans an important lesson: *Always Be Prepared.*

In the event of any serious storm that could disrupt electric utility service for an extended period, Ohioans should have food, water and general emergency supplies on hand to sustain them for more than three days. Homes with special needs individuals should have alternate power sources such as generators (for people on oxygen or for refrigerating medications) identified and available in the event of an emergency.

The Ohio Emergency Management Agency encourages all Ohioans to –

Be Prepared

Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit that includes items such as nonperishable food, water, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio or NOAA Weather Radio, flashlights, batteries, first aid kit, extra clothing and bedding, copies of important papers, and emergency contact numbers. Also have food, water and supplies for the family pets/ animals.

Prepare your home for severe storms. Clear away dead tree branches and limbs. Keep trees, bushes and shrubs well trimmed. Elevate basement appliances. Anchor propane tanks. Know how to shut off utilities. Invest in flood insurance.

Make a Plan

Make a Family Emergency Plan. Everyone needs to know what types of emergencies or disasters can affect their homes – from severe thunderstorms to fires. Everyone needs to know what to do for each type of emergency.

Practice your plan. Conduct fire drills. Everyone should know at least two ways to exit a room during a fire. Children should be taught how to open and escape from windows. Test the smoke detectors at night when the household is asleep. Conduct tornado drills. Everyone should know to go to the lowest and central level of the home. Mobile home residents should know to seek shelter in the nearest sturdy building or tornado shelter.

Plan where family members will meet if an emergency or disaster occurs when no one's at home. Know how to contact family members if they're not together when a disaster occurs. Know where to go and what to do if an evacuation order is issued.

Stay Informed

Know how to contact your county emergency management agency. Listen to your local officials. Learn about the emergency plans that have been established by your local government. In any emergency, always listen to the instructions given by local emergency management officials.

Know the difference between storm watches and storm warnings. Stay aware of inclement weather conditions by listening to your NOAA Weather Radio or local television or radio news stations.

For additional information on emergency preparedness, visit:

Ohio Emergency Management Agency at www.ema.ohio.gov

Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness at www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency at www.fema.gov

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