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OHIO'S NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGES OHIOANS TO GET READY

(COLUMBUS) – September is National Preparedness Month (NPM), a nationwide effort encouraging Americans to take steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools. This year marks the sixth NPM and the Ohio Department of Public Safety today joined preparedness partners including FEMA, the Central Ohio Transit Authority and the Ohio Community Service Council to kick-off the 2009 campaign.

NPM 2009 is focusing on changing perceptions about emergencies and helping Americans understand what it truly means to be *Ready*. Being ready goes beyond smoke detectors, fire alarms and extra food in the pantry. Being *Ready* means knowing what specific items to include in disaster preparedness kits. Being *Ready* means meeting with household or business members and writing emergency plans for the different types of incidents that can affect your home or community.

Throughout the month of September, county emergency management agencies, Red Cross chapters, schools, churches and local businesses will host activities and events that highlight the importance of emergency preparedness.

“The state of Ohio is no stranger to disasters and weather emergencies. We can ensure that the state is able to adequately respond to and recover from whatever comes our way by making sure we are all *Ready*,” said Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Henry Guzmán. “Get a kit. Make a plan. Be informed. And get involved. Every Ohioan should take the necessary steps now to keep themselves and their families safe, prepared and *Ready*.”

Examples of *Ready* activities include first aid/CPR training; preparing emergency plans; participating in neighborhood watch meetings; practicing tornado and fire drills; and organizing emergency preparedness information at fairs, churches, schools and businesses. Visit www.ready.ohio.gov for additional preparedness information and resources. National Preparedness Month is an initiative of the federal Department of Homeland Security sponsored by FEMA's *Ready* Campaign and Citizen Corps.

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The Ohio Department of Public Safety is dedicated to the mission of saving lives, reducing injuries and economic loss and administering Ohio's motor vehicle laws through the work of its divisions: Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Medical Services, Ohio Investigative Unit, Office of Criminal Justice Services, Ohio Homeland Security, Ohio State Highway Patrol and the Ohio Traffic Safety Office.