



MEDIA RELEASE

Emergency Management Agency

Ohio Emergency Management Agency • Nancy J. Dragani, Executive Director
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 31, 2009

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September is National Preparedness Month

Week One – Fire Preparedness – Are you Ready or Are you *READY?*

(COLUMBUS) – September marks the observance of National Preparedness Month and the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is leading a statewide campaign with a diverse group of national, state and local partners to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and to promote community involvement throughout events and activities.

National Preparedness Month 2009 focuses on changing perceptions about emergency preparedness to help Ohioans understand what it truly means to be Ready. Each week during National Preparedness Month, ODPS will be sending a press release or providing information on different areas of preparedness most likely to impact Ohioans.

In 2008, according to the State Fire Marshal's Office, Ohio had more than 48,000 fires and 150 deaths as a result of fires, many of which could have been prevented. It is important to learn about fires and how your family will respond to a fire in order to protect yourself and your loved ones. **Are you Ready, or Are you *READY?***

When there is a fire, do not waste time gathering valuables or making a phone call. Fires can spread quickly, becoming life threatening in just two minutes and engulfing a residence in as little as five minutes. While flames are dangerous, heat and smoke can be more dangerous and can sear lungs. As a fire burns, poisonous gases are emitted that can cause one to become disoriented or drowsy, which could put you into a heavy sleep. The leading cause of fire-related deaths is asphyxiation, outnumbering burns by a three-to-one ratio.

For more information about preparing for or responding to a fire emergency, log on www.Ready.Ohio.gov or <http://www.redcross.org> so you can be sure your family and loved ones are *READY*.

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Throughout the month, ODPS will highlight weekly testimonials of fellow Ohioans who have survived a disaster, or the impact the disaster has had on their community, on Ohio's preparedness Web site at www.Ready.Ohio.gov. The Web site also has information and resources to help Ohioans develop a successful game plan to be prepared, including making a plan, putting together an emergency kit and sharing information with others.