As Summer turns into Fall, many of us are getting ready for the cooler months ahead; we are packing away the summer clothes and flip flops and airing out the sweaters and boots. September is National Preparedness Month, a time to remind ourselves and those around us about the importance of preparing for emergencies and encourage everyone to take action.

So what can you do to become prepared?
- Get a kit
- Make a plan
- Be informed
- Get involved

Get a kit. Make or purchase a basic kit of emergency supplies that will allow you and your family to survive for at least three days should an emergency happen. However for longer emergency situations, we recommend that you try to accumulate at least 14 days of provisions. The lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina highlighted the fact that a government response to large magnitude event was deficient. It may take time for responders to get to your location. It is better to have your own supplies so you can wait it out. To make use of the first aid kit, take classes in basic first aid and CPR at your local American Red Cross or hospital.

Make a plan. Plan in advance what you and your family will do in an emergency. Your plan should include a communications plan and address both sheltering-in-place and evacuation. Templates are available at www.ready.gov.

Be informed. Learn more about different threats that could affect your community, and appropriate responses to them. You can find more information about threats in your community by visiting your local emergency management office.

Get involved. After preparing yourself and your family, take time out and get involved in preparing the community. One way you can do this is by joining the Central Washington Medical Reserve Corps (CWMRC). The mission of the CWMRC is to provide volunteer medical support during emergencies or when requested, to promote health and wellness in the communities of Central Washington, and to support affiliate organizations. An application has been e-mailed with this newsletter, or is available by calling Barbara Andrews 509.249.6533.

Pets. If you have pets, remember that they need to be taken care of. The 14-day kit recommended above applies to your pets also. Saving the Whole Family can be found at the American Veterinary Medical Association website.

For more information, please visit:
Ready
www.ready.gov

American Red Cross
http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_239_00.html

American Veterinary Medical Association
http://www.avma.org/disaster/default.asp
**Personal Preparedness: Rotating Supplies**

You are prepared for the worst. You have a plan, a car kit, a 72 hour kit and supplies for two weeks or more.

Have you checked your supplies lately?

Many components of your emergency kit may need to be rotated. Make a schedule for checking your kits twice a year. New Year’s Day and Independence Day are good times to see what needs to be done to update and restock your supplies. Shelf life varies depending on manufacturer and storage conditions, but here are some general guidelines:

- **Water:** 2-5 years, depending on the type of storage container
- **Food:** Check expiration dates. MREs, Food Bars and other long-term emergency food supplies may last five years or more.
- **Lightsticks:** 2-3 years
- **Warmers:** 3 years
- **Batteries:** 3-5 years
- **Sunscreen:** 1-2 years
- **First aid kit and medications:** Check labels and replace accordingly.

**Getting the Word Out: Preparedness and Prevention**

In a mix of *Big Brother* and *Survivor*, the **State of Colorado** is putting residents who want to test their ability to deal with emergencies live on YouTube.

Nine people will spend a weekend at a Denver bed and breakfast later this month facing various real emergencies. The “What If?” contestants will be judged on how they’ve prepared and how they respond. Prizes include Apple iPods for each contestant, and a $2,500 bonus for the winner.

It’s all part of a six-month preparedness campaign called “What If? Colorado”, sponsored by the Colorado Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response and the state health department.

The adventures can be seen live on YouTube September 20—23.

For more information: [http://www.whatifcolorado.com/default.asp](http://www.whatifcolorado.com/default.asp)

The **Florida Department of Health** has people talking about behaviors that can prevent disease with a multimedia campaign about the “fifth guy.” The fifth guy is the one who doesn’t follow society’s hygienic norms. He doesn’t wash his hands, cover his cough, or stay home when he’s sick. The humorous series shows him suffering the social consequences of his behavior.

The web site also includes information on how to set guidelines for illness in the workplace, posters on identifying illness versus allergies, and other resources. [http://www.fifthguy.com/](http://www.fifthguy.com/)
Training and Education

Training and education are vital components in developing and maintaining emergency response personnel and teams. To meet that need, Region 8 Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response provides training opportunities to our partners. These include in-person trainings, video or dvds, and web-based learning opportunities. New trainings and materials are added to the Region 8 library on a regular basis and by request.

### In-person trainings include:

**The Washington Community Safety Summit**  
September 25-27 Olympia  

**NIMS/ICS Training**  
100, 200, and 700 available.  
As requested. Contact Leslie Koenig at 509-586-0673 x4 to schedule.

**Communication Training**  
Risk Communication, Spokesperson Training, and other aspects of communication. As requested. Contact Angela Seydel at 509-586-0673 x2 to schedule.

### On-line training opportunities:

**Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Clinical Education**  
Webcast sponsored by the CDC  
September 20, 2007  9:00—10:00 a.m.  

**A Practical Tool for Business Continuity during a Flu Pandemic**  
Webinar from the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice  
September 18, 2007  12:00—1:00 p.m.  
[www.nwcphp.org/htip](http://www.nwcphp.org/htip)

### On-line resource:

**Accommodating People with Disabilities in Disasters: A Reference Guide to Federal Law**  
This FEMA guide outlines legal requirements and standards relating to access for people with disabilities. This is the first of a series of disability-related guidelines produced by FEMA for planners and providers at all levels.  
[www.fema.gov/oer/reference](http://www.fema.gov/oer/reference)

The prospect of a safer future is within reach—and this both a collective aspiration and a mutual responsibility.  

**The California Department of Public Health**  
has new disease prevention materials.  
[http://cdlhn.com/default.htm](http://cdlhn.com/default.htm)

### From the video library ~ DVD or VHS:

*Contact Angela Seydel 509.596.0673 x2 for the following programs.*

**Infection Control Update 2007— Home Health Aides and Attendants**  
September 19, 2007  2 hours

**Conflict Management: Lessons from the Field**  
August 16, 2007  1.5 hours
Region 8 Healthcare Coalition

The Region 8 Healthcare Coalition will meet **October 17th** at the Holiday Inn Express Hotel and Suites in Pasco. The Coalition meeting will follow the Healthcare Systems Planning Meeting. Please plan to attend both.

Our grant cycle for this work began September 1, 2007 and runs through August 2008. The group has decided on a quarterly meeting schedule that will start this October. A final schedule of those meetings, times, and places will soon be available.

The Coalition will have several workgroups; Influenza Pandemic Preparedness, Communications, ICS/NIMS Compliance, and Mass Fatalities and Healthcare Facilities Evacuation. The formation of these groups will take place at the October 17th meeting.

Please come and participate in these exciting planning areas!

The meeting will be held at the

**Holiday Inn Express Hotel and Suites**

4525 Convention Place, Pasco WA

Next to the TRAC

10:00 am – Region 8 Healthcare Systems Planning Meeting
11:30 am – Lunch
12:30 pm – Region 8 Healthcare Coalition Meeting
2:00 pm – Meeting adjourn

Please RSVP by **September 28th**.

Please contact Leslie Koenig at lesliek@bfhd.wa.gov or 586-0673 X4. We need your name, organization and contact information.

Shelter Intake Tool: Matching Needs with Shelters

Matching people’s needs with particular emergency shelters is the intent of a new Shelter Intake Tool being used by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Federal Medical Stations and the American Red Cross.

The HHS-developed tool was designed to ensure that everyone is assigned to the shelter option providing the best support for maintaining that individual’s independence. Other entities are encouraged to use the tool, as appropriate. A copy of the form has been e-mailed with this newsletter. It is also available at [http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/File/MRC_Resources/ARC_HHS_Assessment_Tool_May07.pdf](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/File/MRC_Resources/ARC_HHS_Assessment_Tool_May07.pdf).

TOPOFF 4 in Portland, Oregon

The Top Officials 4 Full-Scale Exercise (TOPOFF 4 FSE/T4 FSE) will be held in Portland, Phoenix, and Guam October 15-24, 2007. This full-scale exercise is the fourth in a series of terrorism preparedness exercises sponsored by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Players include DHS, other Federal agencies, Phoenix, Portland, Guam, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

Each TOPOFF exercise involves a two-year cycle of seminars, planning events, and exercises culminating in a full-scale assessment of the Nation’s capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks involving Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

This year’s scenario involves a response to the simulated detonation of a Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD), or “dirty bomb,” causing casualties and widespread contamination in a populous area. An RDD releases radioactive material into the surrounding area using conventional explosives. While it does not cause catastrophic damage, there are severe rescue, health, and long-term decontamination issues.