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Health District Advises Residents to Prepare for Disasters

The Central Connecticut Health District is reminding residents to take precautions for unexpected community emergencies. With the possibility of a public health emergency due to a hurricane, tornado, act of terrorism or pandemic influenza, it is important to be prepared. According to the American Red Cross, three key steps to take are: get a kit, make a plan and be informed.

A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items that may be used at home, at work, at school or in a vehicle. This kit is made up of the following items:

- ⇒ Water; one gallon per person, per day (a 3 day supply for evacuation, 2 week supply for home)
- ⇒ Food; non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items such as canned goods, a manual can-opener, and dry mixes (a 3 day supply for evacuation, 2 week supply for home)
- ⇒ Battery-powered or hand-crank radio with extra batteries
- ⇒ First Aid Kit
- ⇒ A 7-day supply of medications and medical items
- ⇒ Multi-purpose tools
- ⇒ Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- ⇒ Copies of personal documents (medication lists, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies and pictures of family members)
- ⇒ Cell phones and chargers
- ⇒ Family and emergency contact information
- ⇒ Extra cash
- ⇒ Emergency blankets
- ⇒ Map(s) of the area

If there are children, seniors, pets or someone with a medical condition or special needs in your home, please consider adding the following items to your supplies kit:

- ⇒ Medical supplies (hearing aids and wheelchairs with extra batteries, glasses, syringes, canes)
- ⇒ Baby supplies (bottles, powder formula, baby food, diapers)
- ⇒ Games and activities for children
- ⇒ Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl, medical records)

Pack the items in easy-to-carry water-proof containers, label the containers clearly and store them where they would be easily accessible, such as duffle bags, backpacks and covered trash receptacles. Remember, you can reduce the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool.

When making a plan, it is essential to meet with family members and discuss how to prepare and

respond to emergencies. Identify responsibilities of each family member of your household and plan ways to work together. Choose two places to meet both outside of the home and outside of the neighborhood, in the event of a sudden emergency, such as a fire or evacuation. In the event of an evacuation in your community, decide where you would go and multiple routes of getting there. Be sure to identify a name of relative or friend outside of the area to leave messages if necessary. When planning for pets, call ahead to determine pet-friendly hotels and motels.

Being informed involves learning what types of disasters or emergencies may occur in your area. These events can range from those affecting only you and your family, like a home fire or medical emergency, to those affecting your entire community, like an earthquake or flood. Make sure that at least one member of your household is trained in first aid and CPR and knows how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). This training is useful in many emergency situations. Emergency contact cards for each family member are useful in the event of separation. Children and anyone with special needs should wear or carry some form of identification at all times. Printable versions of these cards are available on the American Red Cross website at www.redcross.org.

Brochures about emergency preparedness are available from the Central Connecticut Health District, now celebrating 15 years of services to its communities. For further information, contact the District's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Judy Torpey at 860-721-2816 or our website at www.ccthd.org.