

Sept. 6, 2005

### **September is National Preparedness Month**

The Central Connecticut Health District, as the local public health agency serving Berlin, Rocky Hill, and Wethersfield, is joining the Department of Homeland Security and the Red Cross in reminding residents that September is National Preparedness Month. The devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina served as a grave reminder that emergencies happen, and often cannot be predicted. People around the country are being encouraged to “take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and schools.”

The American Red Cross points out that “disaster can strike quickly and without warning. It can force you to evacuate your neighborhood, workplace or school or can confine you to your home.” Would you know what to do if your basic services were cut off? It is clear that it is not always possible for help to arrive immediately, so the best way to make you and your family safer is to be prepared for an emergency before it happens.

Two of the best ways to become prepared are to make a family emergency plan and to put together emergency supplies. It is important to remember the special needs of your family members, such as medication, eyeglasses, dentures, and dietary supplements. Infants will require formula, special food, and diapers. The elderly often have hearing aids and other medical devices that will require extra batteries. Persons with disabilities will also have particular needs, such as specialized equipment. And remember to plan for family pets.

Both the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the American Red Cross offer numerous tips on their web sites at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), and [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org). The Central Connecticut Health District ([www.ccthd.org](http://www.ccthd.org)) has brochures available, and is developing a list of volunteers to aid in the event of an emergency.

To become an emergency volunteer in Berlin, Rocky Hill, and Wethersfield, or to obtain further information, contact Judy Torpey, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the Health District at 721-2816.