



NPM 2014 Ulster Co. Dept of Health Public Health Preparedness e-mail Week 1:

Distribution Date: September 5, 2014

- Welcome to September is National Preparedness Month!

Theme: Be Disaster Aware-Take Action To Prepare

Subject line:

How to reconnect with your family after a disaster

FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS



Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another. Think about how you will communicate in different situations.

Complete a contact card for each adult family member. Have them keep these cards handy in a wallet, purse or briefcase, etc. Additionally, complete contact cards for each child in your family. Put the cards in their backpacks or book bags.

Check with your children's day care or school. Facilities designed for children should include identification planning as part of their emergency plans.

Family Communication Tips

Identify a contact such as a friend or relative who lives out-of-state for household members to notify they are safe. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.

Be sure every member of your family knows the phone number and has a cell phone, coins or a prepaid phone card to call the emergency contact. If you have a cell phone, program that person(s) as "ICE" (In

Case of Emergency) in your phone. If you are in an accident, emergency personnel will often check your ICE listings in order to get a hold of someone you know. Make sure to tell your family and friends that you've listed them as emergency contacts.

Teach family members how to use text messaging (also known as SMS or Short Message Service). Text messages can often get around network disruptions when a phone call might not be able to get through.

Subscribe to alert services. Many communities now have systems that will send instant text alerts or e-mails to let you know about bad weather, road closings, local emergencies, etc. Sign up by visiting NY-Alert.gov, NYS All-Hazards Alert and Notification System.

Ready.gov has made it simple for you to make a family emergency plan. Download the [Family Communication Plan for Parents and Kids](#) (PDF) and fill out the sections before printing it or emailing it to your family and friends.

Have a plan for traveling between work and home, and other commonly visited locations, in case of an emergency. Download the [Commuter Emergency Plan](#) (PDF) for more information.

UCDOH Public Health Preparedness Program 334-5540/5538

Source: The Ready Campaign www.ready.gov
