

Governor Baker Proclaims “Emergency Preparedness Month” and Encourages Individuals and Families to Prepare

FRAMINGHAM, MA – Governor Charlie Baker has proclaimed September 2018 to be Emergency Preparedness Month to highlight the importance of emergency preparedness and to encourage planning for disasters and other types of emergencies. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) will promote public preparedness throughout the month through various outreach initiatives. These efforts are part of a month-long nationwide preparedness campaign to encourage residents to take simple steps to better prepare themselves, their homes, their businesses, and their communities.

“The destructive storms that impacted the Commonwealth in March and the recent natural disasters across the country are reminders of the importance of emergency preparedness,” said Governor Charlie Baker. **“Preparedness improves public health and safety, can help minimize property damage and the economic impacts of disasters, and can accelerate the disaster recovery process.”**

“The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, Department of Public Health and other public safety agencies work closely with our communities in Massachusetts and across all levels of government to strengthen our preparedness for the next disaster,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.** “We encourage individuals, families, and businesses to take steps to prepare themselves and their property before the next emergency.”

To help individuals and families prepare during Emergency Preparedness Month, MEMA will promote four key preparedness messages: 1) [Be Informed and Receive Emergency Alerts](#), 2) [Plan for Emergencies and Disasters](#), 3) [Build an Emergency Kit](#), and 4) [Get Involved](#) in community preparedness and resilience. MEMA will also stress the importance of considering the unique preparedness needs of children, pets, seniors and people with access and functional needs.

MEMA’s website, www.mass.gov/mema, features resources to help prepare for emergencies and information about the hazards common in Massachusetts. During September, MEMA will also share emergency preparedness tips on Twitter and Facebook, partner with MassDOT to feature signage along highways, and will support various emergency preparedness events across the state.

Be Informed

Massachusetts is susceptible to many natural hazards, including floods, hurricanes and tropical storms, severe winter weather, tornadoes, coastal storms, thunderstorms, earthquakes, lightning, extreme temperatures, and man-made disasters, including hazardous materials incidents, nuclear power plant incidents, power outages, transportation accidents, water supply problems, terrorism and more. If you live or work in a coastal community, you should learn whether you are in a designated hurricane evacuation zone. To learn whether your home, business, or school is in a hurricane evacuation zone, use the interactive "[Know Your Zone](#)" map on MEMA’s website. Being aware of, and understanding the different [types of emergencies and disasters](#) that can occur is a critical part of being prepared and staying safe.

Receive Emergency Alerts

Receiving advance warnings for severe weather, timely emergency alerts, and information during a disaster is critical to staying safe during an emergency. Every family should have multiple methods for

receiving emergency alerts, including at least one with an audible alert to wake you in the middle of the night. Some of the primary ways to get information during an emergency include:

- Local notification systems such as “Reverse 9-1-1” or “Code Red.” MEMA urges residents to contact their local [Emergency Management Director](#) to find out about local notification systems and how to enroll.
- MEMA’s [Massachusetts Alerts](#) smartphone app.
- The Emergency Alert System (EAS) which broadcasts information via radio and television.
- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) which deliver emergency alerts via cellphone
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radios.
- Traditional media such as TV and radio stations.
- MEMA’s [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) accounts and the social media accounts of public safety agencies in your community.
- MEMA's website: www.mass.gov/mema and local government websites.
- Massachusetts 2-1-1 is the Commonwealth's primary telephone information call center during emergencies. [Call 2-1-1](#) for information about the location of open shelters, transportation or other restrictions due to a declared state of emergency, post disaster assistance, ways to volunteer or donate, or other services you or your family may need.
- A teletypewriter (TTY) device, which allows individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired use the telephone to communicate.
- U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Broadcasts are used for maritime weather and safety broadcasts.
- MassDOT variable message boards and private sector digital billboards can be used to provide information during emergencies.

More information about emergency alerting systems can be found online at:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/be-informed-and-receive-emergency-alerts>

Over the coming weeks, MEMA will issue additional information to promote the themes of: [Plan for Emergencies and Disasters](#), [Build an Emergency Kit](#), and [Get Involved](#) in community preparedness and resilience.

For additional information about MEMA and Emergency Preparedness, go to www.mass.gov/mema [Plan for Emergencies and Disasters](#), [Build an Emergency Kit](#), and [Get Involved](#) in community preparedness and resilience

Continue to follow MEMA updates on Twitter at www.twitter.com/MassEMA; Facebook at www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA; YouTube at www.youtube.com/MassachusettsEMA.

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