

Sons of The American Legion Homeland Security & Civil Preparedness Committee 2010 – 2011

Main Objective: To educate our members and our communities.

This past year we have been bombarded with a seemingly increasing surge of Natural Disasters.

Where do you go for help? Who do you turn to? Is your Post Home ready? Is it a place where the public can come for shelter or assistance? Has your Squadron developed a disaster kit for your post Home? For your own home?

Floods, Tornados, Hurricanes, Mudslides, Wild Fires, Earthquakes, & acts of Terrorism...

ARE YOU READY?

It will be the goal of this committee to get information into our member's hands from the Federal Department of Homeland Security and The American Legion, to prepare them to cope with and assist in a time of emergency.

The Sons of The American Legion ask

Are You Ready???

In just general terms the Federal Department of Homeland Security deals with and in the following areas...

Counterterrorism in the fields of Aviation Security, Cyber-Security, Chemical Security, Law Enforcement, Counterfeiting, & Identification Security, Border Security in the fields of...Protecting America, Trade and Travel, Laws and regulations, Civil Preparedness, In the fields of..., Response & Recovery, Preparing your family, Disaster Response, Disaster Recovery, Communications and Community Group Coordination, and Immigration, in the Fields of..., Moving to the US, Immigration Enforcement, & Laws and Regulations.

The very scope and size of the information included in such a large field of important public knowledge, that needs to be shared with every American, makes it very difficult to distribute in such a fashion that reaches every one of our members.

One area of concern however does lend itself to quick coverage with a minimal amount of time and money involved to reach all members of the Sons of The American Legion. **CIVIL PREPARDNESS !**

The ability to have each S.A.L. Detachment or Legion Department add to their web-site a link to the Federal Ready Campaign www.Ready.gov, is a task that should be easy to accomplish.

PLAN OF ACTION for 2010 - 2011

The S.A.L. can inform America about The *Ready* Campaign

Launched in February 2003, *Ready* is a national public service advertising (PSA) campaign designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies including natural and man-made disasters. The goal of the campaign is to get the public involved and ultimately to increase the level of basic preparedness across the nation.

Ready and its Spanish language version *Listo* ask individuals to do three key things: (1) get an emergency supply kit, (2) make a family emergency plan, and (3) be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses.

The campaign's messages have been distributed through: television, radio, print, outdoor and Web (PSAs) developed and produced by The Advertising Council; brochures; www.Ready.gov and www.Listo.gov Web sites; toll-free phone lines 1-800-BE-Ready and 1-888-SE-Listo; and partnerships with a wide variety of public and private sector organizations.

In 2004, The Department of Homeland Security launched *Ready Business*, an extension of the *Ready* Campaign that focuses on business preparedness. *Ready Business* helps owners and managers of small- to medium-sized businesses prepare their employees, operations and assets in the event of an emergency. The campaign's messages are being delivered through a Web site www.Ready.gov/business, brochures, radio, print and internet PSAs and key partnerships.

In 2006, the Department launched *Ready Kids*, a tool to help parents and teachers educate children ages 8 - 12 about emergencies and how they can help get their family prepared. The program includes a family-friendly Web site www.Ready.gov/kids and online materials developed by Sesame Workshop and Discovery Education.

Homeland Security has also worked with a variety of public and private sector organizations to develop tailored preparedness information for specific Americans. The Department worked with American Kennel Club, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, American Veterinary Medical Association, and The Humane Society of the United States to create materials that highlight the key steps pet owners should take to prepare themselves and their animals. Homeland Security also worked with AARP, the American Red Cross, the National Organization on Disability and the National Fire Protection Association to create emergency information for seniors and Americans with disabilities and special needs. Materials developed for these specific Americans include brochures and instructional videos available at www.Ready.gov.

In 2008, The *Ready* Campaign added a section on their web site for military families. The entire Department highlights emergency preparedness through National Preparedness Month (NPM), a nationwide effort held each September to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools.

The S.A.L. can help American put together an Emergency Supply Kit

You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least three days. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it might take days. In addition, basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, and telephones may be cut off for days, or even a week or longer.

Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:

- [Water](#), one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- [Food](#), at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- [First aid kit](#)
- Whistle to signal for help
- [Dust mask](#), to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers, inverter or solar charger

Additional Items to Consider Adding to an Emergency Supply Kit:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container. You can use the [EFFAK](#) Emergency Financial First Aid Kit - PDF, 277Kb) developed by Operation Hope, FEMA and Citizen Corps to help you organize your information
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Find out how to keep food safe during and after an emergency by visiting:
<http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/>

The S.A.L. can help American Make A Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to plan in advance: how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations.

Family Emergency Plan

- Identify an **out-of town contact**. 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 your [local Office of Emergency Management web site](#).

Planning to Stay or Go

Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is whether you stay where you are or evacuate. You should understand and plan for both possibilities. Use common sense and available information, including what you are learning here, to determine if there is an immediate danger. In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for information or official instruction as it becomes available. For information on staying put or sheltering in place, [click here](#).

Emergency Information

Find out what kinds of disasters, both natural and man-made, are most likely to occur in your area and how you will be notified. Methods of getting your attention vary from community to community. One common method is to broadcast via **emergency radio** and **TV broadcasts**. You might hear a special siren, or get a telephone call, or emergency workers may go door-to-door.

Emergency Plans

Use the New Online Family Emergency Planning Tool created by the Ready Campaign in conjunction with the Ad Council to prepare a printable Comprehensive Family Emergency Plan:

<http://ready.adcouncil.org/beprepared/fep/index.jsp>

Use the New Quick Share application to help your family in assembling a quick reference list of contact information for your family, and a meeting place for emergency situations:

<http://ready.adcouncil.org/beprepared/quickshare.html>

You may also want to **inquire about emergency plans** at places where your family spends time: **work**, **daycare** and **school**. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together in the event of an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance. Read more: [School and Workplace](#).

The S.A.L. can help American Be Informed

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as making an emergency supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency.

However, there are important differences among potential emergencies that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take. Learn more about the potential emergencies that could happen where you live and the appropriate way to respond to them.

In addition, learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your state and local government.

Emergency preparedness is no longer the sole concern of earthquake prone Californians and those who live in the part of the country known as "Tornado Alley." For Americans, preparedness must now account for man-made disasters as well as natural ones. Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.

The S.A.L. and The American Legion Family can register to become a Coalition member and promote National Preparedness each year.

What is National Preparedness Month (NPM)?

September is National Preparedness Month! This awareness month is sponsored by the Ready Campaign in partnership with Citizen Corps and the Ad Council. NPM is designed to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and communities.

How do I register my organization?

You can register to become a NPM Coalition Member by visiting <http://ready.adcouncil.org>. In the past we have had as many as 3,200 NPM Coalition Members who worked to create a culture of preparedness in the United States. We hope your organization will join us in spreading this emergency preparedness message in 2010!

What does it mean to be a NPM Coalition Member?

By joining the Coalition, your organization would agree to promote emergency preparedness in any way that it can during September.

Who can sign up to be an NPM Coalition Member?

NPM Coalition membership is open to all public and private sector organizations at no cost.

What do I get for being a Coalition Member?

Once you register you will receive access to the NPM Website where you can find a toolkit that includes templates, resources, and tips to assist you with promoting emergency preparedness. You will also find an NPM calendar where you can post your events and see what other organizations are doing in your community. In addition, you can share your success stories and read about the successes of others. Your organization will also be listed on our Web site!

The S.A.L. can produce, promote and distribute Public Service Announcements that can be shared with every Post, Unit, & Squadron in America.

The American Legion has offered with approval, assistance with the production of PSA's that promote Legion programs and initiatives. We can use these PSA's to inform our membership and the communities that they live in about the Ready.gov programs.

By the end of Commander Dew's term in office we hope to have links to www.ready.gov/america on all American Legion Family web-sites in each Detachment and Department.

Then and only then we can say...**THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION ARE READY!**