

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & PUBLIC HEALTH BLOOMINGTON

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

## September is National Preparedness Month

**Get a Kit. Make a Plan. Be informed and get involved.**

National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort held each September to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools. National Preparedness Month 2007 is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

For the first time, the month will focus on different areas of emergency preparedness:

- September 1-8: Back-to-School
- September 9-15: Business Preparedness
- September 16-22: Multicultural Preparedness
- September 23-30: Home & Family Preparedness

"It is vital that Americans take steps to prepare for emergencies at home, work or school," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "Personal preparedness is paramount to effectively reacting to the effects of a disaster. By preparing yourself, your family, and your business, you allow first responders to prioritize efforts and aid."

## Bloomington, Edina and Richfield PLAN TO BE SAFE

The cities of Bloomington, Edina and Richfield plan to recognize National Preparedness Month by continuing their work in the community to educate them about preparing for emergencies and sheltering-in-place. The "Plan to Be Safe" campaign, originally created by Montgomery County's Advanced Practice Center, focuses on nine essential items residents need in order to shelter-in-place in the event of an emergency. The materials include a tri-fold "Plan 9" pamphlet with pictures and simple text listing the essential items (water, food, clothes, medications, flashlight, manual can opener, battery powered radio, hygiene items and first aid kit). Another component of the campaign is a brochure, "Everybody Ready," describing steps to prepare: start a conversation, make a plan and make a kit.



**Make a Kit.** Start simply! Collect these nine essential items to help you shelter-in-place in an emergency.

**Plan 9 materials** are available for your organization by calling Andy Hase at 952-563-8919. Materials are currently being translated into Spanish and will be available in the Fall. For more resources about emergency preparedness, go to [www.codeready.org](http://www.codeready.org).

Richfield disseminated 1500 brochures and pamphlets at their National Night Out, and plans to distribute them to city employees, council members and the public. Bloomington is partnering with the faith community to disseminate the information. In Edina, materials were distributed to all full-time city employees. In addition, police distributed to families and neighbors during National Night Out, and the Public Health Department plans to distribute them at the Edina Senior Resource Expo in October.

## Strategic National Stockpile Assessment

### 3 City Planning Efforts Praised

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, Bloomington Public Health underwent a full-day assessment of their planning efforts related to the Strategic National Stockpile. In attendance were key partners from Bloomington, Edina and Richfield, including local public health, emergency management, police, fire, public works and others. The assessment was completed by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) using guidelines and instruments from the Center for Disease Control (CDC).



*12-hour Push Packages are strategically located in 10 different locations in the US*

The assessment went smoothly and initial feedback was very positive. MDH was very impressed at the relationships that have been built between the three cities and their representatives, especially law enforcement.

### What is SNS?



CDC's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) has large quantities of medicine and medical supplies to protect the American public if there is a public health emergency. Once Federal and local authorities agree that the SNS is needed, medicines will be delivered to any state in the United States. Supplies are

stored in 12-hour Push Packages ready for rapid deployment when requested by the Governor.

### When would the stockpile be used?

- When local public resources would likely be or have already been overwhelmed by a public health disaster.
- Use could include emergencies resulting from a major earthquake, pandemic flu, a smallpox event, terrorist events or explosive incidents.
- With a single case of smallpox or indication of an impending chemical, biological, radiological/nuclear, or large explosive attack.

## City Staff Gets "Drugs" During Drill!

Operation Snowbaby was an exercise implemented by Bloomington Public Health on May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> to test the distribution of medications to essential local government personnel. It was parallel to the metro-wide emergency preparedness exercise called Snowball III. On May 15<sup>th</sup> security personnel were sent to the Regional Dispensing Node to obtain and transport the pharmaceuticals needed for dispensing to Bloomington. On May 16<sup>th</sup> staff acting as couriers from Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield, picked up the medications (packages of M&Ms) and delivered them to their departments for dispensing.

The exercise was successfully executed in less than the required time of 6 hours. City staff were notified and completed necessary forms in 48 minutes, couriers returned to their agencies with the medications within 62.7 minutes, and dispensing of the medications was completed in 31.6 minutes. As with all exercises, there were lessons learned and changes made. Some adjustments in the dispensing site have been made, some alternatives in the process are under consideration, and data helpful for future dispensing to essential personnel was gathered.

## Psychological First Aid Used by Bridge Disaster Victims

Look for upcoming training opportunities soon.

With the recent Minneapolis 35W bridge disaster, clients, friends, or we ourselves may be experiencing traumatic stress. Though there may be no outwardly visible signs of physical injury, there may nonetheless be serious emotional consequences.

This spring, Bloomington Public Health held four Psychological First Aid (PFA) classes for Human Services, Block Captains, Parish Nurses and varied school personnel. PFA is a practical set of skills that help community residents provide emotional support and comfort to disaster survivors such as in the bridge disaster.

Call Sue Sheridan, PHN at 952-563-8987 for more information or to schedule a class for your group.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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