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Are You Ready?

A Preparedness Newsletter for Residents of Montgomery County, MD

Do You Know How to Stay Informed?

When you hear someone say that it's important to 'stay informed,' what does that person mean?

Staying informed means knowing how to get information before and after a disaster.

Before the disaster, it's important to know how to receive warnings and other information about staying safe. Even though we don't always have warning before a disaster strikes, when we do have advance notice (such as hurricane or tornado warnings) it's critical that we know what actions to take.

After the disaster, it's critical to know where to get updates on response efforts and conditions around the county.

The best way to stay informed is to have access to multiple resources. This way, you're not dependent on one service that may not be available if the power is out or the system is down.

Some of the best ways to stay informed include:

- Signing up for [Alert Montgomery](#) to receive notification and updates directly to your phone via text or email,
- Listening to the [radio or watching television](#). Make sure you have a battery or crank-operated radio in your emergency kit. [Click here](#) for a list of stations that provide news updates.
- Visiting [Montgomery County's homepage](#) following the disaster for updates on county response efforts and services.
- Making sure family, friends, and neighbors update each other when warnings are posted before an emergency or important information updates are released after an emergency.

For more information on staying informed, visit the [OEMHS website](#).

Ensure Your Business or Organization has an Emergency Communication Plan

When a disaster strikes, does your organization have a plan to communicate with its key stakeholders? Make sure your business or organization has a communications plan as part of its emergency plan.

Your communications plan should include the following:

- An appointed decision-maker (and back-ups) so everyone knows who has the final authority,
- A list of your stakeholders including employees, customers, and partners,
- A clear procedure on how your organization will communicate with its stakeholders. For example, your organization may use a phone tree to communicate with employees,
- A procedure for how your organization will practice and revise the plan.

[Click here](#) to download a communications plan template, or visit PrepareMyBusiness.org for more information on emergency planning for businesses and organizations.

Are You Ready? Get the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security's New Preparedness Guides

The Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security has five new emergency preparedness guides - for [families](#), for [kids](#), for [seniors](#), for [pet owners](#), and for [businesses](#).

You can download the guides by clicking on the links above. You can also get these guides and other planning resources from the OEMHS [Resource Library](#).

The family guide is also available in [Spanish](#) and [Chinese](#).



January's Preparedness Tip

Do you have a pet? If so, make sure that you include your pet in your preparedness plan. If you need to leave your home quickly, have some friends or family lined up who would be willing to shelter your pet temporarily. Include some pet friendly hotels in your list.

Don't forget to prepare a kit for your pet. Include food, water, leash, medication, and copies of any important medical and vaccination records.

For more information on pet preparedness, visit the OEMHS [pet preparedness page](#).

About Montgomery County OEMHS

The Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) coordinates disaster response activities, offers preparedness education for residents, develops and maintains response plans, coordinates exercises and mitigation activities, and runs the hazardous materials permitting program.

Learn about Hazards and Preparedness

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