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# Are You Ready?

A Preparedness Newsletter for Residents of Montgomery County, MD

## Getting Children Involved in Preparedness

Do your children know what to do if a disaster occurs when they're at home? What if an emergency happens when your kids are not home?

Make emergency preparedness a family activity. Children should understand how to respond to emergencies including fire, power outage, or severe storm warning.

To help children prepare, get them involved in your family's preparedness activities, including:

- Assembling your emergency kit
- Planning escape routes and meeting places in case of a fire
- Determining an out of town contact
- Planning for your pets, including preparing a pet preparedness kit

For more information on children and preparedness, visit the [OEMHS Kids Preparedness Page](#) or download our [Kid Preparedness brochure](#).

## Is Spring Around the Corner? Not Quite Yet.

This time of year, thoughts turn to Spring and warmer temperatures. While we daydream about sunshine and spending time outside, it's important to remember that winter is not over yet.

In fact, February is historically when Montgomery County has seen its harshest winter storms (remember Snowmageddon?).

Keep these tips in mind as we head into the final stretch of winter:

- Stay informed - know how to get information before and after a winter storm
- Make sure your emergency kit is stocked, including fresh batteries, non-perishable food, water, and extra medication.
- Help your family, friends, and neighbors - especially those who may need some extra assistance.
- Keep an emergency kit in your car, including an extra blanket, first-aid kit, non-perishable food, and water.

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

## How to Respond to An Active Shooter

The tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut has many people asking how they can prepare for an active shooter.

Best practices from law enforcement encourage everyone to:

- Evacuate - Get out of the building fast. Call 9-1-1 once you're safely out of the building.
- Hide - If you are unable to evacuate, hide behind a piece of furniture or heavy door that might provide you some protection
- Take Action - As a last resort and if your life is in imminent danger, take action to incapacitate the shooter.

For more information how to prepare for an active shooter, take a look at the following resources:

- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security Active Shooter [How to Respond Guide](#)
- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security [Options for Consideration Active Shooter Video](#)
- Ready Houston's Video - [Run. Hide. Fight. Surviving an Active Shooter](#)

## February's Preparedness Tip

Don't allow your car's fuel tank to get close to empty. If a disaster occurs that affects power, re-fueling stations may be unable to operate the pumps.

Re-fuel when your car has about a quarter of a tank left. If a disaster strikes, or you need to evacuate quickly, you won't be caught on the side of the road because you can't refuel.

### 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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