

## National Emergency Preparedness Month—Protect Your Family by Planning Now

(9-9-2016)—The Sharon Board of Health would like to remind residents that September is National Emergency Preparedness Month, a time to reassess personal emergency plans for you and your family. Sharon public safety and public health staff continually plan to address emergencies that may affect Sharon—weather events, fires, and disease outbreaks among others – in order to assist all residents throughout the course of a disaster. The Sharon Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC) also meets regularly to plan for emergency events.

Individuals and families, however, also need to take steps to protect themselves and their property before a disaster strikes. Basic planning can help ensure your family's health and safety during any emergency event.

The following planning and emergency resources offer helpful guidance on how to prepare for and respond to emergency events, both short and long term. Take a few minutes before winter sets in to review these materials and recommendations, to protect you and your family's safety.

- Check the American Red Cross (ARC) website ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)) for information on specific steps you can take and supplies to maintain on hand.
- Go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), the official website of the Department of Homeland Security, to find information on preparing for hurricanes, winter storms, Zika virus, and additional resources on personal planning.
- Create a “personal support network of neighbors, friends, and family” including names, contact information, etc. Check in with your network before, during and after an emergency event to ensure their needs are met, or to request help with yours. Also, make sure important personal papers are readily available to take with you should you need to evacuate.
- Evaluate your family's specific emergency needs such as medications, mobility issues, medical supports such as oxygen, and others. Check with any medical services or other providers who help you or family members, e.g., hospice, HESSCO, visiting nurses, regarding their emergency plans. Also, the Sharon Fire Department and Sharon Adult Center maintain a confidential list of residents who may need special assistance. If you or a family member may need additional help during an emergency, contact the Sharon Adult Center to register.
- Develop a disaster supply kit for all members of your household. Keep a small backpack with extra changes of clothes, medications, personal papers, etc. packed in the event you need to evacuate. Keep a kit in each car with water, flares, a blanket, etc. For a list of suggested items, visit the FEMA website at <http://www.ready.gov/document/family-supply-list>.
- Sharon operates a fully equipped shelter at the High School for residents during major emergencies. Also consider the needs of any pets that might be affected during an emergency. In the event of a major disaster, Sharon maintains a shelter at the Cottage Street School for pets.
- An AM radio will allow you to listen to Sharon 1630 AM and hear broadcasts about local conditions, emergency response efforts, and assistance.

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