

September is Emergency Preparedness Month  
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September has been designated as Emergency Preparedness month. The town of Sharon has a Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC) which meets regularly to plan for any event whether it is man made or natural. The LEPC consists of representatives from the town, school, community and national organizations such as the Salvation Army and the American Red Cross (ARC.) The increase in natural disasters has certainly put a toll on everyone from the residents to the First Responders. So what can you do to prepare?

It is important to have a plan in place prior to the event. Meteorologists are able to predict a hurricane, blizzard, etc. sometimes the previous week. The day of the snow storm is not the time to check batteries, stock up on non-perishables, put gasoline in the car and the list goes on and on!

The ARC website ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)) is filled with information on emergency preparedness. To simplify the process, there are basically four steps that individuals and families can take.

First, it is important for everyone to “create a personal support network.” This could be your neighbor, family or friend. Keep a list of their name, address and phone number/s and have at least one of your contacts be either out of state or out of town. Check on your neighbors before, during and after the event. Also, if you receive services such as oxygen from a medical supply company, meals from HESSCO or Hospice for example, ask them about their emergency plans.

Second, everyone needs to “complete a personal assessment.” What assistance do you need in your everyday life which may be missing during a disaster? Are you able to climb stairs if there is no electricity for the elevator or do you need help with personal care?

The third step is “a disaster supply kit” for every member of your household. A small backpack with an extra change of clothes, medicines, important documents, etc. already packed in case of evacuation is recommended. Don’t forget about your pets. Some shelters do not allow animals other than service animals. Sharon is fortunate to have the High School shelter for residents and the Cottage Street School shelter for pets. There should be a kit in each car containing flares, a blanket, water, and other emergency items. Make it a habit to put gas in the tank as soon as it’s half full. For a list of suggested items, please visit the FEMA website: <http://www.ready.gov/document/family-supply-list>.

The last step is “make your home safer.” Remove unnecessary items from hallways and stairs; ensure all egresses are easily accessible; and hang pictures and other heavy items away from beds. If you use oxygen, make sure the shut-off switch is near your bed or chair in case of fire.

Preparedness begins with each and every one of us. It is important that all residents take responsibility for their basic needs. Be assured that the Town of Sharon has many resources to assist during an event whether it is man-made or natural. With the gift giving season coming up, why not ask for a battery operated lantern or an AM radio so you can listen to Sharon 1630AM when the power is off. For further information please visit the town website homepage ([www.townofsharon.net](http://www.townofsharon.net)) and download the Emergency Preparedness Booklet. The Emergency Management Resident Registration form is located on the Fire Department's website ([www.townofsharon.net/fire-department](http://www.townofsharon.net/fire-department)) . With everyone's help, the town of Sharon will be ready for the next visit from Mother Nature.