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## NEWS RELEASE

### September is Emergency Preparedness Month

In today's world we need to be prepared for many kinds of emergencies which could impact our health and safety. Whether an emergency is caused by disease outbreak, wildfire, severe weather, earthquake or terrorist act, would we know what to do to help protect ourselves and our family?

September is Emergency Preparedness Month. The Otsego County Department of Health reminds you to talk with your family about the need to prepare for an emergency. Then make a plan. The following suggestions will help keep you and your family safe in the event of an emergency.

- Make sure everyone in your family knows where you keep emergency supplies and a first aid kit.
- In an emergency, tune in to media reports for important information. Know which stations can provide up-to-date local information
- Keep important phone numbers by each phone in your home.
- Know the best escape route from each room in your home.
- Know where family members will meet in case they can't get home. One location should be near your home, and another should be outside the neighborhood.
- Know your community's public alert system and your child's school emergency plan.

Take time now to create a family emergency preparedness plan, and then practice it with your family. Have periodic rehearsals, including some with the lights out. In an emergency, the electricity may be off. You should also prepare a first aid kit and emergency supplies to meet your family's needs for three days. Have at least these emergency supplies on hand:

- Flashlight and extra batteries and/or a wind-up flashlight
- Portable, battery-operated radio or television and extra batteries or wind-up models
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Water for drinking and household use (at least one gallon per person per day for three days)
- Ready-to-eat canned foods to last three days
- Manual can opener
- Peanut butter, crackers, granola bars and other high-energy foods
- Supply of prescription medication
- Disposable diapers, baby food, formula
- Supplies for seniors or family members with special needs
- Bleach (for disinfecting)
- Plastic bags and ties (for sanitation)
- Credit card and cash
- Personal identification
- An extra set of keys
- Important documents, such as your insurance policies

Put together a first aid kit containing these supplies:

- First aid manual
- Assortment of sterile adhesive bandages
- Sterile gauze pads
- Over-the-counter drugs (aspirin, antidiarrheal medication, activated charcoal)
- Antiseptic ointment
- Soap
- Latex gloves
- Thermometer
- Tongue depressors
- Tweezers, needles
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Arrange for a friend or relative to serve as a point of contact in case your family members are separated in an emergency. Because it may still be possible to call long distance when local phone lines are down, you should select someone out-of-state to be your emergency contact. Don't forget to plan what you will do with your pets. They won't be permitted in public emergency shelters

For more information on emergency preparation and planning, visit the Otsego County Department of Health's Web site @ [www.otsegocounty.com/depts/doh/](http://www.otsegocounty.com/depts/doh/) or call 607-547-4230.

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