



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Aug. 25, 2011**

### **PEMA Urges Pennsylvanians to Prepare for Hurricane Irene**

ReadyPA.org Offers Tips to Help Prepare For Variety of Emergencies

**Harrisburg** – The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency today urged Pennsylvanians to prepare for expected high winds and heavy rain from Hurricane Irene this weekend. Although the storm is expected to primarily impact southeastern Pennsylvania, residents across the state should remain alert and be prepared.

“The approaching hurricane means all residents should be sure emergency supplies are ready in our homes, and to secure outdoor items so they don’t cause more damage when the winds come,” said PEMA Director Glenn Cannon. “As this week’s historic East Coast earthquake reminded everyone, being prepared at all times is critical.”

In the event that roadways become impassable or power is lost, Cannon said residents should be prepared to survive on their own without outside assistance for at least three days. Emergency crews simply will not be able to reach everyone immediately after the danger has passed.

Have disaster preparedness supplies on hand, including:

- Flashlights and extra batteries;
- Portable, battery-operated radio and extra batteries;
- First aid kit and manual;
- Emergency food and water;
- Non-electric can opener;
- Essential medicines/prescriptions;
- Cash, credit cards and important legal documents; and
- Sturdy shoes.

If residents are ordered to evacuate, they should do so without hesitating, and should take important papers with them including:

- Checkbooks;
- Driver's license;
- Credit card information;
- Birth certificates;
- Social Security cards; and
- Other forms and documents proving ownership/identity.

Never drive into low-lying areas or over roads and bridges that are already under water. Just a few inches of moving water can sweep away the average car.

Individuals and families need to have a communication plan in place in order to contact or find each other if separated. As the storm approaches, residents should listen to and closely follow instructions from local and state authorities.

“Personal preparedness is an essential responsibility,” Cannon said. “Individuals and families should be ready to take protective actions at any time, whether the forecast gives us several days notice of a storm, or with an unexpected event like Tuesday’s earthquake.”

To be better prepared for emergencies of all sorts, Cannon urged residents to visit [www.ReadyPA.org](http://www.ReadyPA.org) -- a state resource that encourages citizens to take three basic steps before an emergency or natural disaster:

- Be Informed: know what threats Pennsylvania and your community face.
- Be Prepared: have an emergency kit with at least three days’ worth of essentials at your home, including food, one gallon of water per person per day, medications and specialized items such as baby or pet supplies. Create an emergency plan so family members know where to meet if everyone is separated when an incident occurs.
- Be Involved: Pennsylvanians have a long history of helping one another in times of need. Specialized training and volunteer opportunities are available so citizens can help others in their community in a disaster.

Information such as checklists for emergency kits and templates for emergency plans, as well as other information and volunteer opportunities, is available at [www.ReadyPA.org](http://www.ReadyPA.org) or by calling 1-888-9-READYPA (1-888-973-2397).

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