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Prepare for the unexpected

Stanton- As the media coverage associated with the ten year anniversary of 9/11 slowly fades, let us not forget that life-changing day and vow to be as prepared for disaster as we possibly can.

One of the many things we learned from 9/11 is that emergency preparedness is no longer the sole concern of earthquake prone Californians and those who live in the part of the country known as “Tornado Alley.” For all Americans, preparedness must now account for man-made disasters as well as natural ones. Knowing what to do during an emergency is an important part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.

Disasters can happen with little or no warning – from tornado outbreaks, floods, power outages, and crippling winter storms, to man-made disasters we can’t even fathom.

This fall, the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) would like to encourage individuals, families, businesses and communities to take action and prepare for the unexpected with the help of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) *Resolve to be Ready* campaign.

When disaster strikes, you may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having enough food, water, and other supplies to last each member of your family at least three days. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but it could take hours or days. In addition, basic services, such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, and telephones may be cut off for days, or even a week or more.

The *Resolve to be Ready* campaign divides preparedness into the following three steps:

1. **Get an emergency supply kit-** Keep enough emergency supplies on hand for you and those in your care. See www.ready.gov for a checklist of supplies.
2. **Make a family emergency plan-** Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it’s important to plan in advance. Sample plans are available at www.ready.gov.
3. **Be informed-** Learn about the types of emergencies (both natural and man-made) that are most likely to happen in your area and their appropriate responses. Visit www.ready.gov for further information.

Emergencies can range from inconvenient to devastating, but by following these simple steps in advance, you will minimize the impact on you, your family, your business, and your community and give yourself greater peace of mind.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.

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