



NEWS RELEASE

Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein

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CONTACT: JoAnne Paxon/ JoAnne.Paxon@erie.gov
Phone: (716)858-4941/ Mobile: (716) 912-8692

Hurricane Sandy Triggers a Review of Preparedness for Everyone

How to be personally prepared for storms, power outages and potential flooding

ERIE COUNTY, NY— The Erie County Department of Health (“ECDOH”) Urges Erie County residents to be prepared for storms, floods and power outages. “Having the right supplies on hand can make life a little easier during a power outage, flood, or storm” **said Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein.** “Even though it is unlikely that an emergency would prevent you from getting to the grocery store for long, you should prepare a reserve supply of food and other supplies that will last three to seven days. This can relieve a great deal of inconvenience and uncertainty until services are restored.”

ECDOH encourages everyone to prepare for weather emergencies especially as we enter the winter weather season. The lists below provide information on items suggested to have on hand for Storms and other emergencies:

Food and Water

- Bottled water - two gallons per person per day
- Ready-to-eat canned foods - vegetables, fruit, beans, meat, fish, poultry, pasta, soup, juice
- Milk - powdered, canned or shelf-stable brick pack
- High energy foods - peanut butter, jelly, nuts, dried meat (for example, jerky), granola, trail mix
- Cereal and snacks - cookies, crackers
- Staples - sugar, salt, pepper, instant coffee, tea bags, cocoa
- Candy - chocolate bars, hard candy
- Infant and small children's needs - baby food, formula, disposable diapers
- Specialty food - for elderly or people on special diets
- Pet food (if needed)

Health and Hygiene Supplies

- Prescription medication
- First aid kit with bandages, gauze pads, antiseptic, pain killers, tweezers, scissors
- Toilet paper
- Premoistened hand wipes - premoistened towelettes or baby wipes
- Disinfectant no-rinse hand soap
- Toiletries - toothpaste, deodorant
- Feminine hygiene supplies

Household Supplies and Equipment

- One gallon liquid chlorine bleach - unscented with no soaps or additives
- Battery-powered radio
- Flashlights - one in each room of the house
- Extra fresh batteries for both radio and flashlights
- Candles and/or oil lamps filled with odorless oil
- Matches
- Gasoline (if you plan to use a generator)
- Propane fuel (if you plan to use a grill or camp stove)
- Charcoal (if you plan to use a barbecue grill)
- Disposable tableware, including paper towels and napkins
- Manual can opener
- Plastic bags - zip sealing, garbage
- Cash/travelers checks
- Fire extinguisher (small canister "ABC" type)
- Food product thermometer - able to measure temperature from 0 to 220 degrees Fahrenheit

Other Emergency Preparations

- Keep your electric and natural gas company's emergency number on or near your phone.
- Keep your water department's or water company's number near your phone.
- Know ahead of time when and how to safely turnoff your electric, gas and water supplies. Have the tools available to turn these services off if it becomes necessary to do so.
- Contact your utility company if anyone in your household uses life-sustaining equipment, such as a kidney dialysis machine or a respirator. Your utility company can advise you on how to prepare for power outages.
- Prepare a plan for anyone in your household who has mobility problems or other special needs.
- Have at least one telephone in your home that does not need electricity (wall plug style or cellular). Cordless phones do not work when there is a power outage.
- Fill your car's gas tank if a heavy storm is predicted.
- Check to be sure that you have an adequate supply of your family's prescription medication if a heavy storm is predicted. Keep a current list of family prescription medications, their dosages, schedules and prescribing doctor.

- Fill your bathtub with water if you are on a well and a heavy storm is predicted. The water can be used for purposes other than drinking (for example, washing, flushing toilets).
- Make a written record of household possessions for insurance purposes. Record model and serial numbers. Be sure to include expensive items such as sofas, chairs, tables, beds, chests, wall units and other furniture too heavy to carry. Store the list somewhere away from home, such as in a safe-deposit box.

For more information of how to prepare for adverse weather and emergencies please visit the following websites:

Erie County Department of Health

www.erie.gov/health

New York State Department of Health

<http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/emergency/>

American Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/>