



# READY RACINE



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## Recent storms highlight need to be ready

Preparedness 101 seems to be a frequent theme here, but according to recent Red Cross findings:

- Close to 60% of Americans are wholly unprepared for a disaster of any kind.
- 54% of Americans don't prepare because they believe a disaster will not affect them.
- Only 2 in 10 Americans feel prepared for a catastrophic event.
- Only 1 in 10 American households has taken the appropriate preparedness steps: a family emergency plan, an emergency supply kit, and training in First Aid and CPR/AED.

In light of the Ground Hog Day blizzard which stranded close to 200 motorists and the rash of tornadoes impacting southern states, the need to be prepared and ready for any emergency is even greater.

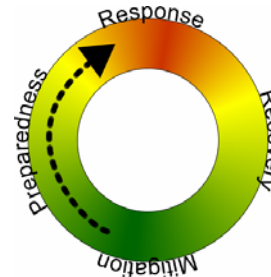
Emergency management encompasses four phases:

- Mitigation
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery

Simply stated, each of us must ask: How can I prevent or minimize the damage from disasters? What steps do I need to take to prepare for emergencies? What

would I do if there was an emergency? And how would I be made whole after the disaster?

As you look around your home, ask yourselves those questions and then involve your family. You'd be surprised at how easy some of this really is. For example, one mitigation strategy is doing a home hazard hunt to reduce fire hazards and slip, trip and fall situations.



Preparedness steps can involve making a plan for common emergencies and taking free training like our Community Emergency Response Team course, which teaches you how to protect you and your family when disaster strikes.

With knowledge gained from this course and other training available, you gain the skills and tools to respond to an emergency. At the very minimum, even clearing the scene and calling for help aids in a successful response.

And after something happens, not only should you work towards restoring what was damaged but look into prevention or mitigation steps you can take to help protect your investment. For example, after the January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 tornado hit Prayer House Assembly of God in Kenosha, the church installed a sprinkler system during the rebuild. That system could prevent hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage in the event that the church should have a fire.

When disaster strikes, are you ready? Are you prepared? If not, start preparing today. For more information, go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for handy resources and other tools to help you and your family. ❖

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## Preparedness 101: Zombie attacks

When I speak to groups about emergency management, I usually tell them I plan for severe weather including tornadoes, chemical spills, terrorist acts, tsunamis (on Lake Michigan), asteroids and alien invasions. Now I learn I need to add Zombies to the list of potential hazards to prepare for.

In a tongue-in-cheek blog, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) took a look at preparedness steps in the event of a zombie attack. While poking fun at pop culture, the point of the blog was to raise awareness about personal preparedness. While CDC regularly promotes [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)'s three-step approach-**Get a kit, Make a Plan and Be Informed**-that message is often lost.

But focusing on zombies had a completely different reaction. News outlets around the country carried this story, and I would assume that visits to CDC's website increased dramatically.

So what steps should you take to prepare for a zombie attack? According to the CDC, first of all, you should have an **emergency kit** in your house. This includes things like water, food, and other supplies to get you through the first couple of days before you can locate a zombie-free refugee camp.

Once you've made your emergency kit, you should sit down with your family and come up with an **emergency plan**. This includes where you would go and who you would call if zombies started appearing outside your door. You can also implement this plan if there is a flood, earthquake, or other emergency. Finally, plan your evacuation route. When zombies are hungry they won't stop until they get food (i.e., brains), which means you need to get out of town fast!



Hats off to the CDC for coming up with a creative way to get its message out. While I may have waited until October to launch this campaign, I think CDC has achieved its desired outcome. And who knows, maybe I'll launch Preparedness 101: Alien Invasion to coincide with the release of Harrison Ford's new movie, Cowboys and Aliens.❖

## Citizen Corps corner

Moira Moon



The South Eastern Wisconsin Citizen Corps Council (SEWICC) is taking a proactive approach to keeping our Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT) program right on track. We have contacted UW Extension requesting that a facilitator join in discussions regarding our goals and objectives, thereby helping to clarify and consolidate ideas that spring from our council meetings.

Our council is made up of a very diverse group of people who come together with a common goal of educating residents of Racine and Kenosha Counties in emergency preparedness. We have council members from education, public health, law enforcement, emergency management and state government. So given all the different backgrounds, discussions at our council meetings can become lively to say the least. Having an independent facilitator join in gives us a wonderful chance to see things more clearly and therefore can help spearhead this very beneficial program.

A CERT class held in Racine in March of this year was well attended, and Citizen Corps Council members are participating in the planning for a large drill in Kenosha County, in June.

There are many opportunities for individual trained in CERT to volunteer gaining them more experience and allowing them to put to good use, all they have learned in the course.

The council would like to thank Marilynn Pelky, Executive Director of the Volunteer Center of Racine County, for allowing this program to run out of the volunteer center and for all the help she has been to this council and the CERT program. Marilynn is retiring from her position and the council would like to welcome the new Executive Director, Al Volmut.❖



## Tornadoes strike terror in heartland...outdoor warning sirens not the only tool

David L. Maack, CEM, CPM, WCEM

Tornadoes are deemed nature's most violent storm and when you look at the destruction and devastation left in their wake, one begins to understand why they earned that title. Spring 2011 may very well go down as the most active tornado season on record.

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, outdoor warning sirens wailed across Wisconsin as 14 tornadoes struck communities in central Wisconsin. On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, a violent EF4 tornado struck St. Louis, Missouri causing extensive damage. Between April 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 305 tornadoes were confirmed. A large tornado on April 27<sup>th</sup> resulted in over 35 deaths in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and the mayor called the damage "catastrophic". That same day, another large tornado hit Birmingham, Alabama.

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, Wisconsin again was hit by several tornadoes, but that damage paled in comparison to the damage resulting from a monster tornado that flattened the town of Joplin, Missouri, knocking out the hospital and killing over 100 people. Even though there was over a 20 minute warning, George Stephanopoulos on Good Morning America reported that there were some who claimed that they didn't hear the warning.

After tornado warnings, it is not uncommon to hear complaints from citizens that they didn't hear the warning. In some cases, outdoor warning sirens malfunctioned but in many cases, outdoor warning sirens worked.

However, these sirens were not meant to be heard indoors. While some may hear them, issues like proximity to the siren, wind direction, how well a home is "sealed up" and external factors like air conditioners, radios, television and sleep may also have a bearing on how well you hear these devices.

### NOAA weather radios

The days of relying on outdoor warning sirens as a primary means of warning are over. For example, programmable tone alert weather radios provide warnings as they are issued.

Weather radios are "smoke detectors for danger." A NOAA Weather Radio with an alarm and battery backup is one of the best ways to protect your family, especially at night when the alarm feature can wake

you up during severe weather and give you and your family time to seek appropriate shelter. If there is no severe weather or emergency your radio can be switched to a silent, stand-by mode.

Weather radios come in many sizes, with a variety of functions and costs. They can be purchased at most electronic stores. Most weather radio receivers are either battery-operated portables or AC-powered desktop models with battery backup.

The portable weather radios are an important item to take along when you are enjoying outdoor recreation such as camping and boating. Many receivers have digital technology called Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) that allows users to program their radios to alarm only for hazardous conditions that affect their county.

### Text alerts

Another means of warning is text alerts. Many television stations are offering severe weather text alerts so no matter where you are-indoors or outdoors-you can receive severe weather warnings as they are issued. Most of these are offered at no charge. ❖

## Mark Baden addresses forum

Mark Baden, WISN Weather Watch 12's Chief Meteorologist recently addressed the Racine County Public/Private Partnership group on severe weather in southeastern Wisconsin.

In addition, Scott Anderson, General Manager of Grove Gear spoke on his company's recovery from the November 22, 2010 tornado in which 30,000 sq. ft. of their roof was ripped off and Rusty Kapela, NWS meteorologist spoke about the three tornadoes that struck Racine County that year.

Later that evening, over 80 individuals attended the annual Tornado Awareness and Severe Weather Spotter class taught by Rusty Kapela and Skip Voros, Executive Director of the Milwaukee Area Skywarn Association. ❖



## Red Cross rating program

When you look at the frequency and severity of disasters in just the last decade you can see that the risks, if not getting worse are certainly significant. The American Red Cross Ready Rating Program is a tool that just might help motivate you to assess your current vulnerabilities and level preparedness.

The American Red Cross Ready Rating program is a free, self-guided program designed to help businesses, organizations and schools become better prepared for emergencies. Members complete a 123-point self assessment of their level of preparedness, gain access to tips and best practices, and commit to improving their score each year to maintain membership. The 123 Assessment has been aligned with the federal government's private sector preparedness standards (PS-Prep). For more information, go to:

[www.readyrating.org/HowItWorks.aspx](http://www.readyrating.org/HowItWorks.aspx)



## BEAT THE HEAT TIPS

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun.
- Stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available.
- Consider spending the warmest part of the day in public buildings such as libraries, schools, movie theaters, shopping malls, and other community facilities. Circulating air can cool the body by increasing the perspiration rate of evaporation.
- Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- Drink plenty of water. Persons who have epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease; are on fluid-restricted diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake.
- Limit intake of alcoholic beverages.
- Dress in loose-fitting, lightweight, and light-colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible.
- Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.
- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
- Avoid strenuous work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system when working in extreme heat, and take frequent breaks.

## Public works consortium

Rebecca Ewald, Village of Waterford Administrator

Our region has been progressive in cooperative planning between our fire, rescue and law enforcement agencies. These entities all have mutual aid agreements; however, they are unable to address emergencies if they cannot get to the scene – the individuals in Department of Public Works are responsible for clearing the roads.

The Public Works Departments in our communities do a variety of duties due to the size of our communities and geographic locations in Racine County. When disaster struck in Eagle in 2010 the Village of Waterford Public Works Department reflected on what their resources would be to respond to a similar circumstance. While they have excellent manpower, trucks and equipment, there may come a time when that will not be sufficient to address emergency management needs.

Village staff worked in cooperation with Racine County Emergency Management and Wisconsin Emergency Management to draft the Racine County Public Works Mutual Aid Response Agreement. Communities in western Racine were approached to see if this agreement would be a tool that would be of interest to them. Since that time the communities in western Racine County have been meeting quarterly at each municipality to develop the framework for public works emergency management planning.

The group looks forward to approaching additional communities in Racine County to join us in this planning effort later this year. You are welcome to join us at our next quarterly meeting on Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at the Town of Burlington Town Hall. Should you have additional questions regarding our efforts, please contact Rebecca Ewald, Administrator, Village of Waterford at 262-534-7912.



## FEMA Administrator Calls Amateur Radio “The Last Line of Defense”

In an **FCC forum** on earthquake communications preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency (**FEMA**) Administrator Craig Fugate described the Amateur Radio operator as “the ultimate backup, the originators of what we call social media.” The forum-- held May 3 at FCC Headquarters in Washington, DC -- brought together officials from the White House, the Department of Homeland Security (**DHS**), the United States Geological Survey (**USGS**), FEMA, the FCC and the private sector. Fugate and FCC Bureau of Public Safety and Homeland Security Chief Jamie Barnett gave the opening remarks.

Later in the forum, Fugate spoke more on Amateur Radio. “During the initial communications out of Haiti, volunteers using assigned frequencies that they are allocated, their own equipment, their own money, nobody pays them, were the first ones oftentimes getting word out in the critical first hours and first days as the rest of the systems came back up,” he told the forum. “I think that there is a tendency because we have done so much to build infrastructure and resiliency in all our other systems, we have tended to dismiss that role ‘When Everything Else Fails.’ Amateur Radio oftentimes is our last line of defense.”

Fugate said that he thinks “we get so sophisticated and we have gotten so used to the reliability and resilience in our wireless and wired and our broadcast industry and all of our public safety communications, that we can never fathom that they’ll fail. They do. They have. They will. I think a strong Amateur Radio community [needs to be] plugged into these plans. Yes, most of the time they’re going to be bored, because a lot of the time, there’s not a lot they’re going to be doing that other people aren’t doing with Twitter and Facebook and everything else. But when you need Amateur Radio, you really need them.”

(Reprinted from AARL News)

[www.arrl.org/news/view/fema-administrator-calls-amateur-radio-the-last-line-of-defense](http://www.arrl.org/news/view/fema-administrator-calls-amateur-radio-the-last-line-of-defense)



## Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES)

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes. Every licensed amateur is eligible to apply for membership in ARES.

The **Volunteer Center of Racine County**, in cooperation with the Racine County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, maintains the amateur radio station **WI9VCR**.

The facility is staffed and maintained by volunteers and is equipped with the apparatus necessary for carrying on radio communications in the Amateur Radio Service.

This station can be used for training exercises and for emergency communications. The station is located in the **Volunteer Center** at 42.72030 -87.85665 (N 42° 43' 13.08" W 87°51' 23.94")

### ARES augments communications

Racine County ARES is made up of dedicated amateur radio enthusiasts who augment their skills with additional training. The group is led by Jim Markstrom (KB9MMA).

ARES members assist with disaster drills and exercises and during severe weather watches and warnings, serve as weather spotters.

Amateur radios can be found in the Racine County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Racine County Communications Center. In the aftermath of a disaster, ARES members would augment local communications. For example, ARES members may be assigned to local shelters, providing reports to the EOC.

For more information on Racine County ARES, go to their website: [www.rcares.org](http://www.rcares.org)

