



Jeb Bush  
Governor

M. Rony François, M.D., M.S.P.H., Ph.D.  
Secretary, Department of Health

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**PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*September is National Preparedness Month*

**Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed and Get Involved**

During September, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Pinellas County Health Department encourage individuals to take some simple steps to make their families better prepared for emergencies.

**Get a Kit** – Put together a kit of emergency supplies that will allow you and your family to survive for a minimum of three days in an emergency. Seven days' worth of supplies would be better. Your kit should include basic items like water, food, battery-powered radio, flashlight and a first aid kit.

**Make a Plan** - Plan what you and your family will do in an emergency. Include a communications plan and address sheltering-in-place (staying at home) and evacuation.

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and what you will do in different situations. Establish an emergency contact and consider using someone out of town. An out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. Be sure every member of your family knows the phone number and has coins or a prepaid phone card to call the emergency contact. You may have trouble getting through, or the telephone system may be down altogether, but be patient.

You may also want to ask about emergency plans at places where your family spends time – work, daycare and school. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together in an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance.

**(MORE)**



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**Be Informed** - Emergency preparedness is no longer limited those of us in Florida during hurricane season, earthquake prone Californians or those who live in the part of the country known as "Tornado Alley." Preparedness must now include being ready 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. Learn more about the potential emergencies (natural, biological, radiological, man-made) that could happen where you live and the appropriate way to respond to them. In addition, learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your state and local government.

**Get Involved** - After preparing yourself and your family for possible emergencies, take the next step: get training in first aid and emergency response and get involved in preparing your community. Citizen Corps provides residents with opportunities to prepare, train and support local emergency responders. To get involved, visit [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov) to find your local Citizen Corps council.

Go to – and bookmark – [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for more information, including a list of recommended emergency supplies, planning information and templates, information about natural disasters and potential terrorist threats and for more information about the emergency plans that have been established in your area.

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*The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of our community through public and private partnerships in an environment that respects diversity. [www.PinellasHealth.com](http://www.PinellasHealth.com)*