

Congressional Leaders Urge Residents Get Ready for Disasters This National Preparedness Month

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WASHINGTON -- On Friday, FEMA's Ready Campaign launched the 20th annual National Preparedness Month which is recognized each September.

The wildfires in Hawaii and Hurricane Idalia are a reminder of the importance for individuals, families and communities to prepare for disasters and emergencies that can happen at any time.

On Aug. 31, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. issued a [National Preparedness Month proclamation](#), acknowledging the importance of building a nation more prepared and resilient in the face of more frequent and severe disasters the country has endured in the last few years.

FEMA and the Ready Campaign are honored to partner with this year's [Congressional co-chairs](#) to spread the message of preparedness. We thank this bi-partisan team for their work to keep Americans safe.

"Rising water levels, wildfires, and extreme flooding continue to take lives, put communities at risk, and cause billions of dollars in damages. National Preparedness Month is an important way to raise awareness of how families and businesses can prepare for disasters, and how FEMA resources can help everyone be more resilient."

- **Chairman Gary Peters** of Michigan, Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee

"Disaster can strike at any time and place, from our coastal communities to the plains of the Midwest to every corner of the United States. While we can't predict every disaster, we can always have a plan and be prepared. September is National Preparedness Month, serving as a critical reminder that we must be



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ready year-round to protect our homes, communities, businesses, and loved ones from the devastation caused by disasters of all types. I encourage all Americans to take advantage of the disaster preparedness resources and guidance from FEMA and other state and local emergency officials.”

- Chairman Sam Graves of Missouri, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

“Climate change is increasing extreme weather events across the nation. Recent examples include the Maui wildfires -- the worst wildfires in over 100 years -- and extreme heat that has impacted millions nationwide. Just this March, a tornado outbreak devastated communities across Mississippi, including in my district. To face this growing threat, it is imperative that the federal government works with its partners to increase preparedness for disasters at all levels of government, which includes ensuring that those who are disproportionately impacted by disasters -- including racial minorities, rural areas, low-income communities, tribes, individuals with disabilities, seniors, and children -- are included in emergency preparation, response, and recovery. I am honored to serve as Co-Chair during the 2023 National Preparedness Month and look forward to working with FEMA and DHS to ensure there is more equity in emergency management.”

- U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security

“From tornadoes to intense heat waves, natural disasters are becoming more frequent, more severe, and more expensive due to climate change. Seniors and minority communities are especially vulnerable. Raising awareness of their needs and having an equitable approach are vital components of disaster mitigation and recovery. National Preparedness Month provides an opportunity for people nationwide to plan, prepare, and protect their communities from future disasters. As Ranking Member of the House subcommittee that oversees FEMA, I’m proud to uplift its good work and promote its efforts to step in at such critical times to help rebuild lives shattered by disaster.”

- U.S. Rep. Dina Titus of Nevada, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management



“With natural disasters increasing in frequency and intensity, investments we make today in readiness and resilience will determine the outcome of our response tomorrow. In New Orleans, we have experience with extreme weather events and what I have learned from my time on the ground is that we must instill a culture of preparedness at all levels of government – while also ensuring that our response and recovery to disasters is equitable. I am proud to serve as a Co-Chair of the 2023 National Preparedness Month and look forward to working with FEMA to promote equitable disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.”

- U.S. Rep. Troy A. Carter Sr. of Louisiana, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology

FEMA recently announced an agreement formalizing the partnership with the [Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers](#). This agreement recognizes the importance of including those who provide critical support for family or friends into the conversation about emergency preparedness.

In June, FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell [announced this year’s theme](#): preparing older adults and their caregivers ahead of disasters.

By emphasizing the theme, “Take Control in 1, 2, 3,” Ready.gov encourages everyone, especially older adults, to become more prepared in three simple steps:

- **Assess your needs.** Everyone has unique needs. There are several factors that can affect the steps you need to take to prepare yourself and those you care for. Whether you care for pets, have children, have a medical condition or a disability, it is important to know what your family will need to stay safe.
- **Make a plan.** Once you’ve assessed your needs, you can plan for what you’d do, where you’d go and what to bring if a disaster strikes. Your emergency supply kit should include items that [meet your individual needs](#).
- **Engage your support network.** Get to know your neighbors because they, along with your family and friends, can be a support network before, during and after a disaster by providing emotional and practical support.

FEMA urges our partners, emergency managers and all those who work with and support older adult communities to access the new webpage available in English and Spanish languages at [Ready.gov/older-adults](#) and [Ready.gov/es/adultos-](#)



[mayores](#), We've also created a [toolkit in English](#) and [Spanish](#) with key messaging, graphics and talking points to help our partners uplift and amplify this year's National Preparedness Month theme.

Last year, as part of FEMA's ongoing approach to advance accessibility and cultural competency in boosting the nation's preparedness, FEMA's Ready Campaign and the Ad Council created [PSAs](#) developed specifically to reach [Black and African American communities](#). The year prior to that, the theme was "[Prepare to Protect](#)" and was designed to resonate with [Latino communities](#).

For more information on how to prepare yourself, your loved ones and your community, visit [Ready.gov](#) or [Listo.gov](#).

