



FEMA

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BULLETIN

Week of December 8, 2014

Important Dates and Deadlines:

[Public Assistance Simplified](#)

[Procedures Thresholds](#)

(January 20, 2015)

## FEMA Reservist, Coast Guard Retiree Partnership Announced

FEMA partnered with the Coast Guard to create a unique and exciting opportunity for Coast Guard retirees – the [U.S. Coast Guard Retiree to FEMA Reservist Initiative](#). This initiative allows semi-retired or fully retired former Coast Guard employees to serve fellow citizens and take part disaster response missions. [FEMA's website](#) includes a section dedicated to recruitment of Coast Guard retirees for this initiative that includes information on the application process, forms and resumes.

FEMA Reservists are the largest component of the FEMA response workforce during a disaster. They are trained and qualified to perform the necessary tasks for the disaster response and recovery process. When deployed, FEMA Reservists are reimbursed for travel and paid as intermittent employees.



FEMA has openings within the reservists program, with more than 2,700 vacancies available. Reservist positions are managed through FEMA Cadres, and the skills needed to serve in most of them are generally equivalent to many Coast Guard ratings and officer specialties. Many Coast Guard retirees may already have experience in disaster response, Incident Command System, hazardous material handling, survivor support, recovery operations and many other areas of expertise needed in the aftermath of a disaster.

To learn more, [visit us online](#), contact the FEMA Call Center at 855-377-3362 or email [fema-iwmo-program@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-iwmo-program@fema.dhs.gov).

FEMA's Office of External Affairs provides this bulletin to highlight recent and upcoming program and policy activities and announcements. Feedback is welcome at [fema-ea-bulletin@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-ea-bulletin@fema.dhs.gov). Previous editions are available at the [FEMA library](#).

### Open Joint Field Offices

AZ, CA, HI, IA, KY, MI, MN, NE, NV, NY  
[Learn more.](#)

## Holiday Preparedness Fire Safety Tips

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together, but holidays can also bring an increased risk for home fires. Following a few simple tips can make the holidays fire-safe.

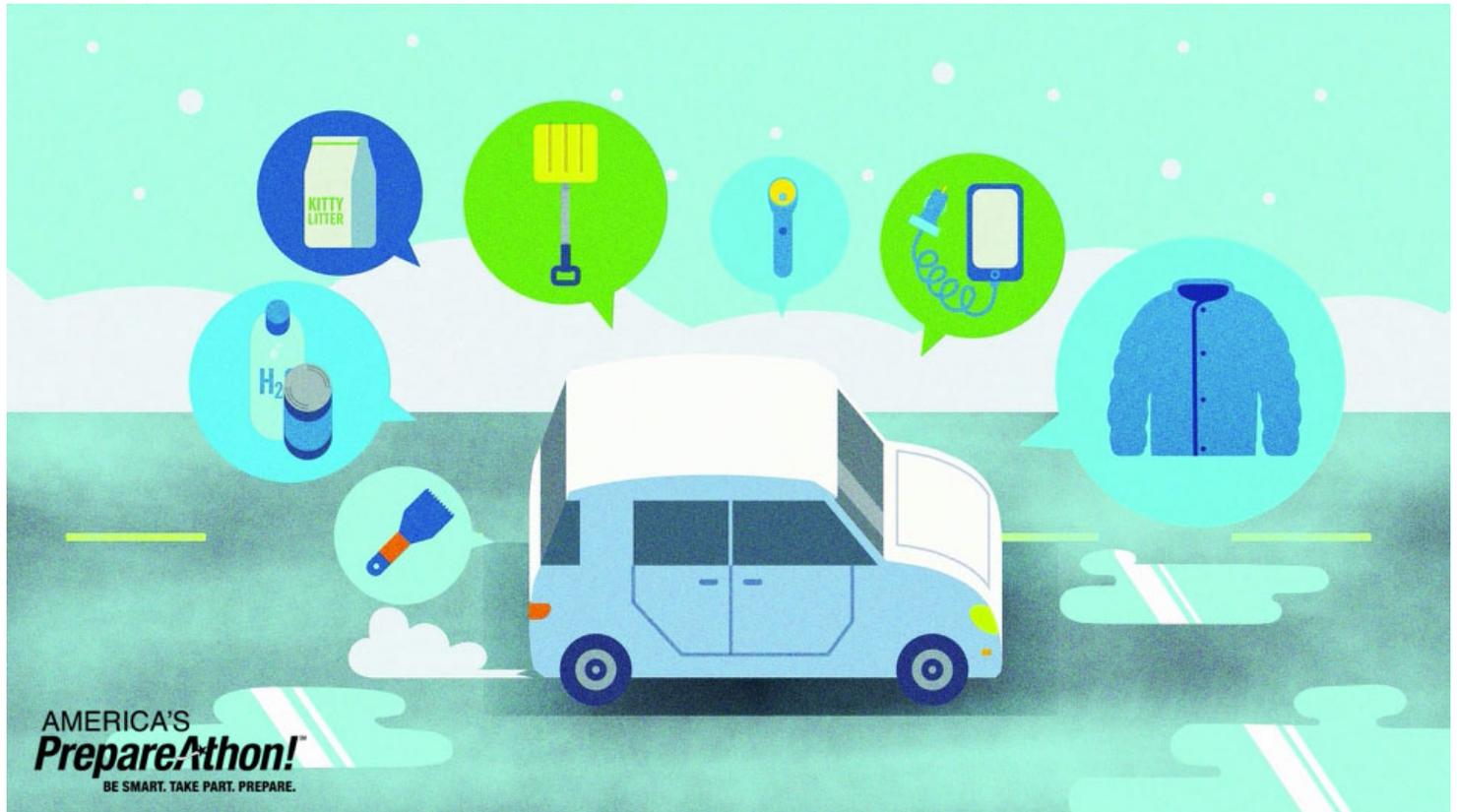
- Choose holiday decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles and flames away from decorations and flammable items.
- Make sure you are using the right lights. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulbs.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Make sure decorations do not block windows or doors.
- Test smoke alarms and tell guests about the home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking at high temperatures.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside and keep smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.
- Blow out lit candles and turn off all light strings and decorations when leaving the room or going to bed.

For more information about winter fire safety, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov/winter](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/winter).

This bulletin is not intended to provide a comprehensive list of policies that are open for public comment, nor does it describe all of the instructions or requirements necessary to submit a comment. For a complete list of instructions and deadlines please click the hyperlinks included. FEMA does not endorse any non-government organizations, entities or services.

### Building an Emergency Kit for the Car

In addition to encouraging people to build an emergency kit for the home, FEMA encourages [building an emergency kit for the car](#). The graphic below provides information on what items to include in a car emergency kit in the event that a vehicle becomes stranded.



### REMINDER: FEMA Seeks Comments to Public Assistance Simplified Procedures Thresholds

FEMA is seeking public comments from state, local, tribal and territorial governments, private non-profit organizations, and interested members of the public regarding the agency's recent revision of the Public Assistance program simplified procedures program. FEMA seeks comments on specific questions to inform any future revisions to the project thresholds that are updated annually based on the Consumer Price Index. **Comments are due on January 20, 2015, and may be [submitted online](#).**

Following the passage of the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 and the accompanying Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, Congress directed FEMA to evaluate its simplified procedures thresholds and immediately implement the recommendations. On January 29, 2014, FEMA issued its [report to Congress](#) that recommended several changes to the threshold and outlined FEMA's reasoning. On February 26, 2014, FEMA published a [final rule](#) amending both the minimum and maximum simplified procedures threshold for disasters declared on or after February 26, 2014.

The mission of the Office of External Affairs (OEA) is to engage, inform, and educate all of FEMA's stakeholders in support of the Agency's programs and initiatives to achieve its mission. OEA accomplishes its mission by coordinating and maintaining visibility of public and internal communications; advising FEMA program and support offices on decision-making regarding policies, plans, and actions that affect stakeholder, media, and Congressional audiences; and organizing outreach efforts targeted at principal stakeholders to include local, state, territorial, and tribal governments, the private sector, national organizations and associations, and the American public.