

Homeland Security National Preparedness Month This September

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Washington, DC - The United States Department of Homeland Security announced today that more than 1,200 national, regional, state and local businesses and organizations have pledged their support and joined the 2008 National Preparedness Month Coalition. Sponsored by the department's Ready Campaign, National Preparedness Month helps to raise awareness and promote action by Americans, businesses, and communities on emergency preparedness.

"As we approach our fifth National Preparedness Month, I want to thank the hundreds of coalition members who are making a difference in their communities by helping raise the basic level of preparedness in our country," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "Individual preparedness is the cornerstone of emergency preparedness. Experience shows that if Americans take steps ahead of time, they stand a much better chance of coming through an emergency unharmed and recovering more quickly."

The Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps (www.citizencorps.gov) are specifically encouraging individuals across the nation to take important preparedness steps. These steps include: getting an emergency supply kit, making a family emergency plan, being informed about the different emergencies that may affect them, as well as taking the necessary steps to get trained and become engaged in community preparedness and response efforts.

National Preparedness Month Coalition members have agreed to distribute emergency preparedness information and sponsor activities across the country that will promote emergency preparedness. Membership is open to all public and private sector organizations. Groups and individuals can register to become members by visiting www.ready.gov, and clicking on the National Preparedness Month banner.

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Joseph I. Lieberman and Ranking Member Susan M. Collins, along with House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Bennie G. Thompson and Ranking Member Peter T. King, will serve as honorary Congressional Co-Chairs of National Preparedness Month 2008. Together, they will lead the effort to increase public awareness about the importance of emergency preparedness on Capitol Hill and throughout the country.

For more information on the Ready Campaign and National Preparedness Month, please visit www.ready.gov or www.listo.gov. Information is also available by phone at 1-800-BE-READY or 1-888-SE-LISTO.

February 2008 marked the Ready Campaign's fifth year at the Department of Homeland Security. Launched in 2003 in partnership with The Advertising Council, Ready is designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. It has proven to be one of the most successful campaigns in Ad Council's more than 65-year history. Since its launch, the campaign has generated more than \$703.2 million in donated media support. Individuals interested in more information about family, business and community preparedness can visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY to receive free materials.