
August 2008

- The American Red Cross joins the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and a coalition of more than 1,800 organizations in recognition of National Preparedness Month this September.
- Now in its fifth year, National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to raise public awareness about the importance of preparing for all types of emergencies.
- You can “Be Red Cross Ready” for emergencies in just three simple steps: 1) Get a kit, 2) Make a plan and 3) Be informed. Visit www.redcross.org/BeRedCrossReady to learn how. ([Be Red Cross Ready talking points](#))
- This year, [“Pledge to Prepare”](#) in September. Pledge to do at least one thing this month to help yourself, your family or your community be prepared for an emergency.
- This year for National Preparedness Month, the Department of Homeland Security’s *Ready* Campaign is highlighting an additional preparedness step: “Get Involved.” Get involved by taking steps to prepare yourself and your community by volunteering with your local Red Cross chapter, or by giving blood to ensure an adequate blood supply. Go to www.redcross.org/en/NPM2008 to learn more.
- This year during National Preparedness Month, The Wireless Foundation will run a Text 2HELP™ program to allow subscribers of participating wireless carriers to donate \$5 to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund by simply texting the keyword “GIVE” to “2HELP” (24357). Plus, you can help people become more familiar with their cell phone, a device that may be useful in emergency situations. You can help the victims of thousands of disasters across the country each year by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, which enables the Red Cross to provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to victims of disaster.
- As America’s partner in preparedness, the American Red Cross is in communities teaching life-saving preparedness and health and safety skills to more than 46,000 people each day.

PRI Research Key Findings

A recent poll conducted by the American Red Cross and Council for Excellence in Government to gauge the Public Readiness Index found:

- The public is hearing about the need for preparedness in their communities, but the number of people taking actions to get prepared has decreased.
- Employers, schools, and daycare centers play a strong role in public readiness.
 - Employees are better prepared if their employer has a plan and practices

the plan.

- Parents are better prepared if their children's schools or daycare centers have plans, practice those plans, and provide parents with written information about the plans.
- Three out of four parents (76%) report that all of their children's schools or daycare centers have an emergency plan. Eight in ten of those (79%) have practiced the plan in the last 12 months, up from 65% in 2007.
- 73% of employees report that their employer has an emergency plan. Of these, 65% have practiced the plan in the last 12 months.
- However, preparedness in several specific areas has decreased, including making a communication plan, having an emergency preparedness kit in a designated place, or having a set meeting place in case of emergency.
- Three quarters of Americans (73%) would delay or ignore an ordered evacuation because of concerns about traffic along evacuation routes, elderly relatives, pets or a lack of transportation.
- The oldest and youngest segments of the population are the least prepared.
- Non-Hispanic whites are less prepared and represent the sharpest decline in preparedness among ethnic groups since 2007. African Americans preparedness levels have remained the same.
- People living in the Northeast region of the country have the lowest average preparedness levels (2.65), while people in the North Central region have the highest (3.82).

PRI Key Messages

- Preparedness increases when communities as well as individuals are engaged in the process, where they live, work and learn.
- Preparing for a disaster doesn't require a lot of time or money. Your local Red Cross chapter can help. It's not as expensive as you might think and it's worth the peace of mind to take the time to support your safety.
- Research shows that having an emergency supplies kit gives people the greatest sense of security.
- Preparedness creates security, which in turn promotes confidence and peace of mind for your family, friends, and community.



Talking Points

National Preparedness Month
