



pennsylvania
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



MONTHLY
September 2017

National Preparedness Month (NPM)



Pennsylvania has a state flag , state dog  (Great Dane), and state beverage  (milk). We would argue that we also have a state *dessert*: PIE. Some of our favorite pies are **P**artners **I**n an **E**mergency – so you can be **P**repared **I**n an **E**mergency. This year, the theme for National Preparedness Month is, “Disasters Don’t Plan Ahead. You Can.”

What does this have to do with National Preparedness Month in September?

We know disasters start locally and it takes a whole community to prepare for, respond to, and recover from when disaster strikes. Your local responders such as fire, ambulance, police, community government, volunteer organizations, neighbors, and you, come together when skies are blue to learn, prepare, and practice for when skies go gray. No one can do it alone, together we are **P**artners **I**n an **E**mergency that are prepared for an emergency.

Recipe for being Prepared in and Emergency:

- Be Informed
- Be Prepared
- Be Involved.

Because disasters don’t plan ahead, but you can. You can’t be prepared with just one step, but every one counts.

Your Recipe for Success?

1. Start with a pledge to be Prepared in an Emergency, included in the ReadyPA Monthly.
2. Visit www.readypa.org and learn how you can plan, prepare, and Be Ready, PA!
3. Follow ReadyPA and PEMA on Facebook and Twitter: #PAPrepared, #NatlPrep, and #ReadyPA. We will provide tips and tools throughout the month and beyond.
4. Share your pledge on social media by using #PAPrepared, #NatlPrep, and #ReadyPA.

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National Preparedness Month

Getting Started: How to be Prepared In an Emergency



Be Informed

Know what to plan for.

1. Understand which disasters are likely in your area and what you must know to stay safe. Visit www.ReadyPA.org to find out common hazards in your county.
2. Identify how you will receive alerts and updates.
Learn more about Weather Radios and Emergency Alerts for your mobile phone in this month's ReadyPA Monthly.
3. Know the different weather alerts and what action to take in each. Visit www.ReadyPA.org to learn more.
4. Share what you have learned with your family, household and neighbors and encourage them to be informed.
5. Follow your local emergency management agency online.



Be Prepared

Know what to do and have what you need when disaster strikes.

1. Sign the Preparedness Pledge on the Action Sheet and post the Tip Sheet on your refrigerator.
2. Determine how your family will communicate during an emergency and where to go if you are not together when disaster strikes.
3. Identify and gather essential supplies you would need if disaster strikes and you lose power for an extended period of time or if you have to evacuate your home. Consider special medical needs and your pets.
4. Visit www.readypa.org for special planning tools that you can complete and have ready.



Be Involved

It takes a community. Learn how you can help.

1. Volunteer and receive training to support disaster and preparedness efforts in your community.
2. Take a first aid class. There may be times, during a disaster, when responders cannot come to your aid immediately.
3. Get others involved and share your preparedness on social media. Include #PAPrepared and #ReadyPA.

Weather Alerts

Be Informed: Learning About Weather Alerts

Regardless of the season, Pennsylvania faces threats from snow to floods. *Take some time this month to ensure you have at least two methods for receiving important, potentially lifesaving weather alerts from the National Weather Service.*

Weather Radio:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radios are designed to provide only the information you need. It can be programmed to receive alerts for your specific county, alerting you only when severe weather is close to your home. Why have a Weather Radio when you can get the same information on your cell phone? Consider it similar to a smoke detector for fires in the home, a weather radio will activate while you sleep to wake you and alert you of potential severe weather. These units work radio waves and can be operated by crank power. Battery operated units also are great for travel or time outdoors.



TXT & Email Notifications:

Mobile phones and computers can be a great method for alerting you of severe weather. Sign up to have emergency and weather alerts sent to your phone or email. Pennsylvania's AlertPA is free and available at <https://alert.pa.gov/>. Media outlets and weather companies offer similar products. Many of these are customizable to your county, and you can even sign up for alerts for family and friends living in other counties or states. Weather apps may enhance the layer of alerts.



Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA):

For certain severe weather events immediately threatening to life and property, a special message will be broadcast across all TV and radio stations and a loud alert will be sent to your cell phone. While you cannot sign up for these alerts, as they are automatic, if you receive an EAS or WEA, you should take action immediately.



Alert Terms

Be Ready: Know what to do when you receive an alert or when disaster strikes.

How can you Be Ready?



Before

- Know what a watch and a warning mean for you.
- Know what county you live, work or go to school in.



During

- **Thunderstorms:** Head indoors and stay off electronics and away from water.
- **Tornadoes:** Head to the basement or the lowest floor.
- **Floods:** Head to higher ground.
- **Heat:** Drink lots of water.



Know Your Alert Terms

When the weather turns bad, the National Weather Service lets us know with special phrases. Do you know the difference?

Watch: There is a chance for dangerous weather. Time to prepare!

Warning: Dangerous weather is occurring or will occur in your area. Take action! Watch and warning messages sent from the National Weather Service are based on weather in your county.



Warning	Take Action!
Lightning/Thunder	"When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors" "When you see a flash, dash inside"
Flooding (Severe or Flash)	"Turn Around, Don't Drown"
Tornado	"If a tornado is around, get low to the ground"
Heat	"Beat the heat, stay cool"

National Food Safety Awareness Month

Food Handling Safety Risks are More Common Than Most People Think.

Did you know that in the United States each year:

- 76 million cases of foodborne illness occur.
- More than 325,000 people are hospitalized for a foodborne illness.
- 5,000 people will die from a foodborne illness.

Follow These Four Easy Steps to Help Your Family Be Food Safe.

Clean. Bacteria can spread throughout the kitchen and get on hands, cutting boards, knives, and countertops. Frequent cleaning can help prevent this from happening.

- **WASH** hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before and after handling food.
- **RUN** cutting boards and utensils through the dishwasher or wash them in hot soapy water after each use.
- **KEEP** countertops clean by washing with hot soapy water after preparing food.

Separate. Cross-contamination is how bacteria spreads. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices away from ready-to-eat food.

- **USE** one cutting board for raw meat, poultry, and seafood and another for salads and ready-to-eat food.
- **KEEP** raw meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices apart from other food items in your grocery cart.
- **STORE** raw meat, poultry, and seafood in a container or on a plate so juices can't drip on other foods.

Cook. Even for experienced cooks, the improper heating and preparation of food means bacteria can survive.

- **USE** a food thermometer—you can't tell food is cooked safely by how it looks.
- **STIR**, rotate the dish, and cover food when microwaving to prevent cold spots where bacteria can survive.
- **BRING** sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating.

Chill. Bacteria spreads fastest at temperatures between 40 °F and 140 °F, so chilling food properly is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of a foodborne illness.

- **COOL** the refrigerator to 40 °F or below, and use an appliance thermometer to check the temperature.
- **CHILL** leftovers and takeout food within 2 hours and divide food into shallow containers for rapid cooling.

Thaw. Meat, poultry, and seafood in the refrigerator, not on the counter, and don't overstuff the refrigerator.

National Child Passenger Safety Week (September 17-23)

Child Passenger Safety

PennDOT cares about protecting our children and encourages all adults to take the responsibility of keeping them safe when riding in a vehicle. It is our job to make sure they buckle up — from the time when children are too young to do it themselves to the time they climb behind the wheel for the first time.

Child Passenger Safety Week 2017

PennDOT is working with its highway safety partners and law enforcement officials for the upcoming Child Passenger Safety Week, which runs from September 17-23. Throughout this week, trained car seat technicians will be available to make sure your car seat is properly installed. [Look for a car seat check near you.](http://www.pakidstravelsafe.org/news-events/events) (www.pakidstravelsafe.org/news-events/events)

Pennsylvania's Seat Belt Law

Under Pennsylvania's primary child passenger safety law, children under the age of four must be properly restrained in an approved child safety seat. Children under two must be secured in a rear-facing car seat until the child turns two or outgrows the maximum weight and height limits designated by the car seat manufacturer. Children from age four up to age eight must be restrained in an appropriate booster seat. Children from age eight to age 18 must be in a seat belt no matter where they sit in a vehicle.

Car Seat Recommendations for Children

- Select a car seat based on your child's age and size, fits in your vehicle, and use it every time.
- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system; and check height and weight limits.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Keep your child in the back seat up to age 12.

Birth to Two Years

Under a law passed in 2016, children under age two must be restrained in a rear-facing car seat. There are different types of rear-facing car seats: Infant-only seats can only be used rear-facing; convertible and 3-in-1 car seats typically have higher height and weight limits for the rear-facing position, allowing you to keep your child rear-facing for a longer time.

Two to Three Years

Keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. Although the current law says age two, it also says "or" the height and weight limit of the seat. That means you don't need to automatically turn your child around at age two. Rear-facing is the best way to keep your child safe. Once they outgrow the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

National Child Passenger Safety Week (September 17-23)

Four to Eight Years

Once your child has outgrown a forward-facing seat, they are ready to transition to a booster seat. There are a few kinds of booster seats: a combination seat moves from harnesses to booster in the same seat; a high-back booster provides head/neck protection in the event a vehicle does not have a head restraint; and a backless booster still provides the protection from having the lap/shoulder belt fit properly across the hips and collarbone. Although Pennsylvania's law for booster seats stops at age eight with guidelines of 4'9" and 80 lbs., national recommendations are moving back the age to ten to twelve years of age, based on the small size of some children.

Eight to Eighteen Years

To determine if your child is ready for a seatbelt, have them sit all the way back in the seat, as upright as possible. Their knees need to bend at a 90 degree angle and their feet must be flat on the floor. In addition, the shoulder portion of the seatbelt must come across their collarbone and sternum. If these guidelines are not met, it is safest for your pre-teen to continue using a booster seat.

Right Seat • Right Time • Right Use

Unrestrained children are 3 times more likely to be injured in a crash.

1. Keep Children Rear-Facing as Long as Possible:



- Use rear-facing car seats in the back seat as long as possible up to the rear-facing weight or height limit (even up to age 2 or 3).
- Use a car seat with higher weight and height limits if your child outgrows their car seat before age 2 to keep your child rear-facing longer.
- Leg crowding is expected and does not cause harm as long as the child is within weight and height limits for the car seat.

2. Keep Children in Car Seats with Harnesses as Long as Possible:



- Use a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether in the back seat when the upper rear-facing weight or height limit is reached.
- Use the car seat with a harness as long as possible up to the upper weight or height limit for the harness.

3. Keep Children in Booster Seats until the Seat Belt Fits:



- Use booster seats in the back seat until the seat belt fits.
- Use a seat belt when:
 1. The child can sit all the way back in the vehicle seat with knees bent at the edge of the seat.
 2. The shoulder belt crosses the center of the chest and rests on the shoulder (not the neck).
 3. The lap belt fits low and snug on the hips / upper thighs (not the stomach).

4. Keep Children Belted in the Back Seat until Age 13:



- Use a correctly fitted lap and shoulder belt in the back seat for older children when they outgrow the booster seat, which may not happen until close to 12 years old.
- The back seat is safest for all children.

Follow these 4 Steps
to Keep Kids Safe
in the Car

Staying Safe While Traveling for Business

Traveling for business can be fun but it comes with hazards such as traveling to the site, the hotel stays, and the unfamiliarity. Below are tips to avoid business trip hazards. It is important that employees remain vigilant and safety-conscious wherever their work assignments take them and for many employees, that includes traveling across Pennsylvania—and beyond—for overnight stays.

Driving Safety



Even if utilizing the National Safety Council's defensive driving techniques, vehicle emergencies may still occur. In the event of a vehicle emergency, stay at the scene and call 911 as soon as possible. Assess the situation and provide appropriate assistance to others that may need it. Remain calm and cooperate fully with law enforcement. Lastly, remember to report the vehicle accident to your direct supervisor as soon as possible.

Hotel Safety



Preparing for your overnight stay at a hotel is very important. Identifying the fire escape route and emergency exits prior to falling asleep is a highly recommended practice and will make evacuating less stressful in the event of an emergency. Also, when practical, don't accept a room on the ground floor of a hotel. Most experts recommend staying somewhere between the third and sixth floors- where rooms are high enough to be difficult to break into, but not so high that they're out of reach of most fire engine ladders.

On Site Safety



Employees that work or spend most of their time in the field are exposed to a variety of hazards that vary based on their type of work, geographic region, and season. Whether you are attending a meeting or training, working outdoors, or any other reason you may find yourself in unfamiliar facilities, the most important thing to remember is safety first. In the event of a fire or other emergency, it is vital to be able to respond quickly and evacuate the area swiftly, if needed. Having a plan focused on what to do and where to go can save lives. Commonwealth workplaces are required to develop and educate employees on safe evacuation and assembly procedures. Upon arriving at a new office or jobsite, familiarize yourself with the evacuation plan.



PEMA is Social!

Find us, visit us, like us, tweet us, retweet us!



Twitter

<https://twitter.com/ReadyPA>

<https://twitter.com/PEMAdirector>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/BeReadyPA>

PEMA Can Also be Found on the Web!

Be Informed, Be Prepared, and Be Involved!



www.ReadyPA.org



pennsylvania

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

www.pema.pa.gov

Preparedness Events in September

National Preparedness Month

www.ready.gov

9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance

<https://www.serve.gov/site-page/september-11th-national-day-service-and-remembrance>

National Child Passenger Safety Week: 9/17 - 9/23

www.nsc.org

National Food Safety Education Month

www.foodsafetymonth.com

Additional Resources

Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency: www.pema.pa.gov

ReadyPA: www.Readypa.org

SERVPA: www.Serv.PA.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency: www.fema.gov

National Weather Service: www.weather.gov

PA State Animal Response Team: www.pasart.us

PA511Connect: www.511pa.com

Pennsylvania State Police: www.psp.pa.gov

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation: www.penndot.gov

Are you ReadyPA?

ACTION SHEET



Take the pledge to prepare and Be Ready, PA!

I know that disasters don't plan ahead, but I can. To help prepare myself and my family, I pledge to take steps now to:

- ✓ Be Informed: about what kind of disasters might happen where I live, work or visit
- ✓ Be Prepared: and make a plan. I will include specific health and safety needs.
- ✓ Be Involved: Spread the word on social media using #PAPrepared, #NatlPrep, #ReadyPA

Your name: _____

Date: _____



FIRE

READY TIPS

Crawl low under any smoke to your exit.

Feel the door before opening. If cool, open slowly and leave. If hot, use your second way out.

Use the stairs. Avoid elevators.

Stay out once you get out. Call 911.

If you can't get out, close the door and cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape to keep smoke out. Call 9-1-1. Tell them where you are and signal for help at the window with a light-colored cloth or a flashlight.



Test smoke alarms monthly



Find 2 ways out of each room. Practice your escape route.



POWER OUTAGE

READY TIPS

Use flashlights for emergency lighting, candles can cause fires.

Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Most food requiring refrigeration can be kept safely in a closed refrigerator for several hours.

Take steps to remain cool if it is hot outside. If you remain at home, move to the lowest level of your home, since cool air falls. Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty.

Wear layers of warm clothing if it is cold outside. Never use your oven or grill as a source of heat.

Turn off or disconnect appliances and other equipment in case of a momentary power "surge".



Store batteries, phone chargers, flashlights and a wind up radio.



Have alternate plans for medical devices needing power.

GET INFORMATION

- Subscribe to emergency alert systems in your community.
- NOAA Weather Radios provide weather warnings directly from the National Weather Service.
- Listen to local TV and radio stations for information and instructions
- Follow local emergency response agencies and media on social media

GET HELP

Police: Call 911 or: _____

Fire Dept.: Call 911 or: _____

Ambulance: Call 911 or: _____

Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

Other local numbers: _____