



American Red Cross
in Greater New York



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**AMERICAN RED CROSS IN GREATER NEW YORK & NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO HOST READY NEW YORK NIGHTS**

Helping New Yorkers prepare for all types of emergencies

NEW YORK, NY, SEPT. 8, 2004 – September is National Preparedness Month. In recognition, the American Red Cross in Greater New York (ARC/GNY) and the NYC Office of Emergency Management (OEM) are hosting Ready New York Nights, a series of interactive presentations designed to help New Yorkers better prepare for all types of emergencies.

Events take place from 7-9 p.m. in each of the five boroughs as follows:

- Sept. 9 – Hunter College – Brookdale Campus, Manhattan (425 E. 25th St.)
- Sept. 14 – Brooklyn College, Brooklyn (Gershwin Theatre, Campus Rd. & Hillel Place)
- Sept. 21 – LaGuardia Community College, Queens (Mainstage Theatre, Van Dam St. & 47th Ave.)
- Sept. 23 – College of Staten Island, Staten Island (2800 Victory Blvd., Performing and Creative Arts Building)
- Sept. 28 – Hostos Community College, Bronx (Main Theater, 450 Grand Concourse)

“Polls show that New Yorkers are not as prepared as they should be, yet most say they are interested in getting trained but don’t know what to do,” said ARC/GNY CEO Theresa Bischoff. “These community-based events will address those concerns and will offer easy, family-oriented preparedness training where people can speak directly with experts and learn how to make a plan, build a kit and go bag, get educated, get involved.”

“Many New Yorkers are aware of the need to prepare for emergencies, but most have yet to take action,” said OEM Commissioner Joseph Bruno. “We hope these informative and interactive sessions will prompt people to take basics steps to prepare.”

Ready New York Nights will outline basic preparedness steps New Yorkers can apply at home, work, and school, including how to develop a disaster plan, how to assemble a “Go Bag” and emergency supply kit, how to get trained in First Aid and CPR, and how to get involved through volunteering.

After a general introduction, attendees will have an opportunity to meet with preparedness experts from various city agencies and organizations to ask questions, get individual instruction and more specific information on many subjects. For example, the NYC Fire Department will provide fire safety information, while the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will offer answers to questions about bioterrorism and mental health issues.

“Emergency preparedness has become a part of our everyday lives,” said Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. “Developing family disaster plans and putting together ‘Go Bags’ allow residents to better cope with catastrophe by taking control and being ready should the need arise. Ready New York Nights will give New Yorkers the opportunity to learn how.”

In addition to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, partners in this citywide initiative include: NYC Department for the Aging, New York Cares, Citizens for NYC, ASPCA, Medical Reserve Corps, National Weather Service, NYC Department of Education, NYC Animal Care & Control, Mayor’s Volunteer Center, NYC Fire Department, NYC Police Department, the New York City Blood Center, and the City University of New York, which will provide its facilities for the series. OEM and ARG/GNY also gratefully acknowledge Starbucks Coffee, which will provide refreshments at all Ready New York Nights events.

Ready New York Nights’ kick-off on Sept. 9 will coincide with the announcement made by Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge on activities during National Preparedness Month, which is being spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the America Prepared Campaign, the American Red Cross, and other partners.

Ready New York Nights will also debut the new interactive CD-ROM Together We Prepare New York developed by ARC/GNY in partnership with OEM. “This interactive and entertaining CD is a great way for the entire family to get involved in preparedness planning. You can take a quick quiz to test your knowledge, and you can even create an actual floor plan of your own home and detail escape routes and exits,” explained Margaret Kelley, Director of Preparedness and Community Outreach for ARC/GNY.

For more information, or to register, online visit www.nyredcross.org/readynynights.

The American Red Cross helps people avoid, prepare for and respond to emergencies. In addition to responding to major disasters like the events of September 11th, the American Red Cross in Greater New York responds to an average of eight emergencies a day such as blackouts, fires, and water main breaks and building collapses. The Red Cross also offers a variety of health and safety courses on such subjects as First Aid and CPR. To attend a safety course, call 1-800-514-5103 or visit www.nyredcross.org. For general inquiries, call 1-877-REDCROSS.

The New York City Office of Emergency Management works to mitigate, and plan and prepare for emergencies through educating the public about preparedness, coordinating interagency response emergencies, and developing citywide emergency response plans. In July 2003, OEM launched Ready New York, a citywide preparedness campaign, which offers a comprehensive suite of tips and information designed to help New Yorkers better prepare for all types of emergencies. For more information about OEM and the Ready New York campaign, visit NYC.gov/oem.

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