



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, COMMISSIONER ESPOSITO ENCOURAGE NEW YORKERS
TO BE PREPARED AS THE CITY HEADS INTO PEAK HURRICANE SEASON**

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner Joseph Esposito today encouraged New Yorkers to take steps to ensure they are prepared, as the City heads into peak hurricane season (August – October). Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Esposito were joined by New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Chair Shola Olatoye, Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities Commissioner Victor Calise, and Department for the Aging Commissioner Donna Corrado at Red Hook Initiative, where they assembled “Go Bags” for NYCHA residents to ensure they are prepared in the event of an emergency evacuation.

For the past six months, OEM has worked in partnership with the Red Hook Initiative to bolster emergency preparedness within the NYCHA community in Red Hook and equip residents with skills they need to protect themselves and their families, and organize their neighbors in the event of an emergency evacuation.

“New York City is most vulnerable to hurricanes from August through October. It’s time to start thinking about your emergency plan. We saw during Hurricane Sandy just how disruptive a major storm can be to this city. Almost three million New Yorkers live in a hurricane evacuation zone, so it’s imperative that people prepare and make a plan for what you will do if you are ordered to evacuate your home,” said **Mayor de Blasio**.

“Being prepared for a hurricane or any emergency is the best way to keep you and your family safe,” said **OEM Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “Make an emergency plan with your family, and have a Go Bag packed with essentials you may need in the event that you have to leave your house in advance of a storm.”

“The New York City Housing Authority is committed to planning ahead, making our buildings far more resilient inside and out, leading dozens of staff trainings and resident outreach efforts, and working closely with our partners in OEM and other City agencies to make emergency preparedness a priority for the tens of thousands of New Yorkers who live in public housing,” said **NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye**.

“For New Yorkers who have medical, physical, cognitive or sensory disabilities, emergency situations can be a serious challenge. In order to protect themselves and their families, it is imperative they are prepared,” said **Victor Calise, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities**. “Persons with disabilities should talk with family members, care attendants, and friends to come up with a plan that works for everyone. Knowing what your abilities are will help you to prepare. Each individual should have a ‘GO BAG’ ready that includes proper medications, medical supplies, and appropriate durable medical equipment for 3-5 days or longer. Be safe—and be prepared.”

“DFTA works hand-in-hand with the Mayor’s office and our fellow City agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of all of New York City’s seniors during a public health crisis, natural disaster, or citywide emergency,” said **Department for the Aging Commissioner Donna Corrado**. “Red Hook, in particular, was among those communities hit hardest by Sandy. Today’s initiative helps to better prepare our City when faced with these potentially catastrophic events.”

The City encourages residents to take three key steps to prepare for hurricane season:

- **Know Your Zone:** Find out whether you live in one of the city’s six hurricane evacuation zones.
- **Make a Plan:** Make a plan, so you know what to do, how to find family members, roommates, or neighbors, and how to communicate during an emergency.
- **Stay informed:** Sign up to receive emergency updates and information online and via e-mail, text, phone, and Twitter through the City’s free Notify NYC program at nyc.gov.

The City also has the “Ready New York: Hurricanes and New York City” guide, available in print, audio format, and translated into 13 different languages. The guide offers instructions for preparing a disaster plan, and features a map of the City’s six hurricane evacuation zones and a list of hurricane evacuation centers in all five boroughs. New Yorkers are encouraged to visit www.nyc.gov/knowyourzone to download the guide or call 311 to request a copy.

While 84 percent of hurricanes form during the peak of the hurricane season from August through October, the City plans and prepares year-round for coastal storms. New York City has a comprehensive Coastal Storm Plan that includes detailed procedures for evacuating and sheltering residents. In a major coastal storm, the City has the capacity to shelter up to 600,000 people with a shelter system that consists of 64 evacuation centers and more than 450 hurricane shelters, including special medical needs shelters. To supply and staff the shelter system, the City maintains an emergency stockpile of essential supplies and a database of thousands of City employees and volunteers who would be called upon to manage evacuation centers and emergency shelters.

The City is also moving forward PlaNYC, its comprehensive sustainability and resiliency blueprint, including a number of coastal protection, building resiliency, and infrastructure improvements that are already in place for this hurricane season.

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