

For Immediate Release
#34-20

**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT KICKS OFF NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS
MONTH TO EDUCATE NEW YORKERS ABOUT DISASTER READINESS**

Weekly-themed events will focus on families, children, businesses and faith-based organizations

Social media campaign will encourage New Yorkers to share their readiness plans

September 1, 2020 — In recognition of National Preparedness Month, the New York City Emergency Management Department reminds New Yorkers to prepare for emergencies. This year's events will be held virtually and will include weekly preparedness themes, along with a social media engagement campaign. These initiatives will provide the foundation to equip New Yorkers with the necessary tools to prepare their families, pets, businesses and communities for any emergency.

"National Preparedness Month provides an opportunity for all New Yorkers to take stock of their emergency plans. Individuals can update those plans or create one if they don't have," said **New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell**. "Our goal during the next few weeks is to continue to connect with our communities and equip them with the necessary resources to navigate not only these difficult times, but any future emergency they may face."

This year's National Preparedness Month theme is, "Disasters Don't Wait, Make Your Plan Today." The weekly-themed events will educate and guide the public in preparedness. They are, Make a Plan, Build a Kit, Prepare for Disasters, and Teach Youth about Preparedness. You can find more information on our National Preparedness Month [here](#). Through the various virtual and social media events, New Yorkers will hear from emergency management experts and community groups that specialize in disaster preparedness and response.

Throughout the month, NYC Emergency Management will continue to partner with faith-based and nonprofit organizations, as well as elected officials, to share critical information with the public. Through partnerships with Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) and Community Emergency Networks, the agency will facilitate seminars and panel discussions that can equip individuals with the tools they need to prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency.

"Through our relationship with the COADs and the community emergency networks, we are able to share a lot of information with the public about preparing for a disaster. They are constantly working on community emergency plans or trying to mitigate the different concerns regarding emergencies specific to their communities," said **NYC Emergency Management Director of Community Engagement Moriah A. Washington**. "The COADs and networks assist with

delivering the message and importance of emergency preparedness to an even larger group. Our goal is for New Yorkers to not just prepare their household, but also their communities.”

“Nobody thinks about emergencies during blue skies, and we need to teach (our members) to be prepared for all the other times,” said **Sharmila Rao Thakkar, executive director of the Staten Island Not For Profit Association, and Staten Island COAD**. “You need to make it part of your business, and operations, that is what I aspire to do. “

“National Preparedness Month usually means asking people to imagine what they will do during a disaster, but this year, we are living it instead. As a community, we are experiencing and addressing the full disaster cycle: we’re responding to COVID-19 through distribution of masks and other supplies, doing recovery work through mental health education, and leading preparedness activities for what might come next,” said **Ann-Gel Palermo, project director from the East Harlem COAD**.

In addition to the themed events, NYC Emergency Management will host a virtual reading for the latest issue of the Ready Girl comic book on September 22, during a story hour at the Queens Library. On September 24, the agency will also host a virtual panel discussion with disability partners and advocates titled “Voices of the Disabled: Planning for Emergencies” to discuss the additional challenges that vulnerable populations face during a disaster.

For more information and resources about National Preparedness Month, including a calendar of events, visit [NYC.gov/emergencymanagement](https://nyc.gov/emergencymanagement) or follow the [agency on social media](#).

Census 2020

The 2020 Census is ending on September 30, and it is critical that all New Yorkers are counted. New York City stands to lose billions of dollars in federal aid every single year for schools, hospitals, health clinics, affordable housing, transportation, and more, as well as our representation in Congress and in Albany if we do not achieve a complete count.

The census is easy, safe, and confidential. It can be completed online or by phone. It is just 10 simple questions that can be answered in under 10 minutes. By law, all responses are completely confidential and cannot be shared with anyone — not immigration, not the police, or your landlord. There are no questions about immigration, citizenship, criminal history, or income. Go to my2020census.gov or call 844-330-2020 to complete your census today. New York City’s future depends on it.

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@nycemergencygmt (emergency preparedness info)



This National Preparedness Month,
get your organization prepared for emergencies!

Free virtual events through September:

NYC Emergency Management Community Preparedness Open House
Three Steps to Organizational Preparedness
Community Mapping 101
Preparing for Multiple Emergencies
DAFN Training for Community & Faith-based Organizations

Visit NYC.gov/npm to sign up.

Disability accommodations are available upon request.