



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND AD COUNCIL  
KICK OFF NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH**

*New Yorkers Invited to Audition for TV PSA at Brooklyn Borough Hall*

NEW YORK, N.Y. – Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno, FEMA Deputy Administrator Richard Serino, Fire Department (FDNY) Commissioner Salvatore Cassano, Police Department (NYPD) Assistant Chief Harry J. Wedin, The Advertising Council Campaign Manager Jessica Dahl, American Red Cross in Greater New York Chief Administrative Officer Richard Kane, and Counsel to Brooklyn Borough President Jason Otaño today kicked off National Preparedness Month by encouraging New Yorkers to audition for an upcoming TV public service advertisement (PSA). OEM and NYC TV set up a video booth at a preparedness fair at Brooklyn Borough Hall today, and will encourage passersby to share their thoughts about emergency preparedness on camera. Footage from the shoot will be used to create a series of local PSAs, which will be featured online later this month through [OEM's website](#) and [YouTube page](#), and later this year in taxi cabs and on TV.

“All week OEM has been closely monitoring Hurricane Earl for its potential threat to New York City. Fortunately, it looks like we will not see any major rain and wind this time, but it’s a great reminder of why it is so important to prepare for emergencies and why we are here today,” said Commissioner Bruno. “Our Citizen Corps Council partners will be at locations across the five boroughs today to teach New Yorkers about the steps they should take to prepare for emergencies – get a kit, make a plan, get informed.”

“The public truly is the most important part of the nation’s emergency management team,” said FEMA Deputy Administrator Rich Serino. “No matter how much FEMA and our state and local partners do to prepare, we can only be successful if people are doing the same at their homes, schools, and work. September is National Preparedness Month, and we need no more of a reminder of the importance of getting ready than Hurricane Earl and the tropical storms moving in the Atlantic as we speak. When people take steps to prepare, they do more than help themselves and their family – they also help relieve the burden on local first responders, making the entire community more safe and secure.”

"Our members are trained to respond to any emergency, no matter what. But also it's important that people take steps to be prepared for the unexpected." said Commissioner Cassano. "After 40 years with the FDNY, I have seen many tragedies that could have been prevented by taking

simple precautions. September is National Preparedness month, so we want to let all New Yorkers know: being prepared could save your life."

"The Police Department has taken a number of hurricane-related precautions, including the monitoring of highways and coastal areas that might be impacted by high water, in addition to the surveying of all commands to make certain backup generators are fueled and functional, and that 50 Jon boats assigned to precincts in flood prone areas are ready for deployment," said Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly.

"Emergencies can happen anywhere and any time," said American Red Cross in Greater New York Chief Administrative Officer, Richard Kane. "The Red Cross responds to an average of seven emergencies each day in Greater New York, and most of the people we help are not prepared. In an effort to practice what we preach, the Red Cross is currently preparing for the potential impact of Hurricane Earl as it heads up the east coast. During Preparedness Month—and every month—we encourage all New Yorkers to take steps to be prepared *before* an emergency or disaster occurs."

In addition to the video booth set up at Brooklyn Borough Hall, volunteers from the New York City Citizen Corps Council are stationed at five sites around the city today to distribute literature and remind their fellow New Yorkers about the importance of preparing for emergencies.

Locations include:

- Brooklyn: Brooklyn Borough Hall
- Bronx: The Hub (149<sup>th</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue)
- Manhattan: Columbus Circle (59<sup>th</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, park side)
- Queens: Flushing Library (Main Street and Kissena Boulevard)
- Staten Island: Staten Island Ferry Terminal

In celebration of National Preparedness Month, OEM and the Ad Council today also launched a new Facebook application to help New Yorkers find a safe place to meet their families or friends during an emergency. Located on [OEM's Facebook page](#), the new interactive web mapping application allows New Yorkers to select a meeting place from thousands of locations in the metropolitan area in advance of an emergency. Users can search for meeting places closest to their home or office addresses, such as schools, museums, libraries, senior centers, courthouses, post offices, or police or fire stations. Other options include choosing a meeting place between two addresses or choosing your own meeting place. After the meeting place is chosen, it can be shared via e-mail with those users who want to meet at the designated point in an emergency. Users will also be able to share their meeting place via text message in the coming months.

Another highlight of this National Preparedness Month celebration is a preparedness night at Citi Field on September 27 that will feature a Go Bag giveaway and a special series of videos with Mr. Met, the Mets' mascot. The Empire State Building will also be lit up in yellow (OEM's *Ready New York City* campaign color) Thursday night to remind New Yorkers about the importance of preparing for emergencies.

National Preparedness Month is a month-long, nationwide campaign, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, to promote emergency preparedness and encourage volunteerism. Each September, the New York City Citizen Corps Council organizes National Preparedness Month activities throughout the city by bringing together disaster relief and other volunteer organizations to distribute information at fairs, host demonstrations, and lead preparedness presentations.

During the rest of National Preparedness Month, OEM will highlight different steps toward preparedness each week:

September 5-11: Gather Emergency Supplies

September 12-18: Pick a Meeting Place

September 19-25: Stay Informed

September 26-30: Get Involved

According to OEM's 2010 survey, 40 percent of New Yorkers say they do not feel prepared for an emergency and 68 percent do not have all of the recommended emergency supplies in their homes. Additionally, only 21 percent of New Yorkers make use of real-time news alert features or applications; even though, the majority of residents stated a strong interest in receiving information about terrorist threats or incidents.

In an effort to further educate New Yorkers about the importance of preparedness, OEM and the Ad Council partnered to create the *Ready New York City* campaign in September 2009. The campaign includes TV, radio, print, outdoor, and web banners PSAs.

"We are proud to partner with Commissioner Bruno and OEM to continue to educate New Yorkers and their families on how to prepare for potential emergencies," said Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Ad Council. "By providing New Yorkers with access to interactive preparedness tools and resources we will empower them to not only choose their meeting places early, but show them how easy it is to prepare the necessary emergency supplies before a natural disaster occurs."

Since its launch in September 2009, media outlets have donated more than \$4.9 million in media support.

For more information on the *Ready New York City* campaign, visit [www.readynyc.org](http://www.readynyc.org) or call 311.

-30-

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