



Cochise Health & Social Services

Mary Gomez, Director

"Building A Healthier Future"

*** MEDIA RELEASE ***

Contacts: **Mary Gomez**
Director, Cochise Health and Social Services
Email: mgomez@cochise.az.gov
Phone: 520-432-9404

Ray Falkenberg
Public Information Officer
Email: rfalkenberg@cochise.az.gov
Phone: 520-432-9414

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: *Personal Preparedness Kits Could Help Protect Your Family*

Pre-planning Is Key to Success

Since September is National Preparedness Month, the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program at Cochise Health and Social Services is encouraging everyone in the county to "Build-a-Kit."

A disaster supply kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. The kit should be assembled well in advance of an emergency. Evacuations can occur with just a few moments' notice, and you may need to take essential items with you.

You may need to survive without immediate assistance after an emergency. This means having your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least three days. Police, fire, and other relief personnel will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. Help could arrive in hours, or it could take days, depending on the emergency.

Additionally, basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, and telephones may be cut off for days, or even weeks. Your supplies kit should contain items to help you manage during these outages. Ideally, you should have a kit at home in case you have to shelter in place, and another in your vehicle in the event you must evacuate.

What to Include in an Emergency Supply Kit

A basic emergency supply kit would include the following items:

- Water -- one gallon per person for at least three days
- Food -- at least a three-day supply of non-perishable items, and a can opener
- Battery powered or hand-crank radio (and extra batteries)
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit, including a whistle to signal for help
- Dust masks to help filter contaminated air
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter in place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Local maps

-- more --

Public Programs, Personal Service: www.cochise.az.gov

Email: health@cochise.az.gov

Main: 1415 Melody Lane, Bldg. A, Bisbee, AZ 85603
Benson: 126 W. 5th Street, Benson, AZ 85602
Douglas: 1012 N. G Ave., Douglas, AZ 85607
Sierra Vista: 4115 E. Foothills Dr., Sierra Vista, AZ 85635
Willcox: 450 S. Haskell Ave., Willcox, AZ 85643

Phone: 520-432-9400
Phone: 520-586-8200
Phone: 520-805-5600
Phone: 520-803-3900
Phone: 520-384-7100

Fax: 520-432-9480
Fax: 520-586-2051
Fax: 520-364-5453
Fax: 520-459-8195
Fax: 520-384-0309



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Additional items to consider adding to an emergency supply kit include:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents, such as copies of insurance policies and bank account records
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference materials, such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and sturdy shoes
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper (to be used as a disinfectant or water treatment)
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, paper plates, plastic utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children

Be sure to store and maintain your kits in a cool, dry place that will be easy to get to in an emergency. Store all the items in airtight plastic bags. Keep items you would take if you had to leave your home in one or two containers, such as rolling coolers, trash cans with lids, camping backpacks, or duffel bags.

Rotate stock with your regular supply. Check use-by dates on items such as food, water, medicine, and batteries. Replace items once or twice a year, or as needed.

About National Preparedness Month

On behalf of the County Board of Supervisors, the Cochise Health and Social Services program has participated in National Preparedness Month since its inception and once again encourages all citizens of the county to be prepared in the event of an emergency. Look for weekly media releases throughout the month of September highlighting how you can be better prepared.

For more information contact the Program Director Elizabeth Lueck at elueck@cochise.az.gov. For more information about the Ready Campaign and National Preparedness Month, visit <http://community.fema.gov/connect.ti/READYNPM> or call 1-800-BE-READY, 1-888-SE-LISTO, and TTY 1-800-462-7585. You may also visit www.Ready.gov for more information on emergency preparedness.

About Cochise Health and Social Services

Cochise Health and Social Services promotes health and quality of life for all Cochise County residents through education, service and leadership. For more information, please visit our website at <http://cochise.az.gov/health>. Recent media releases may be accessed at <http://cochise.az.gov/healthnews>.

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