

Department of Homeland Security Releases New Preparedness Resources For Seniors, People With Disabilities And Pet Owners

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The severe weather experienced this summer in parts of the country, and the continuing threat of terrorism, are reminders of how critical it is for all Americans to prepare for emergencies. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's *Ready* Campaign has released three new demonstration videos designed to highlight the specific steps older Americans, individuals with disabilities and special needs, and pet owners should take to prepare for emergencies.

"All Americans have a responsibility to take steps now to be prepared for emergencies whether they are caused by nature or by man," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "These new demonstration videos detail some of the unique steps seniors, people with disabilities and pet owners should take to keep themselves and their families safe and prepared for the unexpected."

The Department of Homeland Security worked with AARP, National Organization on Disability and The Humane Society of the United States to develop these new emergency preparedness resources. The videos, available online at www.ready.gov, remind individuals to get an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan and be informed about the different types of emergencies while considering the unique needs of these individuals, their families and caregivers. The videos recommend seniors include any necessary prescription medications in their emergency supply kits. It encourages Americans with disabilities or special needs to create a personal support network that they can rely on during an emergency. Pet owners are advised to learn which emergency shelters in their area and/or along their evacuation route will allow pets.

The new videos are released in time for National Preparedness Month 2007, a nationwide effort held each September to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies. The goal of National Preparedness Month is to increase public awareness about the importance of family preparedness and to encourage individuals to take action in their homes and schools.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security promotes individual emergency preparedness through the Ready Campaign and Citizen Corps. Ready is a national public service advertising campaign produced by The Advertising Council in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security. The Ready Campaign is designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. Individuals interested in more information about family and business preparedness can

visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY to receive free materials. Citizen Corps brings together community, emergency and government leaders to involve community members in emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery. Through Citizen Corps and its program partners and affiliates, individuals can find training and volunteer opportunities to support first responders in an emergency. Americans can learn more about volunteering by visiting www.CitizenCorps.gov