Prepare and Plan during Emergency Preparedness Month

September is National Preparedness Month, which was founded after 9/11 to increase preparedness in the U.S. National Preparedness Month is a time to reflect and prepare for unexpected emergencies. Peoria City/County Health Department reminds the community that emergencies can happen unexpectedly in communities just like ours, to people just like you, whether here at home or on vacation. Emergencies could be tornados, river floods and flash floods, earthquakes, or even water main breaks and power outages in areas affecting millions of people for days at a time.

Jason Marks, Director of Emergency Management and Preparedness at Peoria City/County Health Department states, “This September, prepare and plan for any event that leaves you for three days without electricity, water service, or access to a supermarket or local services. Police, fire and rescue may not always be able to reach you quickly, especially if trees and power lines are down or if first responders are overwhelmed by demand from an emergency. The most important step you can take is being able to take care of yourself and those in your care during the first hours or days of an emergency.”

To plan ahead, follow these three steps:

1. **Get a Kit:** Keep enough emergency supplies on hand for you and those in your care – water, non-perishable food, first aid, prescriptions, flashlight, battery-powered radio.

2. **Make a Plan:** Have a family meeting to discuss, agree on, and document an emergency plan for the types of disasters that could affect your area. Make sure everyone understands where to go and what to do in case of an emergency. Work together with neighbors, colleagues, and others to build community resilience.

3. **Be Informed:** Check out current preparedness websites like Peoria City/County Health Department to get essential information on specific hazards to your area, local plans for shelter and evacuation, and ways to get information before and during an emergency.

For more information about Public Health Preparedness, making an Emergency Kit, or other important Public Health issues visit our website at [www.pcchd.org](http://www.pcchd.org).

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The Peoria City/County Health Department continues efforts to improve community health in Peoria County with the overarching goal “to increase the number of people who are healthy at every stage of life.”