





**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 19, 2010

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### **Power Outages**

On August 14, 2003 a massive power outage occurred across the Northeastern and Midwestern United States. Nearly 50 million people were affected, most of the passenger rail service in the North-East Corridor was interrupted and the effects on international air travel and global financial markets were widespread. Fortunately, major disasters like that are rare but power outages can be caused by something simple too -- animals can gnaw on wires or construction crews can sever power lines.

Keep a working flashlight (or two) and fresh batteries nearby to light your surroundings or signal for help if you lose power. Another alternative is having 'glow sticks' on hand. Glow sticks don't use batteries or generate any heat. A glow stick is a single-use translucent plastic tube containing isolated substances which when combined make light through a chemical reaction. They are inexpensive, waterproof and reasonably disposable. Look for them at drug stores, camping stores, and dollar stores. Glow sticks are the only light source considered safe for use immediately following a tornado or other catastrophic emergency because they don't cause sparks.

Consider how a power outage would affect you. Do you have special equipment that needs electricity? Vital supplies that need to be heated or refrigerated? Can you get in and out of your building without light or power? Everyone's situation is unique, so assess with your own special needs and plan accordingly.

Along with some glow sticks, add First Aid supplies to your emergency kit: over-the-counter pain relievers, band-aids, sterile gauze pads, tape, small scissors, and antibiotic ointment.

**Resolve to Be Ready in 2010!**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 4, 2010

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### **Even 'Couch Potatoes' Can Resolve to Be Ready**

Movies and television shows can sometimes provide insight and inspiration for emergency preparedness.

May 4<sup>th</sup> is Star Wars Day, so, "May the Fourth" be with you! Consider the many times communication saved the day in **Star Wars**, and the different ways they communicated: from sending R2 D2 as a runner with vital plans, to well organized radio networks during the big space battle, to the valuable multi lingual droid C 3PO who helps people (from literally different worlds) communicate. **Star Wars** also shows the power of organizing for an inspiring cause and triumphing over fear and threat.

**Star Wars** can highlight important lessons. Parents and grandparents seize the teachable moment with your movie loving children or grandchildren. Defeat the "Evil Empire" of fear, avoidance and denial by embracing being prepared!

**If science fiction is not your thing, think about *The Sound of Music*.**

This is a story of an Austrian family (with seven singing children) in the days before the Holocaust. It's a "couch potato preparedness" classic for its sustainability and the sheer number of preparedness lessons.

- Maria is resourceful, making new clothes out of curtains.
- Captain Von Trapp demonstrates using whistles as communication tools.
- He stays aware and informed of the situation, to make good decisions.
- To escape, they make a plan, share it, and adapt it as things change.
- The adults protect the children and the children help each other.
- In crisis, the family finds sanctuary and help from old friends.
- Of course, "*My Favorite Things*" is about thinking positively when bad things happen!

***This family favorite can help you recognize diverse***

***preparedness skills and take action.***

Add to your emergency kit...a roll or two of toilet paper, hand sanitizer, moist towelettes.

**Resolve to Be Ready in 2010!**

As we continue to ***Resolve To Be Ready*** –

It's time to prepare for nature's most violent storm... **tornado**

**Tornado Watch means:**

- Tornadoes are possible.
- Watch the sky and remain alert for approaching storms.
- Tune into an NOAA weather radio or local radio or television for stations.

**Tornado Warning means:**

- A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.
- Take shelter immediately!

### **Taking Shelter Tips**

**At home, work or shopping center:**

- A safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level.
- If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- Do not open windows.

**Trailer or mobile home:**

- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
- Get out immediately and go to the lowest level of a sturdy, nearby building.

**A car or truck:**

- Never try to outrun a tornado in a car or truck.
- Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.

**Outside:**

- Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.
- Do not get under an overpass or bridge because of the potential for flooding.
- Be alert - most fatalities and injuries from tornadoes are caused by flying debris

**A few more items for your Emergency Kit:**

- Cans of your favorite soups and canned fruit/vegetables.
- Don't forget your manual can opener and a bowl and spoon.

## ***Resolve To Be Ready in 2010!***

Thank you,  
Home Care Options Division

## ***April Showers Bring May Flowers – Are You Ready?***

**Floods** are among the most frequent and costly natural disasters in terms of human hardship and economic loss. Most communities have experienced flooding in conjunction with spring thaw, unusually hard rain over several hours, or steady substantial rain over several days.

Floods can roll boulders, tear out trees, and destroy buildings and bridges. Flood waters can reach heights of 10-20 feet and often carry a deadly cargo of debris.

**Flash Floods** are particularly dangerous because they combine the destructive power of a flood with incredible speed and unpredictability.

### **What you can do:**

- Develop an Emergency Plan and know the elevation of your property in relation to nearby streams, rivers and lakes.
- Review insurance policies and consider additional coverage, if necessary.
- Watch for rapidly rising water in nearby streams or rivers.
- Head for higher ground and tune into radio or television for the latest emergency information.
- Don't walk or swim through flood waters.

### **Driving:**

- Never drive through flood water. Avoid already flooded areas and areas subject to sudden flooding.
- If you come upon rapidly rising waters, turn around and find another route. Barricades are put up by local officials to protect people from unsafe roads. Driving around them is foolish and can be a serious risk.
- The depth of water is not always obvious, especially at night. Even large vehicles can be swept away in as little as two feet of water!
- Rapidly rising water may stall the engine, engulf the vehicle and its occupants, and sweep them away.

#### ***Emergency Kit Tip:***

Gather copies of important family documents such as insurance cards, personal identification, and some cash or bank account information in a waterproof container and add to your kit. In emergencies ATMs may not be operational.

**Resolve To Be Ready in 2010!**

**Resolve to Be Ready** Emergency Preparedness Tip:

- Identify the safest place in your home in case of a severe storm or tornado. It may be your basement or an interior room on the first floor, preferably one without windows in case of high winds.
- Now find 2 ways to escape from your home in case of emergency. When away from home always take notice of the location of exits.

**Pet Owners,**

**Remember to plan for your pet's emergency needs:**

- For public health reasons, most emergency shelters cannot accept pets so you will need to plan ahead for safe shelter for your pet. Before an emergency happens, make plans with friends or family to help care for your pet in an emergency or identify motels or hotels in your area which permit pets.
- Add your veterinarian or the local animal shelter to your list of emergency contacts.
- Be sure to prepare an emergency kit for your pet. Suggestions include: pet food, water, medications, veterinary records, cat litter/pan, can opener, food dishes, first aid kit and any other necessary supplies specific to your pet.

Resolve to Be Ready in 2010!

Thank you,  
Home Care Options Division



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** February 23, 2010

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Throughout 2010, the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. is sending emergency planning tips out to our senior centers and the public to help seniors ***Resolve to Be Ready*** for emergencies.

**Senior Emergency Planning Tip:**

It's a regular event and it's ingrained in our consciousness almost as much as the A-B-Cs -- "Spring Forward and Fall Back". This coming weekend, in Ohio, we switch to Daylight Savings Time again! Before you go to bed **Saturday, March 13, 2010** – "Spring Forward" and **set your clock forward one hour.**

Because this happens twice a year, it is also an excellent time to remember to do the following:

- Check the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Check the expiration date on your medication(s).
- Check your fire extinguisher(s) and make sure they are up to date and ready for use.
- Check the expiration dates on food items in your emergency kit.

***March 20th is the first day of Spring...***

While we all welcome the beautiful flowers of the season, we remind seniors to be alert to changing weather conditions and related precautions.

**Watch:** means the conditions exist for a tornado, severe thunderstorm or flood to occur in the area. Dangerous weather can develop quickly. Be alert, watch the sky and tune into a radio or television for further information.

**Warning:** means a tornado has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar in the area or a severe thunderstorm or flash flood will soon begin or is occurring in the area. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property. Take shelter immediately and stay tuned to a radio or television until the warning is lifted.

***Addition to your Emergency Kit:***

***Water:*** at least 1 gallon drinking water per person per day for at least 3 days.

***Hint:*** For a large supply of water for cleaning and sanitation, when an emergency begins, fill your bath tub to the brim if you have one.

**Resolve to Be Ready in 2010!**

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### 1.12.10



January is a great time to make resolutions and/or start something new. In 2010, the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio would like to help seniors **Resolve to Be Ready** for potential emergencies. By doing some simple planning now and throughout the year, 2010 can be easier, safer, and perhaps a little fun. We will be posting tips for seniors on our website every two weeks to help seniors with their new resolution. Here's our first tip for seniors ---

Make a list of emergency contacts. Keep a copy in your purse or wallet near your photo ID.

If you already have an emergency contact list take the time to confirm or update:

- Personal contact information (phones, addresses, emails, etc.)
- Local emergency contacts (for everyday emergencies)
- Out-of-area emergency contacts (for communicating after a major event)
- Special considerations (such as medical needs or allergies)

## **Let's all Resolve to Be Ready in 2010!**

### 1.26.10

Winter can be a beautiful time and many of us enjoy a walk in the sunshine and crisp air, but winter can be challenging and hazardous for older adults and people with disabilities. Isolation can also be a problem.

Here are some helpful winter tips:

- Be alert to changing weather conditions. When in doubt, don't go out!
- Several layers of lightweight clothing will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat.
- Be sure to wear gloves (or mittens) and a hat to prevent the loss of body heat. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs.
- Good boots can give you warmth and stability. Look for lightweight boots with a wide low heel and thick, non-slip soles. Make sure they are well insulated and waterproof.
- Carry a cell phone with you, if you have one.
- Keep your car's gas tank full to keep the fuel line from freezing and keep your windshield washer fluid full.
- Avoid driving during a storm, but if you must -- let someone know your destination, your route, and when you expect to arrive.
- During inclement weather, check on older adult neighbors or those with disabilities.

## Get around safely

- Don't be reluctant to use a cane to help with balance. Have it fitted to the right height for you. When the cane is upside down, the end should be at wrist level.
- Consider an ice pick at the end of your cane (available at most drug stores)
- Cane picks will be slippery on hard surfaces so flip it back when indoors
- If you need further support, use a walker. It gives you 4 extra legs! The cost may be covered by insurance. Ask your doctor.

### 2.9.10

#### **3 Basic Preparedness Steps: Get a Kit, Make a Plan, Be Informed**

Over the next several months, we will share tips for assembling an Emergency Kit. With a flashlight and a whistle you can your own personal alerting and warning system:

**Flashlight** - helps you with more than just finding your way

- Being seen and getting attention
- Seeing in the dark
- Communication device
- Guidance device



**Whistle** – the sound will carry much further than your voice and will last longer, too

- Call for help
- Give a warning
- Remain in communication
- Signaling device



**1-2-3** - are universal signals understood by first responders everywhere

- |          |                                                               |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 = Yes  | Blink flashlight or blow whistle once to answer yes           |
| 2 = No   | Blink flashlight or blow whistle twice to answer no           |
| 3 = Help | Blink flashlight or blow whistle three times if you need help |

### **Resolve to Be Ready in 2010**

**Get a flashlight and whistle for your Emergency Kit  
...Don't forget extra batteries!**

### 2.23.10

**Still Resolving to Be Ready? We hope so. Let's keep it up...**

**3 Basic Preparedness Steps: *Get a Kit*, Make a Plan, Be Informed**

How well you manage during an emergency tomorrow will depend on the planning and preparation you do today. While everyone has different strengths and weaknesses, each of us can take steps to prepare for emergencies. Getting an Emergency Kit is simple to do and it may help you stay safe and healthy in an emergency.

In earlier tips, the Area Office on Aging told you to gather some of your emergency phone numbers and personal information, a whistle and a flashlight – that means you've started to assemble your Emergency Preparedness Kit.

Now you need a storage container. Here are a few suggestions:

- Backpack
- Plastic storage bin with lid
- Small suitcase with wheels

Once you have a storage container you can begin to fill it up with what you might need. First, you can store your personal alert system: a whistle and flashlight (with extra batteries). Then you can add some non-perishable foods, such as, peanut butter, crackers, dried fruit, nuts and granola bars.

We suggest you store your kit near the door so you can ***grab and go*** in an emergency.

**Resolve to Be Ready in 2010!**