

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

PRESS RELEASE

**August 30, 2006
5:30 p.m.**

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BE PREPARED FOR POTENTIAL FLOODING

CHAMBERSBURG, Pa. – As Tropical Storm / Depression Ernesto threatens to bring heavy rains to Pennsylvania, the Franklin County Department of Emergency Services urge all residents and business to prepare now for potential flooding. As part of their continuing recovery efforts in response to the late-June floods, emergency and municipal officials want to encourage individuals, families and businesses to consider their disaster preparedness efforts.

What has officials concerned is that a full recovery from the June flooding has not yet been completed in many areas in Franklin County. Any significant rainfall can only exasperate the recovery process. According to Jerry Flasher, Emergency Services Director. Emergency Planners are very concerned that if we get any significant rainfall in a short period of time it will create another disaster and dangerous situation especially in low lying areas with runoff and especially areas along streams that the banks have been compromised by the June flooding.

The National Weather Service and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency plan to update all Pennsylvania counties on Thursday morning on with the most recent storm information. The Department of Emergency Services will then provide the local municipalities and local emergency planners of what they should prepare for, according to Flasher. In additional press releases will be issued as warranted.

Flasher says he cannot emphasize enough the importance of being prepared. Floods can happen anywhere, at any time, and they can happen fast. To ensure you aren't caught unprepared, here are some actions you can take:

- **Prepare a disaster kit:** A disaster kit should have essential supplies needed to sustain yourself and your family during and after a disaster. The most essential supplies for a kit are water, non-perishable food, a radio, a first aid kit, extra batteries, and unique family needs such as prescription medications and important family documents.
- **Make an emergency plan:** Essential components should include a communication plan, an out-of-town contact, an evacuation plan, a shelter-in-place plan, and knowledge of emergency plans at work, school, and other areas of your community. Keep a list of emergency telephone numbers with you at all times.
- **Stay informed:** Keep informed about all the different types of disasters that could affect your home and community. Remember, some of the things you do to prepare are the same for both natural and man-made disasters. To become more familiar with how to react in an emergency, visit www.ready.gov or call **1-800-BE-READY (1-800-237-3239)**. Both the web site and hotline provide helpful information about disaster preparedness.

- **Document property for insurance:** Take photos of your most valuable possessions to facilitate any insurance claims you make. Save and store receipts for any expensive household items so you have proof of original cost. Make an itemized list of other possessions including books, small kitchen appliances and clothing. The more comprehensive the list, the better. These documents will help you file a complete insurance claim.

In the event of flooding, there are a few steps you should take to make sure you and your family stay safe:

- **Do not** walk through a flooded area. Just six inches of moving water can knock you down.
- **Do not** drive through a flooded area. Two feet of water can lift and move a car, even an SUV. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else during a flood.
- **Keep away** from downed power lines and other electrical wires. Electrocutation is often a major cause of death in floods.
- **Be careful** of animals that have lost their homes during a flood. Animals may seek shelter in your home and aggressively defend themselves.

To learn more about getting your home, family, business, or community ready, call **1-800-BE-READY** or visit www.ready.gov. In addition to general disaster preparedness tips, the website has information specific to different groups such as children and the disabled, and provides links to some local resources. There are also brochures and booklets available that can provide you with more tips on disaster preparedness that are downloadable from the website, or can be mailed to your home or business by ordering through the toll-free number or online.

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