



GET A KIT. GET A PLAN. GET INVOLVED.

**GET+READY**

(612) 871-7676 **REDCROSSTC.ORG**

## "If You Don't Prepare, You Can't Complain"

Minnesotans know pride. We boast of four great seasons, the lakes, the arts, the nightlife and the quality of life. But beneath all the warm and fuzzies, we live in a place that is just not ready. We're not ready for emergencies, big and small, inside our homes and across our great communities. We live in prosperous times, yet we spend more money on disposable things than on life saving.

You would think after suffering from incredible disasters like 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina that Americans and Minnesotans would have stockpiled the reasons to be prepared. You would think that sitting in front of our televisions, reading the newspaper, hearing radio accounts of human suffering, would alter our state of consciousness. It did at those key moments, but for the most part, we've buried those memories and have returned to our state of apathy.

A TIME Magazine story in August 2006 cited our national culture of unpreparedness. "Historically, humans get serious about avoiding disasters only after one has just smacked them across the face. By that logic, 2006 should have been a breakthrough year for rational behavior." That breakthrough will not happen on its own, not from coast to coast, or in the Twin Cities. "91% of Americans live in places at a moderate-to-high risk" of disasters but only 16% are "very well prepared." We all live within this risk. Are you part of the 84% not ready?

Being optimistic is one thing. Living in denial is another. One emergency manager reminded TIME of the four stages of denial. "It won't happen. If it does, it won't happen to me. If it does happen to me, it won't be that bad. If it happens to me and is bad, there's nothing I can do to stop it anyway."

The Twin Cities Red Cross is sounding the siren, whether it's for heart attacks, house fires, storms or pandemic. We've declared 2007 as "The Year to Get Ready." We are providing our hometowns with the tools, the talent and the training to become the best prepared community in the country. We see a Twin Cities where one person in every household is trained to save a life. It's a tremendous goal and we ask everyone to join us. So far dozens of cities are our partners.

If you do nothing else with this article, we urge you to cut out the following. Put it on your fridge, e-mail your friends, talk to loved ones at bedtime.

### **Get a Kit**

Assemble a 3-day supply of water (three gallons per person), a 3-day supply of non-perishable food, manual can opener, utensils, flashlight, battery-powered radio, batteries, first aid kit, clothes and blankets, copies of important documents and emergency contact info sealed in a plastic bag, personal hygiene items, supplies for infants and your pets, prescription medicine, filter face mask and a whistle.

### **Get a Plan**

Make sure every family member has the phone number of an out-of-town contact to call after a disaster, identify evacuation routes from your building, have a meeting place for your family, keep a half tank of gas in your car, know alternative evacuation routes.

### **Get Involved**

Train to save a life through Red Cross CPR and First Aid classes, donate money and blood in advance, become a volunteer now so when a disaster strikes, you won't need time to be trained- you'll be able to help your neighbors immediately.

The Twin Cities Red Cross can help you with all of this and more and most of it is free. Call us now at 612-871-7676 or click on our website [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org). **GET READY!** We are the Twin Cities lifesaving organization, comforting our neighbors and training them to respond to emergencies with confidence.