Preparedness is the shared responsibility of all levels of government, the private and nonprofit sectors, and individual citizens. Individuals and households are at the core of our Nation's preparedness. A community's ability to respond to or recover from a disaster depends on the level of preparedness of every member.

However, a 2009 Citizen Corps National Survey found that 29 percent of Americans have not prepared because they think that emergency responders will help them, and over 60 percent expect to rely on emergency responders in the first 72 hours following a disaster. The reality is that in a complex disaster, first responders and emergency workers may not be able to reach everyone right away. In addition, providers may not be able to restore critical services, such as power, immediately.

The purpose of this initiative is to promote personal and community preparedness discussions with individuals, neighbors and households. These activities are a set of building blocks. You can mix and match the Individual Preparedness Activities based on the amount of time available. Most Individual Preparedness Activities can be completed in approximately fifteen minutes. You should adapt the materials to include critical *local* information, such as information on local hazards, local alerts and warnings, and community response resources and protocols.

Remember, preparedness does not have to be complex or overly time consuming. Rather, it should motivate, empower, and engage the *whole community*.

Choose a Preparedness Activity
Each Individual Preparedness Activity focuses on a hazard: *Active Shooter, Tornado, Wildfire, Hurricane/Flood, Extreme Heat, Pet Preparedness, etc.* It's up to you, the facilitator, to select which Individual Preparedness Activity is most appropriate for your stakeholder group.

Each Individual Preparedness Activity consists of a scenario followed by questions. The participants interact with one another and the facilitator and reach a consensus as to how to implement simple preparedness measures.

Plan Your Program
Here are some suggestions to help you develop your program:

Identify Your Target Audience
This may include co-workers, friends and family members, members of your house of worship, the local Parent-Teacher Association, etc.

Determine Interests and Needs
Now that you've identified which members of the community to work with, consider the following:

- What will motivate these individuals to attend preparedness session(s)?
- What do you think participants will hope to gain or learn?
- Which topics are of most interest to them?

- How much time will individuals want to spend at a session? How likely are they to return if you offered multiple sessions?
- What day, time and location will be best?
- What is the ideal mix of people to help foster networking and sustainability after the session?

a) **Select Presenters**

A facilitator with effective communications skills should be able to conduct most of the sessions. However, it is recommended that individuals with special expertise present these two sessions:

Title	Recommended Presenter
Active Shooter	Law Enforcement Official
Pet Preparedness	Veterinarian and/or Local Animal Shelter Representative

Remember, the local chapter of the American Red Cross and/or the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) are invaluable resources as they are intimately familiar with hazards facing the community.

b) **Prepare for the Individual Preparedness Activity**

The facilitator's preparation and conduct of the session are keys to the effectiveness of this program. Some tips:
- Review each Individual Preparedness Activity thoroughly.
- Be prepared to answer questions and respond to comments that the participants will likely ask while conducting the Individual Preparedness Activity.
- Draft your own notes in the margins to prompt discussion.
- Add personal experiences to help explain the important points.
- Tailor the discussion with information on local hazards, local alerts and warnings, and local community response resources and protocols.
- Rehearse with a small group and ask for suggestions to enhance your delivery.
- Remember to use the following effective facilitation techniques:
  - **Make yourself part of the group**
    Do *not* separate yourself physically from the group by standing behind a podium or a table. Feel free to move around the room while you are speaking.
  - Do *not* read to or lecture the group
    Think back to the last class you attended. If the instructor lectured incessantly, chances are that you tuned out and did not learn much. This package is a guide, not your script. *Flexibility is the key to success*. Modify discussion questions to meet the needs of the group. If you don't like or don't understand a question, change it.
  - Do *not* answer questions if you aren't sure of the answers
    If a participant asks you a question to which you don't know the answer, tell the participant that you don't know and explain that you'll find the answer and get back to the participant.
  - Check for understanding
    Sticking to the agenda is important, but don't move to the next activity before ensuring that the group understands what has already been discussed. You can check understanding by asking for volunteers to summarize concepts and fill in gaps during your transitions.
  - Watch for both verbal and nonverbal responses and clues Use your observations to

keep the session running smoothly.

Do…	Don't…
Eye Contact	**Eye Contact**
• Look at people's eyes. • Continually scan the group with your eyes. • Look at the whole group.	• Avoid eye contact. • Scan the group too rapidly or infrequently.
Body Movement	**Body Movement**
• Position your body so you face most of the people. • Vary your position in the room. • Stand with good posture. • Walk toward people when they speak.	• Talk to your notes, easel or board. • Turn your back to part of the group. • Stand in fixed positions. • Slouch. • Distance yourself from people.
Gestures	**Gestures**
• Use natural and spontaneous gestures. • Smile and be animated.	• Engage in distracting behavior such as looking at your watch, or jingling change.
Voice/Speech	**Voice/Speech**
• Speak loud enough to be heard. • Vary the pace of your presentation. • Slow down for important points. • Use the pause.	• Mumble. • Use "fillers" such as "like" or "um." • Speak in a monotone voice. • Be afraid of pauses.

Ask Questions	**Ask Questions**
• Ask clear, concise questions. • Focus each question on a single issue. • Make sure the participants can answer your questions.	• Ask questions that require two distinct answers. • Answer your own question! Rephrase your question if you don't get an answer.
Listening	**Listening**
• Keep an open mind. • Maintain eye contact and show interest. • Consider the speaker's nonverbal behaviors and tone of voice. • Ask for clarification. • Paraphrase the meaning and feelings being expressed.	• Be judgmental. • Interrupt the speaker. • Begin formulating a rebuttal. • Distort the message based on your own beliefs or thoughts.

Arrange Logistics

Here's a checklist to help you stay organized:

Notifications
- Have all participants and presenters been notified of the time and location? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Has any needed transportation been arranged? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Condition of Room
- Is the training room clean? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Does the room accommodate individuals with disabilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is seating capacity adequate? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is seating arrangement (round tables, conference tables) satisfactory? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Safety
- Are there adequate exits from the room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Are exits clearly marked? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do any hazards exist (e.g., loose wires/cables, narrow aisles, loose carpet, sharp edges on tables, etc.)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Supplies, Materials and Refreshments
- Do you have all needed supporting materials? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Are there sufficient copies of all handout materials? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Are there pens and paper for the participants to take notes? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Are there badges or name tents for the participants? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you have feedback questionnaires for the participants? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you plan to serve refreshments? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Faith-based organizations, libraries, schools, civic associations and government office buildings may have space for hosting the session.

Promote the Event

You'll need to let your target audience know about the preparedness program! Here are some suggestions for getting the word out:
- Email messages to members
- Newsletter articles
- Web, social media or blog postings
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- Local cable television notices

Forming a partnership with local media outlets can be invaluable for promoting your program and recognizing contributions from presenters and others.

Taking photographs of preparedness sessions may be useful for promoting future sessions. Be sure to get signed photo releases from individuals *before* publishing the photographs.

Get Feedback

At the end of your session, you may want to get feedback from your participants. Here are some sample questions you can ask:

- What was the most effective portion of the presentation?
- How could we improve this presentation?
- Following this presentation, what preparedness actions do you plan to take?
- What additional preparedness information would be helpful?

Acknowledge Accomplishments

Following your session, reinforce the value of the training:

- Thank-you notes: Make sure to send thank-you notes to individuals and organizations who helped with presentations or provided sponsorship.
- Follow up: Contact participants to see if they are implementing preparedness actions.
- Certificates: Present certificates to participants who complete the entire program.
- Articles or postings: Feature preparedness accomplishments in articles or web postings to reinforce actions and encourage others.

Share Additional Resources

As supplements to the resources listed in the Individual Preparedness Activities themselves, you may also want to share the following resources with your group:

➢ ***The Ready Campaign***
   http://www.Ready.gov
- Ready Family Emergency Plans
- Hazard-Specific Information
- Family Communications Plan and Wallet Card
- Printer-Friendly Supplies

➢ ***Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)***
   https://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams
   CERT educates individuals about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. Using training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT volunteers can assist others in their community following a disaster when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT volunteers are also encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking an active role in emergency preparedness projects.

➢ ***National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)***
   https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/about/nfip_partnership.jsp
   The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is a federal program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which works closely with more than 80 private insurance companies to offer flood insurance to homeowners, renters and business owners. In order to qualify for flood insurance, the home or business must be in a community that has joined the NFIP and agreed to enforce sound floodplain

management standards.

NFIP flood insurance can be purchased through private property and casualty insurance agents. Rates are set nationally and do not differ from company to company or agent to agent. These rates depend on many factors, which include the date and type of construction of your home, along with your building's level of risk.

- ➢ ***Weather-Related Information***
  Weather Information http://www.weather.gov

  NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/streamaudio.htm

  National Hurricane Center (NHC) http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/

- ➢ ***Keeping Food Safe During an Emergency***
  http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/emergency-preparedness/keeping-food-safe-during-an-emergency/ct_index

  Did you know that a flood, fire, national disaster, or the loss of power from high winds, snow or ice could jeopardize the safety of your food? Learn how to determine if food is safe and how to keep food safe will help minimize the potential loss of food and reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

- ➢ ***Fire Safety***
  U.S. Fire Administration
  https://www.usfa.fema.gov/about/index.html

  An entity of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency, the mission of the U.S. Fire Administration is to provide national leadership to foster a solid foundation for our fire and emergency services stakeholders in prevention, preparedness and response.

  National Fire Protection Association
  http://www.nfpa.org/overview

  The National Fire Protection Association is a global nonprofit organization, established in 1896, devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards.