



## Putnam County Medical Reserve Corps Newsletter: November 2022

### Ongoing Training:

- Training
  - QPR: Question, Persuade & Refer (instructions are attached)
    - We strongly urge you to take part in the QPR training course to learn how to help your community
    - Email your certificate to [stacey.gussak@putnamcountyny.gov](mailto:stacey.gussak@putnamcountyny.gov) upon completion

### PCDOH in the News:

- Emergency Preparedness Presentation by Connie Bueti
  - See the attached presentation and flyers to learn how you can best prepare in case of an emergency
- All the Lonely People documentary
  - Over 100 attendees
  - See attached press release on the successful event

### General Information from the Administration for Strategic Preparedness & Response:

“The updated vaccine is our best protection against the circulating variants we’re fighting right now, and we strongly recommend everyone have the protection this updated vaccine provides. Please use the [#VaxUpAmerica](#) hashtag to connect to other outreach happening across the country ahead of the winter.

President Biden has emphasized that getting Americans their updated COVID-19 vaccine and managing this winter will require everyone—community organizations, doctors, and state, local, education, business, and faith leaders—to do their part. We have the tools we need to protect people, and this winter doesn’t have to be like the last two. We need your help getting information about these updated vaccines into every community around the country.”

The MRC is a critical resource of for the COVID-19 response effort. With volunteering at testing and vaccination sites, your efforts are helping save lives. Thank you!



Happy Thanksgiving! The Putnam County Department of Health is thankful for all our volunteers!

Follow the MRC Facebook page to stay up to date: <https://www.facebook.com/PutnamMRC>



Connie Bueti, MPH

Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

# *Readiness Tips*

Follow-Up from  
National Preparedness Month  
in September

# Today's Objectives

- To Discuss:
  - How to be informed and know the risks
- To Take Action Steps to Prepare:
  - How to make an Emergency Plan
  - How to make an Emergency Kit





# Putnam County Agencies and Emergency Response Roles

- Local organizations work to prevent emergencies from happening and prepare to respond if something does occur
  - At the onset, emergencies are handled locally
- Agencies:
  - Identify hazards and risks
  - Stockpile equipment and supplies
  - Plan and coordinate with other organizations to ensure a quick and effective response, (e.g., aid in recovery efforts, and clearing roads)

# Putnam County Agencies and Emergency Response Roles (cont'd)

- Department of Health: Point of Dispensing (PODs) (COVID-19), planning, education (social media)
- Bureau of Emergency Services: Coordinates agency response/ s (through Emergency Operations Center)
- Sheriff's Department: Security
- Local Fire, Police, EMS: Response entities

# The Health Department's Role in Preparedness

- Coordinate with partner agencies
- Co-Chair Disaster Preparedness Task Force meetings
- Write Emergency Preparedness plans and policies, etc. (as required by the NYS Dept. of Health) to serve as templates for response
  - Plan and participate in exercises, drills and real-world (pandemic) events

# Personal Preparedness

- Before an event:
  - Know the risks
  - Develop a plan
  - Assemble a kit
- During an event:
  - Put your plans into action
  - Help others
  - Follow the instructions of those in charge
- After an event:
  - Begin the recovery process
  - Take steps to prevent or reduce future loss

## KNOW YOUR RISKS

Prepare for the risks where you live.

Visit [fema.gov](https://fema.gov) or download the FEMA app to receive national weather alerts

## MAKE A PLAN

Prepare yourself and your family before disaster strikes

Visit [ready.gov/plan](https://ready.gov/plan) and fill out an emergency plan

## TAKE ACTION

Be ready to respond to and recover from a disaster

GATHER SUPPLIES - UNDERSTAND INSURANCE COVERAGE - SECURE IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS



# Why Must We Prepare?

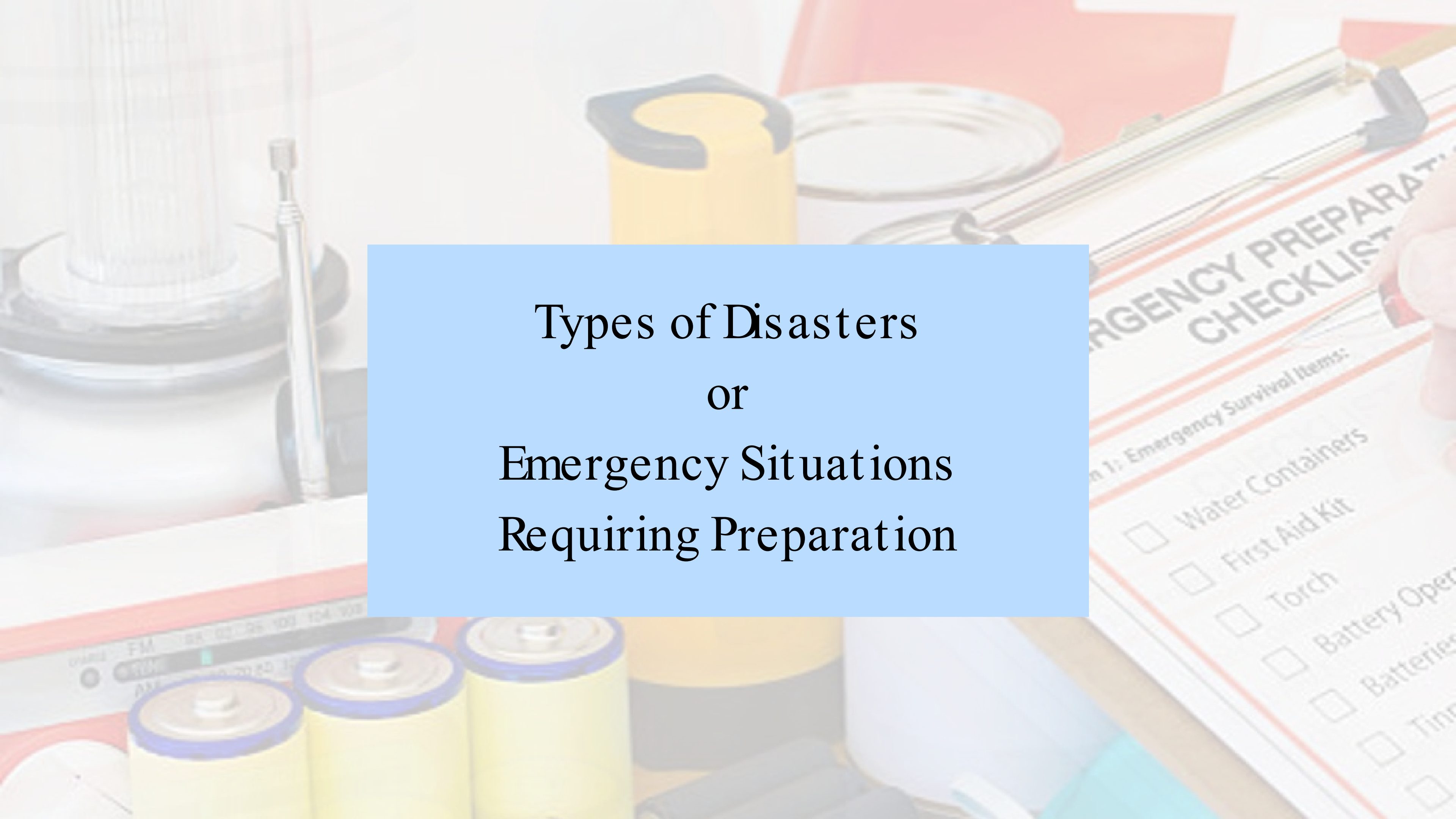
- Local officials will respond after an event, but may not be able to reach everyone right away
- That's why it's critical to be prepared to be on your own for a minimum of 3 days in the event of an emergency
- This may mean providing your own shelter, food, water, first-aid, sanitation and other basic needs





# Preparing is Key!

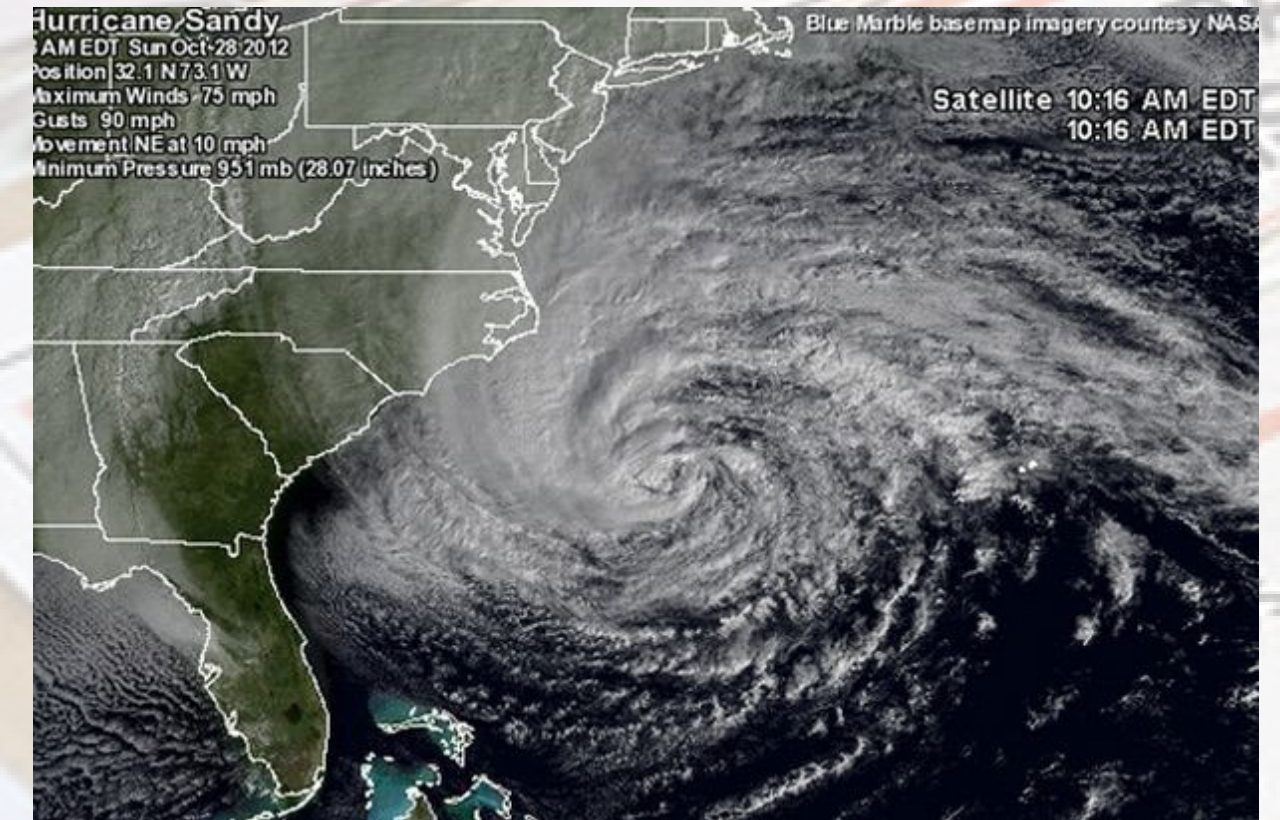
- Disasters can strike without warning. So even though we cannot control a disaster, we can control how we respond and lessen the impact by reducing fear and anxiety
- Protecting ourselves/ family requires pre-planning, discussions, and action steps

The background image is a collage of emergency supplies. On the left, there's a flashlight with a clear lens and a silver body. Below it, several yellow and blue batteries are visible. In the center, there's a yellow container, possibly for first aid or supplies. On the right, a hand is holding a red pen, writing on a checklist titled 'EMERGENCY PREPARATION CHECKLIST'. The checklist has a section for 'Emergency Survival Items' with checkboxes for 'Water Containers', 'First Aid Kit', 'Torch', 'Battery Operated', and 'Batteries'.

# Types of Disasters or Emergency Situations Requiring Preparation

# Natural Hazards

- Flooding
- Hurricanes
- Tornados
- Winter Storms and Extreme Cold
- Fires and Extreme Heat



- As the weather grows colder here in the Northeast, we move from Hurricane season into Blizzard season
  - Think about how to prepare our homes for weather events that leave us without electricity, food and water



# Other Potential Emergency Situations

- Biological threats (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic)
- Chemical Threats/ Incidents, Hazardous Materials spills
- Radiologic events





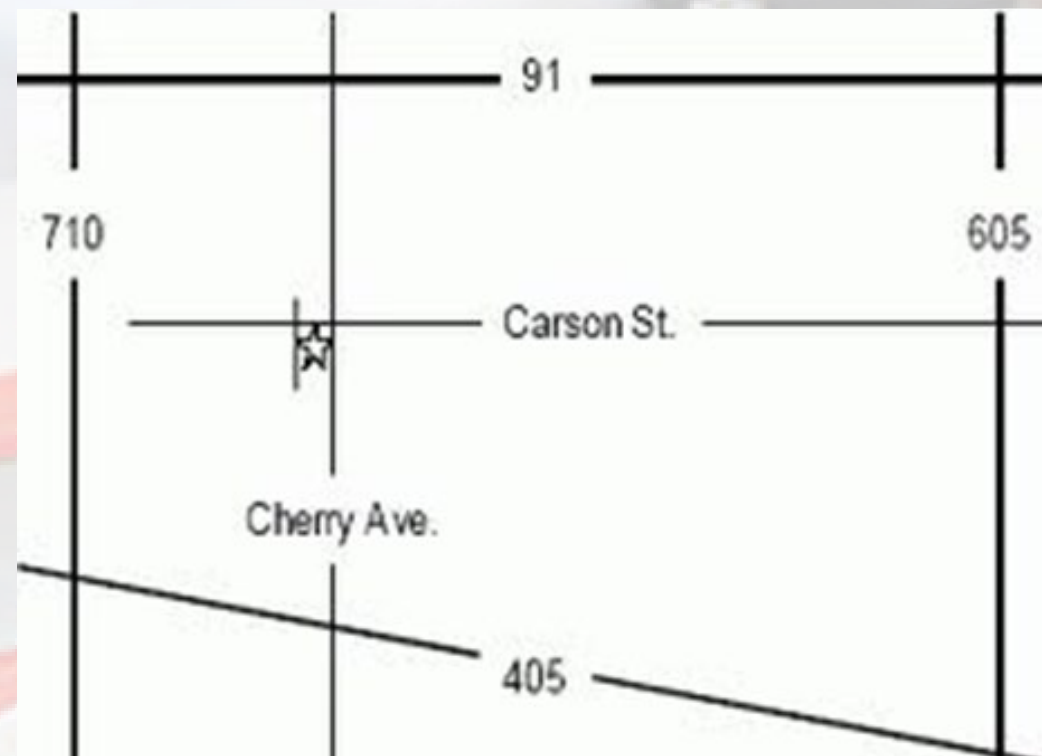
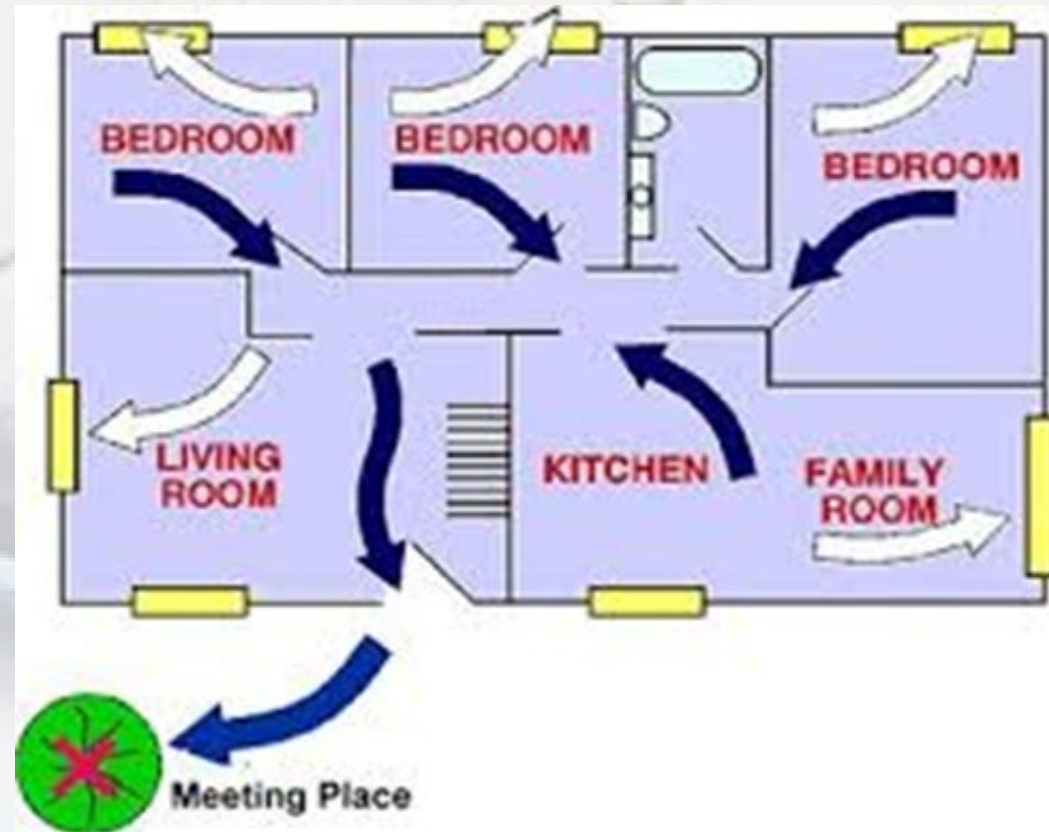
# What You Can Do To Start

- Be informed about the types of emergencies that can occur and prepare for the risks where you live
- Make an Emergency Plan for you and your family in case a disaster strikes
- Get an Emergency Kit that is tailored to meet the needs of you and your family for a minimum of 3 days

# Make an Emergency Plan

- Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan on how you will contact each other
  - Consider asking a relative or friend who lives outside of your area to be your family contact
  - Post emergency contact numbers & program them in your phones
- Make a record of your personal property and take photos

# Make an Emergency Plan (cont'd)



- Plan where your family will meet. Meeting places should be locations near your home (in case of a fire) and outside of your immediate neighborhood (in case you need to evacuate)

## Make an Emergency Plan (cont'd)

- Obtain copies of insurance and vital records
  - Keep family records in a waterproof and fireproof safe
  - Keep a small amount of cash in a safe place to access quickly in case of evacuation
- Take a basic First Aid Course and CPR class
- Learn how to use a fire extinguisher



# Make an Emergency Plan (cont'd)

- Prepare to evacuate:
  - Your home - review escape routes with your family and practice them
  - The area (pre-determined meeting spot)
    - Take your Go-Kit
- Make plans for your pets:
  - Only service animals may be permitted in public shelters



# Make an Emergency Supply Kit

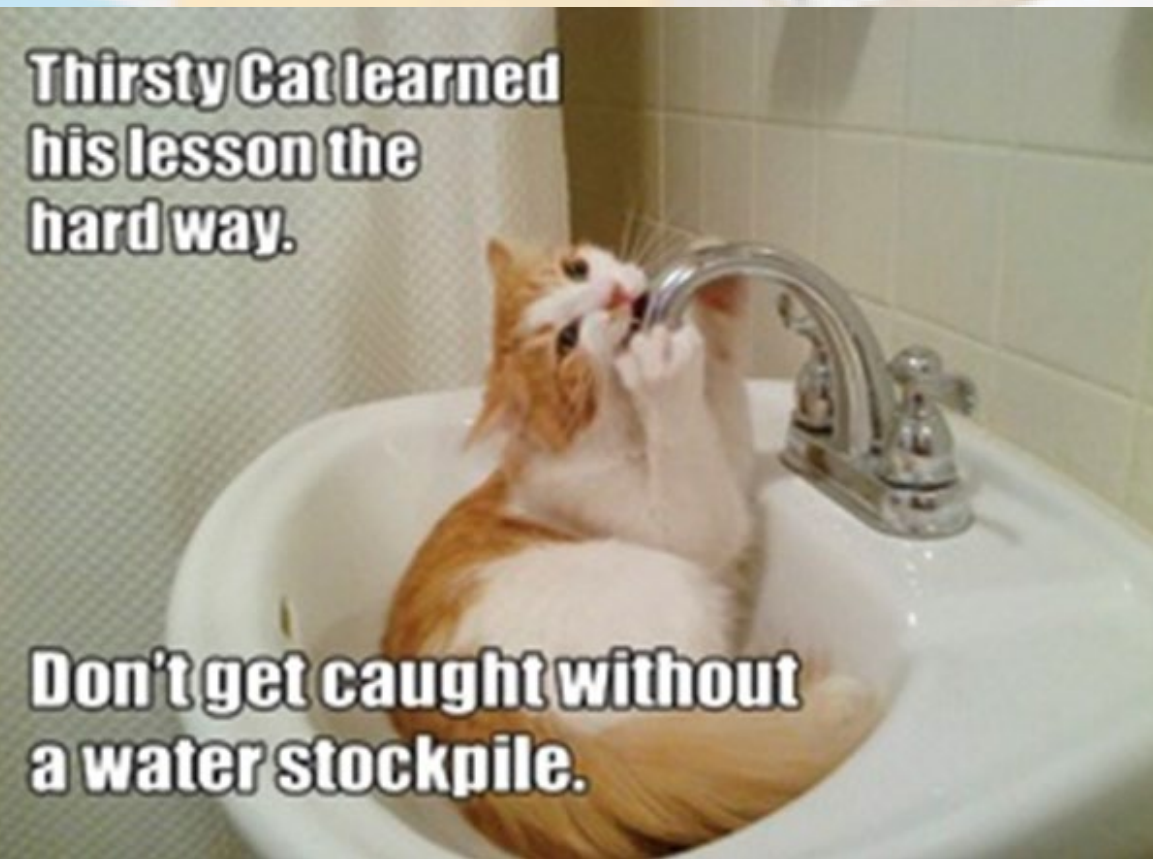
- An Emergency Supply Kit is a collection of basic items that individuals and/ or household members may need in the event of a disaster. Many items may be found around your home, such as flashlights and batteries, garbage bags, etc.
- Keep the kit in a designated place. Make sure everyone knows where the kit is kept



# Make an Emergency Supply Kit - What to Include

W  
A  
T  
E  
R

At least 1 gallon per person for at least 3 days, for drinking and sanitation



Note: Unopened (sealed) water bottles should be good for at least 1 year. After a bottle is opened, the water will begin to grow bacteria in less than a month

# Make an Emergency Supply Kit - What to Include

F  
O  
O  
D

At least a 3-day supply of nonperishable food

- Ready-to-eat canned or dried meats/ tuna, fruits, juices and vegetables. High energy foods such as peanut butter, cereals, breakfast bars, etc.
- Add a can opener, scissors/ knife and disposable utensils

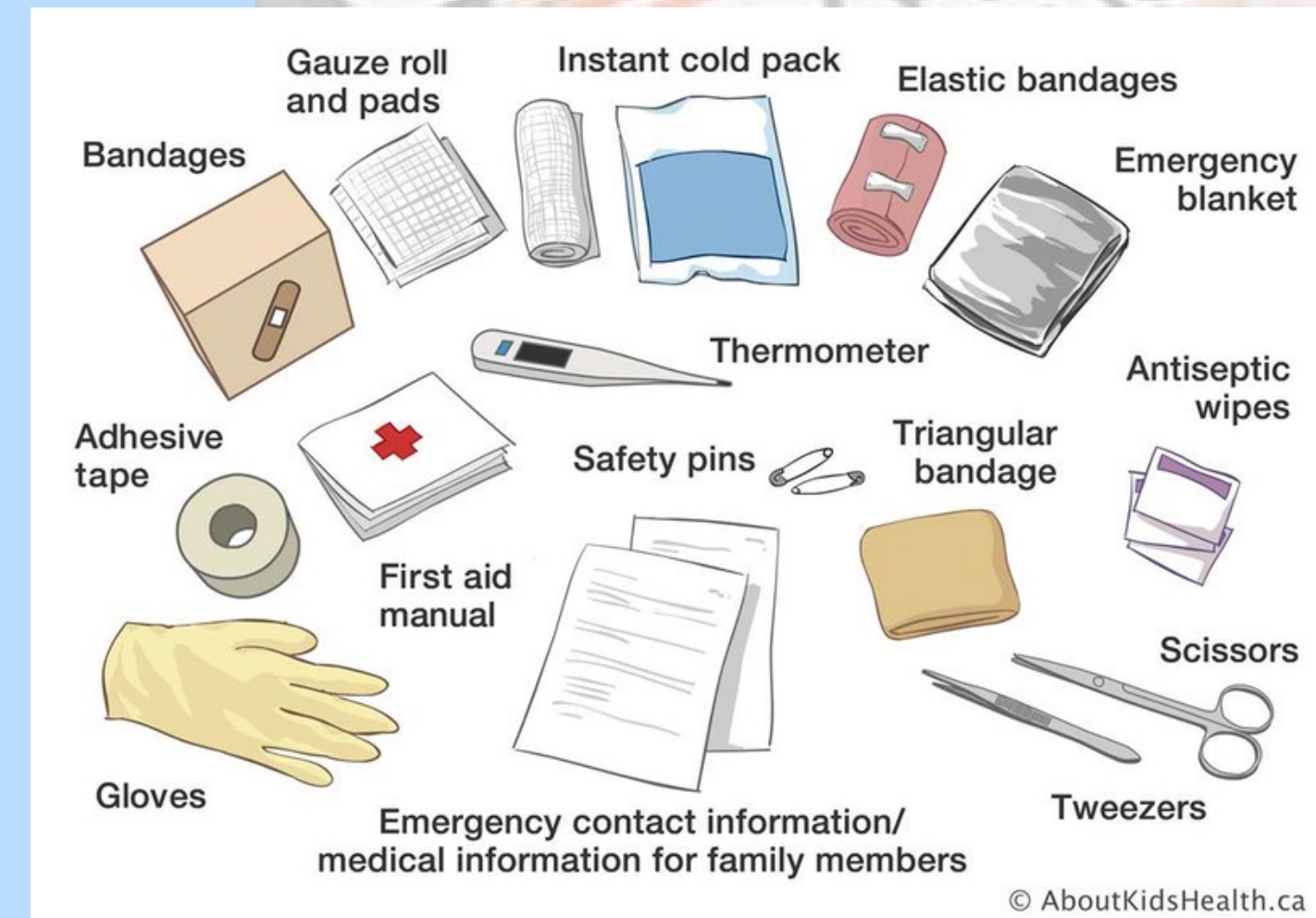
\*Note:—Make sure to include food for infants, those on special diets and your pets



# Make an Emergency Supply Kit - What to Include

Look for items such as

- Bandages
- Cotton washcloths
- Cleaning agent/ soap
- Hydrogen peroxide & isopropyl alcohol
- Antibiotic ointment
- Aspirin/ aspirin substitute
- Include a list of prescription medications
- Sanitation and hygiene items
  - moist towelettes and toilet paper, diapers, etc.



# Make an Emergency Supply Kit - What to Include

- Radio
  - Either battery-powered or hand crank flashlight
- Flashlight
- Batteries and chargers
- Extra clothing
- A whistle
- A wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Copies of credit and identification cards, family records, phone numbers, medications, etc.,



Don't forget your pet(s)!

GENERAL



# Maintaining Your Kit

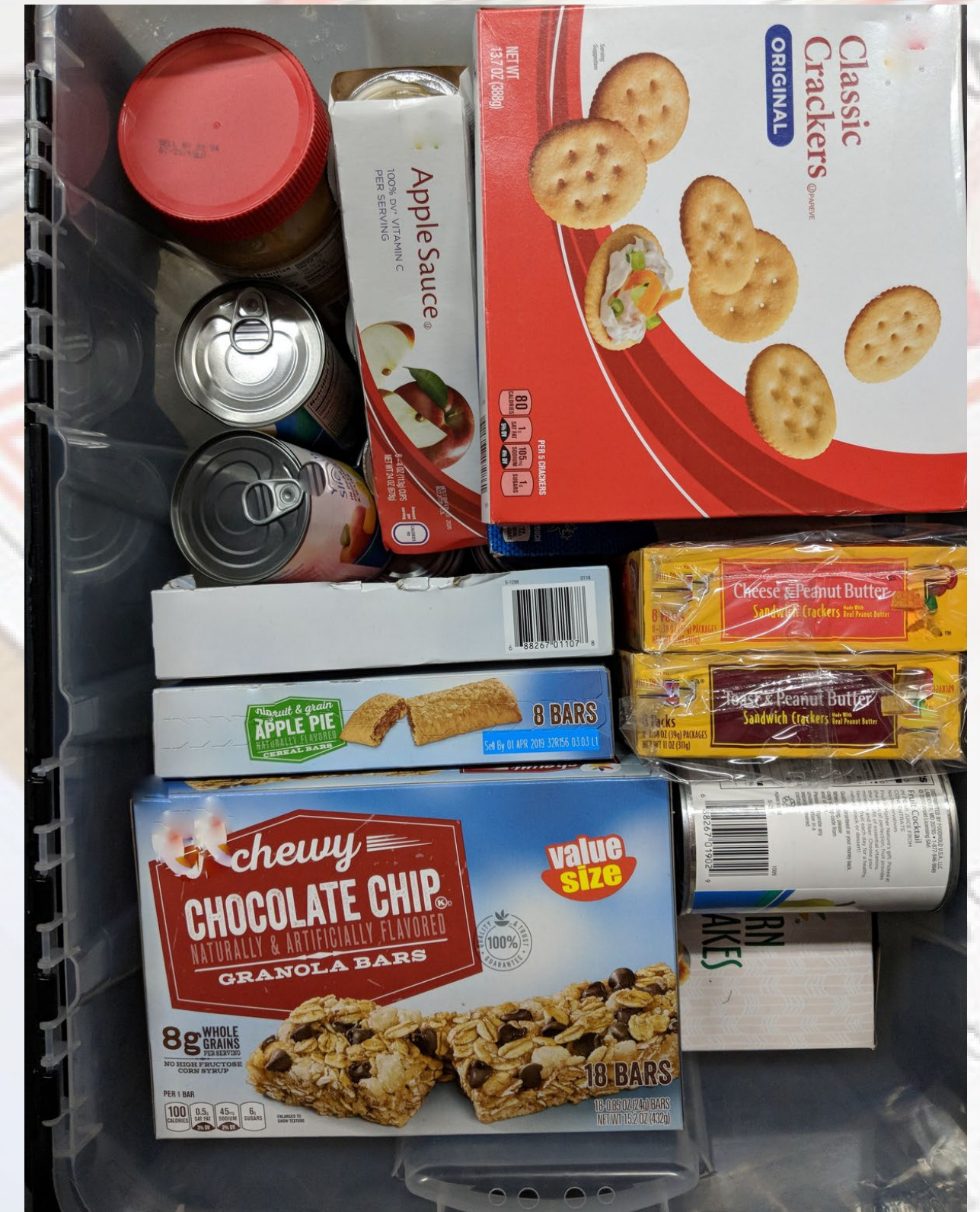
- Keep canned foods in a dry place where the temperature is cool
- Store boxed food in a tightly closed plastic (or metal) container to extend shelf life
- Use foods before they go bad
  - Replace with fresh supplies
  - Place new items at the back and older ones in the front



“Set Your Clocks, Check Your Stocks” - Check the expiration date of items in your kit spring/ fall



# PCDOH Staff Emergency Supply Kits





# Make a Grab & Go Bag

- Copies of important documents
- Extra set of house/ car keys
- Bottled water & non-perishable food (granola bars)
- Flashlight
- Battery operated radio

- A list of medications you/ family members take
- First aid kit
- Contact & meeting place info
- Mylar blanket, light clothing



# If You Have To Shelter in Place

- Choose a room for your shelter, close windows, take your emergency kit, and bring your family and pets inside
- Listen for news and instructions

How will I know when to Shelter in Place?

- “Telephone automated system” for sending recorded messages, known as reverse 9-1-1
- Emergency Alert System broadcasts on radio or TV
- Outdoor warning sirens
- News media sources, radio, TV, etc.
- Residential route alerting – messages announced from vehicles, message boards





# If You Have To Evacuate

- Evacuate immediately if told to do so
  - Wear protective clothing/ sturdy shoes
  - Lock your home
  - Use authorized travel routes
- Notify your family contact
- Take your Grab &Go Bag



## To-Do Items

- Program an ‘ICE’ (In Case of Emergency) number in your cell phone.
  - If you or a family member is injured, emergency workers can use that number to contact family members
- Create text message family groups - texts may get through when phone calls do not

### **NY-Alert**

**Up-to-the-minute info sent straight to your device.**

Customized alerts to your area, including:

✓ **Weather;**

✓ **Traffic; and**

✓ **Missing persons;**

✓ **More.**

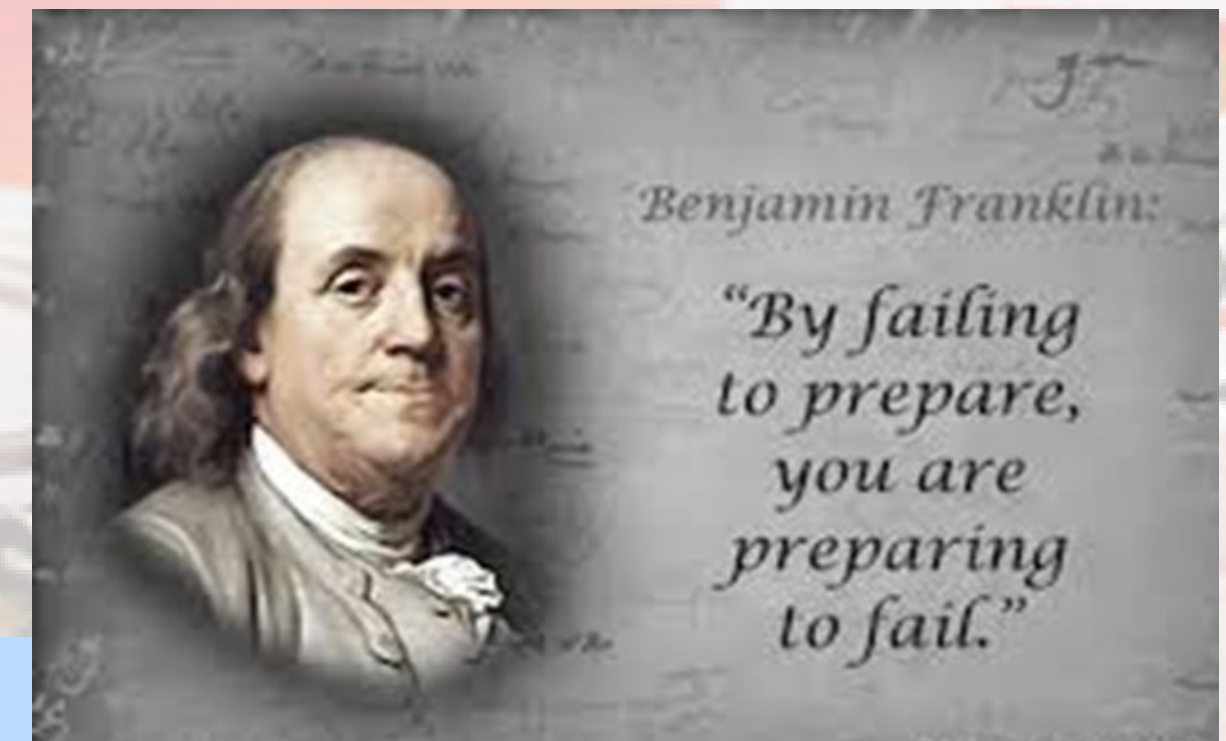
**Sign up at: [alert.ny.gov](https://alert.ny.gov)**

# Coping with Disaster

- Everyone who sees or experiences a disaster is affected by it in some way and has different needs and different ways of coping
- It is normal to feel anxious about your own safety and that of your family and friends
  - Grief and anger are normal reactions to an abnormal event
- Talk with someone about your feelings
- Accepting help from community programs and resources (e.g., counselors) is healthy
- Avoid exposure to disaster coverage by the media
- Be patient: recovery takes time
- Get back to a daily routine as soon as you can
- Take care of your physical health



## In Summary...



- Be Informed about the risks in your area
- Prepare contact info and communication plan
- Prepare an Emergency Supply Kit in case of power outages
- Prepare a Grab and Go Bag if you need to quickly leave your home
- Join the Putnam County Medical Reserve Corps

# Contact Information

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Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

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MARYELLEN ODELL  
County Executive

MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM  
Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Michael Cunningham, Office for Senior Resources  
845-808-1700

## **Over 100 Hudson Valley Residents Attend Film's Premiere: *Loneliness and Resilience Take Centerstage***

CARMEL, NY--Last week, more than 60 Putnam residents gathered in Carmel and dozens more watched remotely from the Poughkeepsie Public Library to view an inspiring documentary “All The Lonely People.” Participants from both locations stayed on afterwards to talk with the filmmakers Joseph Applebaum and Stu Maddox. They headlined the panel discussion in the Putnam County auditorium at the Bureau of Emergency Services and answered questions about how their film came to be and what changes they hope it will launch. It was part of two-month, 20-county tour in New York State for their film, which was created to spur social change.

Loneliness and social isolation have been the topic of health research for decades and surgeon general Dr. Vivek Murthy began calling it an epidemic more than two years before the pandemic began. The film was also well into production before the world encountered COVID, the filmmakers explained. The film’s urgency grew of course, as it tells the story of how for the past two years, a handful of people overcame crippling social isolation and loneliness with breathtaking stories of resilience. Despite the film’s poignancy, in introducing the film the creators expressed hope that the discussions afterwards would be as beneficial as the film itself.

Loneliness is a natural part of the human experience, explained Eric Toth, who was part of the panel discussion. Mr. Toth is executive director of CoveCare, a Putnam County mental health and addiction counseling services group. When loneliness is chronic and debilitating, it becomes problematic, often cited as being as detrimental to one’s health as obesity or smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Loneliness should also be viewed through the lens of health equity. Certain populations including LGBTQ populations, and both youth and the elderly are at higher risk for serious loneliness that affects health and quality of life.



Michael Cunningham, director of the Putnam County Office for Senior Resources, who was instrumental in bringing the film to Putnam, and Shanna Siegel, supervising public health educator at the Putnam County Department of Health, also participated in the discussions. Mr. Cunningham pointed out that how much has changed in our way of life in the last two to three generations and this has resulted in many struggling with loneliness, made that much more critical by COVID.

Despite the challenge and inherent sadness of the pandemic, the film portrayed the clear call of resilience. Numerous “loneliness life hacks” appeared throughout the film such as connecting with nature or expressing gratitude, all of which have social research and history of success to back them up. A question from the Poughkeepsie audience asked about low-cost interventions that local governments could easily implement. One suggestion touted in the discussions was the “chat bench,” which offers a seat to someone who is open to a conversation from a passerby. Another mentioned by Shanna Siegel described a multigenerational program “seniors helping seniors” that put seniors seeking online COVID vaccine registration in touch with tech-savvy high school seniors who helped them register.

Many things can cause loneliness and while it may be different for individuals, many experiences commonly affect people. For more information on these factors and to see a list of all twelve “loneliness life hacks,” visit the website of the production company the Clowder Group, at <https://www.allthelonelypeoplefilm.com/>.

The Putnam County Office for Senior Resources serves the seniors of Putnam County, providing senior center programs, nutritious lunches, transportation, home-delivered meals, recreation, and other services that address the social determinants of health and support seniors living at home as independently as possible.

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