



**American
Red Cross**
Capital Area Chapter

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release
NEWS RELEASE

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As We Prepare for Hurricanes, the American Red Cross is Here to Help

Now is the Time to Have a Plan, Get a Kit, Be Prepared

Tallahassee, FL –As the 2011 Hurricane season approaches, our community has the chance right now to take some simple steps that can save lives if we are threatened this year by a hurricane. The National Hurricane Center has forecasted an above average hurricane season with an expected 15 named storms. The Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross wants residents in the Big Bend Area to Have a Plan, Get a Kit, and Be Prepared.

The Chapter and local Emergency Managers will kick-off the upcoming Hurricane Season with a press conference May 27, at 10 a.m., to announce the distribution of Hurricane Survival Guides. The survival guides will be distributed in the Tallahassee Democrat May 29, and will also be distributed in other local newspapers in the Big Bend.

“The Capital Area Chapter urges every household to make a plan,” said Dan Samborn, the Chapter’s CEO. “We want to arm residents with the necessary information they need to take action in the event of a hurricane. The best defense against storms is being prepared.”

Hurricanes have lasting effects on both people and property and our region is particularly at risk each year. Taking a few moments to discuss these simple, common-sense preparedness steps with your family can save your life and the lives of the ones you love:

- Create and practice a Hurricane Plan:** Talk to members of your household and create an evacuation plan. Planning and practicing your evacuation plan minimizes confusion and fear during the event. Learn about your community’s hurricane response plan. Plan routes to local shelters, register family members with special medical needs as required and make plans for your pets to be cared for. Evacuate if advised by authorities. Be careful to avoid flooded roads and washed out bridges.

•**Assemble an Emergency Preparedness Kit:** Kits should contain a first aid kit and essential medications, canned food and manual can opener, bottled water, flashlights and a battery-powered radio with extra batteries and other emergency items for the whole family.

•**Prepare your Home:** Make trees more wind resistant by removing diseased and damaged limbs, and then strategically removing branches so that wind can blow through. Bring in anything that can be picked up by the wind (bicycles, lawn furniture, outdoor decorations, trash cans, hanging plants, etc). Close windows, doors and hurricane shutters. If you do not have hurricane shutters, close and board up all windows and doors with plywood. Turn the refrigerator and freezer to the coldest settings and keep them closed as much as possible so that food will last longer if the power goes out. Turn off propane tanks and unplug small appliances.

•**Heed Hurricane Warnings:** Listen to your local radio and TV stations for updated storm information. A Hurricane WATCH means there are threats of hurricane conditions within 48 hours. Review your hurricane plans, keep informed and be ready to act if a warning is issued. A Hurricane Warning means hurricane conditions are expected within 36 hours. Complete your storm preparations and leave the area if directed to do so by authorities.

The Atlantic Hurricane season begins June 1, and last through November 30. By knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take, you can reduce the effects of a hurricane disaster. Being prepared can reduce fear, anxiety, and losses that accompany disasters. Communities, families, and individuals should know what to do in the event of a hurricane and where to seek shelter during a hurricane or any disaster. They should be ready to evacuate their homes and take refuge in shelters and know how to care for their basic medical needs.