



# DERT INFORMER

Downtown Dallas, Inc.

SPECIAL PREPAREDNESS EDITION

SEPTEMBER 2016

## September is National Preparedness Month

Established in 2004 by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Preparedness Month encourages everyone to prepare for all emergencies. Though many National Preparedness Month themes are geared toward individuals and families, businesses and organizations need to have plans in place for dealing with disaster. The better prepared an organization is before an event, the quicker they are to recover and resume operations.

## September Chosen for Two Main Reasons

- In recognition of the tragic events on September 11, 2001.
- September is the height of hurricane season in the Atlantic.

Preparedness is a concept that many realize is important, but isn't always implemented. Either no one has a clear idea where to begin, or they believe preparedness is too difficult to achieve. That's where National Preparedness Month is vital. By creating easy to understand themes like, "Don't Wait. Communicate." and encouraging activities, preparedness becomes something more approachable whether for a family or an international company.

Ready.gov/September provides tips on plans and preparedness for individuals, but FEMA also has information specifically for businesses and organizations to cover all elements of preparedness. DallasEmergencyManagement.com can help develop plans and processes.

## Create a Three-Step Process

- Plans to stay in business.
- Plans to communicate with employees, vendors, and customers.
- Plans to protect your investment.

The City of Dallas Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is an active participant in National Preparedness Month. OEM will host a family-friendly event on Saturday, September 24th, from 11am—3pm to bring residents together with businesses and agencies with a preparedness element. We also work with organizations to present and promote emergency preparedness, so together we're all ready for anything.



*"Preparation through education is less costly than learning through tragedy."*

*- Max Mayfield, Director National Hurricane Center*

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## Do You Have a Plan?

# Do You Have a Plan?

Every facility and organization should have an emergency plan to cover the hazards common to our area. If your facility doesn't have plans in place, or hasn't updated plans in a while, now is the time to build or revise those plans.

## Key Elements for Emergency Plans

- Review local hazards. These can be natural or man-made threats. A list of hazards the City of Dallas identifies is found on [www.dallasemergencymanagement.com](http://www.dallasemergencymanagement.com) under Get Informed.
- Know your resources and capabilities. Can you evacuate everyone effectively? Have you taken access and functional needs into account? FEMA has resources available on Ready.gov.
- Work with city first responders by filling out a pre-planning incident plan. Having this information available in DFR Digital Sandbox can help reduce loss of life and property damage.
- Have a schedule for practicing your plans so you can update and revise them as gaps and changes are identified.
- Training and exercise are important parts of preparedness and planning. OEM and DERT offer resources on the [www.dallasemergencymanagement.com](http://www.dallasemergencymanagement.com) website.

## Communicate the Plans

Make sure every person in your facility or organization knows what the emergency plans are and where they're housed. Make sure to involve not only key personnel, but also designate backups to those people and involve them at every level. Communication is key to preparedness and recovery.

## Don't Wait. Communicate.

The theme for National Preparedness Month for the second year is *Don't Wait. Communicate.* Though many aspects of National Preparedness Month are geared toward families, it's just as important—or even more so—for businesses and buildings to be involved.

National Preparedness Month is a reminder for individuals and organizations that disasters are not IF but WHEN. Everyone needs to be ready. Organizations across the board need to know potential hazards, have plans to respond to them, and practice those plans.



Plans to ensure safety should be a priority. Has your facility identified shelter areas in case of severe weather? Do you have an evacuation plan that also includes those with functional and access needs? Have you practiced these plans?

Preparedness begins now. By having emergency preparedness plans in place and active, organizations are able to respond and recover faster and more effectively, allowing them to get back to business.

## Communication is Key!

Do you have a way to communicate with your employees in case of emergency? Create a way to get information to all your employees or residents to inform them of emergencies or relay instructions.

This plan can be as simple as a phone tree or social media group. Some buildings have notification software or other alert systems.

DERT and OEM operate systems to notify groups within the CBD in case of emergency. Check with your facility managers and security directors on how your building sends out notifications.

OEM also recommends residents and businesses have multiple ways to get emergency notifications, including signing up with [www.DallasALERT.com](http://www.DallasALERT.com) to receive notifications when City emergencies occur. Check the website: [www.DallasEmergencyManagement.com](http://www.DallasEmergencyManagement.com) for more information on how to receive warnings.



Dallas Fire Rescue Vehicles

## Preparedness Begins With Pre-Incident Planning

Preparedness begins with planning. National Preparedness Month is an excellent time to check or develop emergency plans for your building. The first step in planning is information.

First responders need information to effectively work an incident. In reality, police and fire departments have little to no information on the buildings in their areas, and the Central Business District is no exception. By having details on buildings, emergency responders can quickly and safely stabilize the facility and the incident.

Information such as floor plans, utility shut-offs, knock boxes, and other vital features of downtown facilities make preserving life-safety and property more likely. This information is added to a cloud-based database, Digital Sandbox, accessible to both Dallas Police and Dallas Fire-Rescue. Responders are then better able to mitigate further damage.

Building managers and/or security directors are encouraged to fill out the Pre-Incident Planning form in a fillable PDF format. Take the time to complete the form. Schedule a time on a regular basis to review the form and update it with any changes such as technology upgrades, security updates, or renovations. Preparing now, before the incident, allows your building to respond and recover faster when an emergency occurs.

This form is available online through the Office of Emergency Management website under the DERT CBD tab under Get Involved. Save and return forms to Chief Tami Kayea at [tami.kayea@dallascityhall.com](mailto:tami.kayea@dallascityhall.com).

## Training Links—Weather Links—Helpful Hints—Other Resources

### —Training Links—

<http://www.preparingtexas.org>

<http://www.fema.gov>

<http://www.nctog.org/ep/training>

### —Weather Links—

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/fwd>

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/fwd/radio.html>

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/fwd/skywarn.html>

### —Other Resources—

<http://www.knowwhat2do.com>

<http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit>

<http://www.dallasalert.org>

<http://www.dallascert.com>

<http://www.domesticpreparedness.com>

### —Helpful Hints—

Emergency supplies to keep handy:

- Flashlights with extra batteries
- First Aid kit
- Food/water for employees and customers to use during a period of unexpected confinement at your business
- Plastic to cover expensive equipment and furnishings
- Hard hats, gloves, and boots
- NOAA weather radio with batteries
- Communication plans

*Subscribe to Downtown Dallas, Inc.'s newsletters and e-blasts to stay up to date on the latest Downtown news, events, and openings!*

[www.dallasalert.com](http://www.dallasalert.com)

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## THIRD ANNUAL PRPREPAREDNESS EXTRAVAGANZA

OEM's Third Annual Preparedness Extravaganza asks the question: **Are You Ready?** We invite all Dallas residents, visitors, and businesses to join us to learn more about emergency preparedness, how to build a kit, and go home ready.

This year's fair will be Saturday, September 24, 2016, from 11 am – 3 pm on the Ronald Kirk Pedestrian Bridge and Felix Lozada, Sr. Gateway. We are partnered with Dallas CERT, Inc., CBS Radio, and Trinity Watershed Management to provide food, fun, and family-friendly activities—along with emergency response vehicles to check out and explore.

For more information on the event or to find out more about preparedness, contact Cassandra Wallace in the Office of Emergency Management at 214-670-4275 or by email at [Cassandra.Wallace@dallascityhall.com](mailto:Cassandra.Wallace@dallascityhall.com).