

National Preparedness Month — September 2013

Each September since 2004, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has observed National Preparedness Month. During September, FEMA and various local, state, and federal agencies encourage U.S. residents to become better prepared for emergencies and disasters. Approximately 3,000 organizations, including the American Red Cross, Citizen Corps, and CDC (1), are scheduling events and activities this month in support of the preparedness initiative.

On this 10th anniversary of National Preparedness Month, CDC also is recognizing the first decade of activity of its Emergency Operations Center (2). Staffed around the clock, 365 days of the year, the center is a state-of-the-art command facility from which scientists and emergency personnel monitor and coordinate CDC's response to a wide range of public health threats (3).

All persons can take important steps to prepare themselves, their families, and loved ones for a possible disaster. CDC has various tools and checklists to help everyone "be ready" at home, at places of work and worship, and within the larger community (4). Additional information regarding emergency preparedness and response is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/phpr>.

References

1. CDC. Be ready! September is National Preparedness Month. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2013. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/features/beready>.
2. CDC. CDC Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2013. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/phpr/eoc.htm>.
3. CDC. Public health responses supported by CDC's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). EOC responses since 2001. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2013. Available at http://www.cdc.gov/phpr/eoc_responses.htm.
4. CDC. Emergency preparedness and you. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2013. Available at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness>.

CDC's Emergency Management Program Activities — Worldwide, 2003–2012

In 2003, recognizing the increasing frequency and complexity of disease outbreaks and disasters and a greater risk for terrorism, CDC established the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), bringing together CDC staff members who respond to public health emergencies to enhance communication and coordination. To complement the physical EOC environment, CDC implemented the Incident Management System (IMS) (1,2), a staffing structure and set of standard operational protocols and services to support and monitor CDC program-led responses to complex public health emergencies. The EOC and IMS are key components of CDC's Emergency Management Program (EMP) (3), which applies emergency management principles to public health practice. To enumerate activities conducted by the EMP during 2003–2012, CDC analyzed data from daily reports and activity logs. The results of this

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Continuing Education examination available at
http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/cme/contd_info.html#weekly.



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