



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

SEP 06 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM
EVALUATION
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE
AFFAIRS
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: DoD Participation in the September 2016 National Preparedness Month

National preparedness is an enduring and dynamic challenge we face together as a nation. The Department of Defense (DoD) plays a vital role in supporting the U.S. Government's preparations for and responses to a wide range of threats to our national security – threats including acts of terrorism, cyber-threats, pandemics, and catastrophic natural disasters. Historically, President Obama has issued a Presidential Proclamation designating September as National Preparedness Month (NPM). The proclamation encourages citizens to learn more about the hazards that threaten our Nation and what we can do to prepare for possible threats to installations, commands, organizations, families, and communities and to take action to prepare for the types of emergencies we might encounter.

As the 15th commemoration of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States occurs during the NPM campaign this year, I want to recognize our first responders and underscore the important role preparedness plays in our ability to meet future security threats and challenges. I urge all DoD Component heads to promote the widest participation in the September 2016 NPM campaign and National PrepareAthon! Day on September 30. Widespread participation in emergency preparedness, military readiness, mission assurance activities, exercises, drills, events, planning, and initiatives builds a culture of preparedness within DoD. Being better prepared allows us to ensure the safety and well-being of each member of the DoD workforce and their families, to execute our defense missions and meet future security threats, and to safeguard U.S. national security interests.

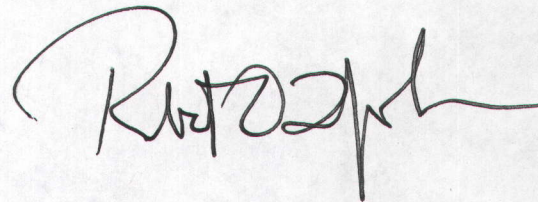
You are encouraged to use your websites and social media channels to promote participation in NPM, to disseminate preparedness information, and to collaborate with partners and stakeholders.



OSD011129-16/CMD014087-16

More information is available in the attached planning guide and at www.defense.gov/prepare and www.ready.gov/prepare. I also encourage widespread downloading of the Federal Emergency Management Agency App (www.fema.gov/mobile-app) and awareness of wireless emergency alerts. Register your NPM participation by clicking the "Be Counted!" button on www.defense.gov/prepare.

Through integrated and collaborative military readiness and mission assurance activities, we strengthen our national security and ensure that we are prepared to meet future threats to protect and defend the homeland with a unified approach to crisis management. Your commitment to emergency preparedness fosters a culture of preparedness within the Department and increases our Nation's security. I look forward to your participation in this important campaign.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Gates". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Attachment:
Planning Guide

**DOD'S PARTICIPATION IN
NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH / NATIONAL PREPAREATHON! DAY
September 2016**

PLANNING GUIDE

This document provides resource information to synchronize the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) national campaign with DoD participation and planning efforts in the September 2016 National Preparedness Month (NPM) / National PrepareAthon! Day. NPM is an opportunity to ensure that our Service members, civilians, and installations take action to prepare and plan ahead of disasters and emergencies. A well-prepared workforce is essential to the Department's ability to carry out its mission, and well-prepared family members are an important part of military readiness. DoD's commitment to NPM underscores the importance of working together across the whole community to foster a culture of preparedness and advances our Nation's security and resilience.

BACKGROUND:

NPM is a national campaign of action to prepare, now and throughout the year, for the types of emergencies and disasters that could affect us where we live, work, learn, and visit. The theme for NPM is "*Don't Wait, Communicate. Make Your Emergency Plan Today.*" The NPM campaign will also include a continuing emphasis on preparedness for youth, older adults, vulnerable populations, people with disabilities, and others with access and functional needs. NPM culminates with National PrepareAthon! Day on September 30, 2016, as a capstone event that promotes emergency preparedness activities across the country.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Promote the NPM campaign and amplify the key message through utilization of social media and internal and public communications channels;
2. Participate in NPM by taking action to make DoD Components and the DoD workforce more resilient to disasters; and,
3. Work with partners and stakeholders to participate in preparedness activities, exercises, events, and initiatives; complete DoD's after-action questionnaire by 10 October at www.defense.gov/prepare; and register NPM participation at www.ready.gov/prepare.

2016 NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY THEMES

August 28-September 3- Kickoff to promote NPM:

- Coordinate with preparedness partners to promote National Preparedness Month and Recommend preparedness actions.

Week 1: September 4-10- Preparing family and friends:

- Emphasis is placed on having an emergency plan for yourself, your family, and loved ones, with a focus on older persons and youth, especially teens. This includes both

making a plan and taking actions at home to be ready. Messaging will align with back-to-school for youth and children (e.g., tie-in with emergency contact list-making already taking place). Highlight how different generations use different technologies to be informed and be prepared.

- Key Message: “Don’t Wait. Communicate. Make an Emergency Communication Plan.”

Week 2: September 11-17- Preparing through service:

- The week begins with *Patriot Day & National Day of Service and Remembrance* on Sunday, September 11. Celebrate first responders and community service and reflect on the importance of community preparedness.
- Key Message: “Don’t Wait. Communicate. Get involved in community organizations or plan with neighbors for emergencies.”

Week 3: September 18-24- Individual Preparedness

- Amplify the many individual actions people can take to help prepare themselves, including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
- Key Message: “Don’t Wait. Communicate. Download the FEMA App.” (<http://www.fema.gov/mobile-app>)

Week 4: September 25-30- Lead-up to National PrepareAthon! Day

- Everyone can take action to be prepared. Emphasis is focused on registering to participate in National PrepareAthon! by taking an action: registering on the website; finding and participating in a readiness event; or sponsoring an event.
- Key Message: “Don’t Wait. Communicate. Participate in National PrepareAthon! Day on September 30. All of us can promote and practice preparedness.”

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

All DoD Components are requested to participate in NPM to strengthen the preparedness of organizations, employees, families, and individuals in any of several ways:

- Learn about local hazards and conduct a drill to practice emergency response actions.
- Participate in a preparedness discussion, training, or class.
- Hold an organization-level scenario-based continuity of operations tabletop exercise.
- Assemble or update emergency supplies or kits.
- Sign up for local alerts and warnings, and download apps.
- Develop and test emergency communication plans.
- Collect and safeguard critical documents (e.g., insurance policies, birth records).
- Document property and obtain appropriate insurance for relevant hazards.
- Make property improvements to reduce potential injury and property damage.
- Plan with neighbors to help each other and share resources.

Suggested Actions:

- **Leadership Engagement and Public Service Announcements:** Engage your principals to promote NPM activities through internal correspondence, memorandums, video, or speaking engagements.
- **Social Media and Communications Channels:** Use your social media and communications channels to promote NPM through websites, newsletters, Facebook, or Twitter to reach your internal audiences and partners and stakeholders.
- **Conduct a Drill, Event, or Preparedness Activity:** Host a preparedness discussion, training, or class; conduct a scenario-based continuity drill; or learn about local hazards specific to your geographic location and conduct a drill to practice emergency response actions.
- **Be Counted:** Complete the DoD NPM After Action Questionnaire found at www.defense.gov/prepare and have your participation become a part of a final report to the White House and, register for NPM and be counted as part of the growing community of people who view preparedness as a shared responsibility at www.ready.gov/prepare.

Guidance for Social Media:

- Use of your public and internal website to promote participation in NPM.
- Use the NPM communications toolkit. The toolkit has messages to share with your social networks (i.e., Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, or Instagram) and customizable NPM promotional materials: <https://www.ready.gov/september>.
- Showcase your Component's participation through social media or other communications channels to set an example for other stakeholders to foster momentum.
- Use #PrepareAthon and reference @PrepareAthon when sharing preparedness tips, actions, events, and NPM resources with your stakeholders.
- Encourage your followers to follow @PrepareAthon and use #PrepareAthon in their preparedness discussions.
- If you plan a preparedness social media engagement, invite @PrepareAthon to promote your event and/or participate.
- Identify supporters (e.g., Federal departments and agencies, organizations, private sector partners) who will help us share the message through Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, or Instagram.

Resources are available at www.defense.gov/prepare and www.ready.gov/prepare for:

- Defense and Service-related preparedness information and tools.
- Hazard-specific preparedness guides, playbooks, and informational material.
- Tips and information about National Preparedness Month, including the digital engagement toolkit.
- National Preparedness Month factsheet, talking points, and additional informational documents.
- Registering organizations or individuals for National Preparedness Month.

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