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County Council offers Preparedness Guide to help residents be ready for emergencies

Delaware County Council wants every household in the county to be prepared in case of an emergency. To promote emergency preparedness, County Council is making an Emergency Preparedness Guide available to all individuals and families.

The "Residents Awareness & Emergency Preparedness Guide" is a glossy, poster-size guide that details emergency evacuation routes, emergency shelter locations, hospitals, Homeland Security information, important contact numbers and a detailed guide for a personal family plan.

"The county has overall emergency plans that address manmade or natural disasters, but this Resource Guide is for emergency planning at the family level. The Guide lists items that each homeowner should have on hand, and should know in case of an emergency," said Council Chairman Andy Reilly. "Individuals are their own emergency managers for their homes or their businesses. Our goal is to help residents be better prepared, to prompt them to be educated and ready."

The Emergency Preparedness Guide was produced by the Delaware County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

The LEPC is one of four branches that come under Delaware County Emergency Services, along with Emergency Communications such as 911, Emergency Management and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM).

The LEPC prepared the Guide to raise public awareness about the importance of personal preparedness. Individuals and families are encouraged to use the Guide to create an emergency plan and to stock crucial supplies in their home.

"The time to prepare for an emergency is before it happens. Knowing how to respond in an emergency is the key to minimizing the impact of that emergency," Reilly said.

The Guide provides information on how to respond to various types of emergencies and details under what circumstances people should "shelter in place" or evacuate. There is a list of items that should be included in an evacuation bag.

According to the Guide, people should "talk with your family about emergencies; what to do, how to find each other, and how to stay in contact during an emergency. Be ready to shelter for at least 72 hours." There are also details for preparing pets for an emergency.

The "Residents Awareness & Emergency Preparedness Guide" is being made available to residents at the 26 libraries in the Delaware County Library System, at municipal offices and at local Sunoco stations.