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Red Cross

*Together, we can save a life*

## **PRAIRIEWINDS CHAPTER**

SERVING LINCOLN, LYON  
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### **PRESS RELEASE FROM THE AMERICAN RED CROSS**

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#### **“codeReady”<sup>®</sup>: HOW DOES IT WORK?**

This week our **“BE SAFE”** article will present part two in a series of articles related to the “codeReady” program outlined last week.

#### **What is the first step in becoming “codeReady”?**

Everyone needs to become better informed. Agencies such as the American Red Cross, local governments and Emergency Managers within the state of Minnesota are required to develop plans for their immediate areas which outline the potential disaster events they must be prepared for.

In our area this includes extreme storms (rain, thunder, lightening and wind), flooding, tornados, fires, major public health emergencies and transportation accidents.

#### **What is the second step in becoming “codeReady”?**

Everyone needs to develop a plan for how they will respond to an emergency.

Begin by asking an out-of-state friend or relative to become your “family contact person”. This is the person that everyone must contact following an emergency to report where they are at and if they are safe.

Next, set two specific meeting places. The first place should be close to your home: a barn, detached garage away from the house, a neighbor’s house where you and your family would go to if there is something like a fire. The second place should be away from your immediate neighborhood in case you can’t return home. Choose a place on the other side of town or in a neighboring town. Be certain that everyone has the phone number and address of that place in advance. This is the place you will go to if there is something like a tornado, flood or other major emergency that leaves your immediate neighborhood damaged or unsafe.

Establish what you are going to do with family pets. Choose two places just as you did for yourself and your family; one in your immediate neighborhood (such as a veterinarian, local pound, kennel, neighbor or other place) and another in a neighboring

town. Be aware that shelters which are established for people do not allow animals unless they are required to assist with a disability. Make arrangements for their care IN ADVANCE to ensure this doesn't become an issue when an emergency actually occurs.

Plan on possible places to stay overnight or for long-term situations. This should include the homes of relatives or friends as well as hotels in your area or shelters set up by organizations such as the American Red Cross. Remember that your home may not be accessible or livable given the situation.

Discuss how you will take care of small children, elderly family members and those with disabilities if you have to be away from your home for any extended period of time.

Complete a contact information sheet. Record the names, addresses, and phone numbers for everyone in each of the aforementioned categories. Keep a copy of this list in your emergency preparedness kit as well as your car's glove compartment or another building on your property other than your home.

Complete a family information sheet. List all family members, their dates of birth, age, weight, medical conditions, medications and allergies. Keep this sheet with all copies of the contact information sheet in case your family becomes separated.

Assemble an emergency preparedness kit. Include the following: one gallon of water per person per day for three days; non-perishable food items that are canned or packaged; one change of clothing and footwear per person; three days worth of prescription medications; a flashlight and extra batteries; a manual can opener; a battery-powered, solar-powered or hand-crank radio; personal hygiene items like soap, toilet paper and a toothbrush; a basic first aid kit with antiseptic, bandages and other non-prescription medications; your contact information sheet and family information sheet.

Join us next week when **"BE SAFE"** will further discuss Minnesota's "codeReady" program and will talk about how you can get connected to help others local and or community levels get prepared. .

This information is sponsored by the Marshall Independent and brought to you by the American Red Cross, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and Lyon County Emergency Management. If you have any questions or need further information on the topic covered in this article, please log-on to <http://www.severeweather.state.mn.us> or contact your local American Red Cross Chapter at 1-507-532-5565.