



Press Release

Pat Quinn, Governor
Joe Klinger, Interim Director

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IEMA Highlights Disaster Preparedness during National Preparedness Month

New radio spots to encourage personal preparedness

SPRINGFIELD – As part of Illinois’ observance of National Preparedness Month in September, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) today unveiled eight new radio spots aimed at encouraging people to prepare for disasters. The ads are expected to air more than 30,000 times statewide during the coming year and will direct people to the Ready Illinois website to learn more about how to prepare for emergencies..

“As we saw during 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, catastrophic events can overwhelm emergency response capabilities and can force people to fend for themselves for hours, days, maybe even weeks,” said IEMA Interim Director Joe Klinger. “Having a preparedness kit and a family communications plan could truly make a life or death difference. We hope these new radio spots will pique interest in preparedness and direct more people to the Ready Illinois website for information on how to become better prepared.”

The new spots include four recorded by acclaimed actress Marion Ross, who portrayed Marion Cunningham on the popular “Happy Days” TV series in the 1970s and 1980s. In the humorous spots, Marion stresses the importance of having a home preparedness kit and a family preparedness plan.

Two other new spots focus on the need for pet owners to assemble a pet preparedness kit, while awareness of the “Seven Signs of Terrorism” and the public’s role in prevention are the subjects of two additional spots.

National Preparedness Month is a nationwide campaign focused on encouraging Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and communities.

The new radio spots are part of a broadcast campaign IEMA launched in 2008 with three radio spots and one TV spot that have aired thousands of times throughout Illinois. In 2009, the

winning TV spot from an IEMA-sponsored high school contest was added to the on-going statewide campaign.

The broadcast campaign is a result of a partnership between the Illinois Terrorism Task Force (ITTF) and the Illinois Broadcasters Association (IBA), through the IBA's Public Education Partnership (PEP) program. The \$220,000 campaign is funded through federal homeland security grants awarded to the state by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

“The Illinois Broadcasters Association is thrilled to partner with IEMA in promoting the Ready Illinois website via our Public Education Partnership program,” said IBA President and CEO Dennis Lyle. “Broadcasters consider ourselves to be part of the first-responder ‘team’ and welcome this continued opportunity to help educate Illinois’ citizens on the importance of emergency preparedness.”

The new radio spots recently began airing on radio stations throughout Illinois. They can also be accessed through the state's Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

The Ready Illinois website offers comprehensive information on steps people can take before emergencies happen, what to do once a disaster has occurred, and tips for recovery after the event. In addition, during large-scale emergencies, current information about the situation can be posted on the site to keep people updated on the event.