



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 5, 2008

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## Government & Community Organizations Join to Prepare Broome County for Emergencies and Disasters

BINGHAMTON, NY – Between severe winter snow storms and major floods Broome County is no stranger to emergency situations. Although government and community organizations stand ready to respond to emergencies and disasters, preparedness must begin at the individual level. September 2008 is the fifth annual National Preparedness Month and Broome County’s residents are being encouraged to get ready!

Today, the Southern Tier Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Broome County Health Department, Broome County Office of Emergency Services, and Broome County’s Community Organizations Active in Disaster (BC-COAD) are pleased to announce the *Be BC Ready* campaign.

*Be BC Ready* is a collaborative project to ensure that the residents of Broome County will be empowered to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. In an effort to educate the public on preparedness issues the collaborative has published a website and is sponsoring three Community Preparedness Education Evenings throughout Broome County.

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## The Website

Accessible at [www.BeBCReady.org](http://www.BeBCReady.org) the website is a one-stop-shop for resident's emergency preparedness needs. Website visitors will be able to:

- ✓ Download Emergency Preparedness Checklists
- ✓ Access Emergency Preparedness Information on Many Topics
- ✓ Link to Emergency Response Organization's Websites
- ✓ Sign Up for New York ALERT – Broome County's Mass Notification System
- ✓ Look-Up Phone Numbers for Community Response Agencies
- ✓ Much More

## Community Preparedness Education Evenings

Government and Community Organization officials will be giving presentations on Pandemic Influenza Preparedness & Response, All-Hazards Preparedness & Response, NY-ALERT Mass Notification System, Broome County's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan at the times and locations below. Additionally, other organizations will have booths set up to provide information and discuss their roles during emergencies.

**Tuesday September 9, 2008**  
**7pm-9pm**

**Broome County Health Department**  
**225 Front Street**  
**Binghamton, NY 13905**

**Thursday September 18, 2008**  
**7pm-9pm**

**West Windsor Fire Department**  
**9 Karla Drive**  
**West Windsor, NY 13865**

**Wednesday September 24, 2008**  
**7pm-9pm**

**Lisle Fire Department**  
**9624 Route 79**  
**Lisle, NY 13797**

## Quotes

“In order for our community to better withstand and more quickly recover from emergencies and disasters every individual, family, and business must be prepared. The Be BC Ready program will give government and human service agencies the chance to talk about our risks, plans, and, most importantly, discuss how they can be better prepared for emergencies. Additionally, we will be able to listen to their thoughts and concerns which we can incorporate into future planning and outreach efforts. Emergency Preparedness is not just a government responsibility. Every individual, family, and business needs to be prepared – before disaster strikes – with plans, small stockpiles of necessary items, and information on how to stay informed in order for our community to successfully respond to and recover from emergencies. The Office of Emergency Services is excited about the opportunity to discuss our plans with the community and help get Broome County Ready” said Brett Chellis, Director of the Broome County Office of Emergency Services.

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“Since 2001 all state and local health departments across the country have been engaged in emergency preparedness planning for all types of disasters. Public Health disaster planning has become well integrated into state and local agency operations to ensure a comprehensive and successful response. Join planning, full drill exercises, ongoing assessments of capabilities, and close communication with county departments, the health care system, law enforcement, schools, colleges and universities, the business sector and community based organizations has become the cornerstone of our local preparedness activities. Personal and family preparedness are critical elements of any community organization’s emergency planning. Disaster response and recovery are facilitated when members of the public have planned in advance. Providing greater access to preparedness messages supports that advanced planning and gives individuals a sense of control during a disaster. Our goal is to assist residents in knowing well in advance what to do, where to go, and how to be prepared for all emergencies that may develop. The “teachable moment” for this is now, before a disaster happens not during the event when our ability to comprehend is challenged.” said Claudia Edwards, Director of the Broome County Health Department

“The Red Cross is committed to being prepared to serve those in our communities who are devastated by disaster. However, that does not diminish the need for each household to also be prepared in the event responders can’t reach the home or if they are advised against evacuation, such as during a pandemic. We are pleased to partner with the Broome County Health Department and Office of Emergency Management to increase readiness”, said Cynthia Gordineer, CEO of the Southern Tier Chapter of the American Red Cross”

“If we all understand what we need and what we can do to be prepared then the effects of a disaster are diminished and everyone’s recovery happens faster.” said Greg Jenkins, Chairman Broome County Community Organizations Active in Disaster

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