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## SHELBY COUNTY OFFICE OF PREPAREDNESS eNEWSLETTER



### FEATURE

## Fall...the Second Severe Weather Season

As we enjoy this stretch of near-perfect weather, we are relieved to be in the recovery phase of the historic spring flooding we survived earlier this year. And now we prepare for the second severe weather season - fall.

We encourage all citizens to **GET READY NOW** for fall weather.



Create a disaster kit for home, work, and auto with enough supplies to sustain you, your family and pets for at least seven days. Stay alert and be ready to take shelter or evacuate as needed when the National Weather Service issues watches and warnings for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes.

Meet with your family ahead of time and plan where your "safe place" will be. Have an ALERT FM or a NOAA weather radio with a battery back-up and tone alert with you at all times. If outside, listen for the outdoor warning sirens and go inside to tune in to TV or radio for locations of approaching storms. Learn more than one way to get to and from work, home, and school in case evacuations are needed. And designate an out-of-state contact all family members will call if separated during a disaster.

**Everyone can be prepared.** Free preparedness training is available for all citizens with the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) classes offered by our agency and other municipalities. To find out about the next available classes, please email [citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov](mailto:citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov).

Additionally, citizens are invited to stop by the Memphis Zoo to visit with us on Saturday, October 22 for "Ready Shelby Day."

As you prepare, so do we. Our office and other

### IN THIS ISSUE

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- [New Sirens](#)
- [ICE Your Cellphone](#)
- [Amateur Radio Training](#)
- [New Terrorism Advisory System](#)
- [Ready Sunday!](#)
- [Storm Shelter Registry](#)
- [Volunteers Needed](#)
- [Ready Neighborhoods!](#)
- [Preparedness Resources](#)

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partnering agencies continue to train for future hazards and threats as we plan for the upcoming county-wide, multi-agency Vertex drill.

**Please join us as we continue our preparedness journey....let's prepare and survive together! We're counting on you!**

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OTHER STORIES

## New Sirens

### Four New Sirens For Shelby County

When the National Weather Service in Memphis issues the dreaded "tornado warning" for Shelby County and the surrounding areas, the Office of Preparedness EMA Staff immediately activates all of the the 139 outdoor warning sirens for Memphis, Millington, Arlington, Lakeland, as well as unincorporated areas of the county.



Citizens, familiar with the sirens' distinctive wail, are aware that the sirens are warning them of inclement weather headed our way. No time to waste, head for a safe place!

Recently, the agency erected four new sirens in the Cordova area to ensure better sound coverage from siren to siren.

According to Walter "Tommy" Thompson, Outdoor Warning Siren Coordinator / Special Projects Officer for the agency, "tornado" sirens - as they have been called - are still the most effective way the EMA Staff warns a large population of impending weather.

These new uni-directional, electromechanical sirens are made by the Federal Signal Corporation. When activated, they rotate and produce a high decibel sound that is easily heard over a wide area.

The locations for the new sirens include: in front of Cordova High School, Country Trail Road, Dexter Road, and Hearth Stone Drive. The new sirens will replace electronic sirens at these location.

Officer Thompson reminds the public, "Sirens are intended to be heard outside only. Upon hearing a siren, other than during the activation test Wednesday afternoons at 3:30 p.m., citizens should immediately go inside, tune into commercial television, radio or NOAA weather radio to find out where the tornado is headed and take shelter. No doubt about it, these sirens save lives!"

When inside a building where the sirens may not be heard, citizens are urged to have an ALERT FM and a NOAA weather radio with a tone alert and a battery back-up at all times.

If a citizen knows of a siren that is malfunctioning near their home or business, they are urged to refer to the "Outdoor Warning Sirens" list found on [www.staysafeshelby.us](http://www.staysafeshelby.us) or [www.msccema.org](http://www.msccema.org) for further information or call 901.515.2525.

**Photo Caption:** One of the four new outdoor warning sirens in the Cordova area of Shelby County.

## ICE Your Cellphone

### Emergency Contacts Aid Rescuers

Adding ICE ("In Case of Emergency") contacts to your cellphone is a clever means by which emergency personnel can locate your next of kin during emergencies.



This simple idea, developed by British paramedic, Bob Brotchie, recognizes the need for speed when emergency personnel are trying to locate your loved ones quickly.

Contacts can include ICE Mom, ICE Dad, ICE Son.

Inform your ICE contacts ahead of time that their phone number will be programmed into your cellphone. ICE contacts should be 18 years or older. Discuss with them important information about your health, medications, and insurance so they can relay this information to medical professionals.

## Amateur Radio Training

### Amateur "Ham" Radio Training at EOC

For ten consecutive weeks on Thursday evenings, citizens are gathering at the Emergency Operations Center for amateur "ham" radio training.



Ham radio communications are used during disasters when other forms of communications are inoperable. As the saying goes, "when nothing else works, ham radios do!"

Ham radio operators enjoy this hobby that mixes fun, public service and friendship. Licensed by the FAA, hams share a common basic knowledge of radio technology, regulations, and operating principles.

The class is free and is designed to prepare students with the information and skills needed to pass the "Technician" license exam. Students are from all municipalities in Shelby County. Many work in government jobs, some in the private sector, and some are retired.

The class is taught by Alexander "Ham" Hillard, call sign W4GMM. Hillard holds an Extra Class license, a commercial license, is a radio instructor, and a test examiner. He is retired, volunteers as a Reserve for the Office of Preparedness, and holds the positions of Tennessee State Training Officer and Region Four Emergency Coordinator for Air Force MARS.

Hilliard plans to offer another ham radio class in 2012.

**Photo Caption:** Alexnader Hilliard, instructor, teaches citizens about ham radios Thursday evenings at the EOC.

## New Terrorism Advisory System

### Simplified Terrorism Warning System Implemented



The color-coded Homeland Security Advisory System that was created soon after 9/11 has now been replaced by a new, easy to understand communication system to inform the public about terrorist threats.

If there is a terrorist threat to the general public, the Secretary of Homeland Security will activate the National Terrorism Advisory System or NTAS by issuing an "**imminent**" or "**elevated**" alert.

An **imminent** alert warns of credible, specific and impending terrorist threats against the United States

An **elevated** alert warns of a credible terrorist threat against the United States.

This new system will provide timely, detailed information to the community, government agencies, first responders, airports, and other transportation hubs.

### What can you do to help?

The Department of Homeland Security advises, "**if you see something, say something!**"

1. Remain alert and report any suspicious activity by calling 9-1-1 immediately.

2. Stay prepared for emergencies before they occur.
3. Stay informed about issues of public safety within your community.

## Ready Sunday!

### Germantown Neighbors Get Ready!

Recently, nineteen excited citizens from the Green Trees Neighborhood

Association and members of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Germantown graduated from the Shelby County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program.



For two consecutive Saturdays the Office of Preparedness brought their "CERT on the Go" trailer, props, and instructors, lead by Eugene Jones, to the Church of the Holy Spirit for disaster preparedness training.

The students learned many important survival techniques such as how to extinguish a small fire, rescue a victim under rubble, splint a broken bone, avoid hazardous materials, protect themselves from terrorism, and create a disaster kit.

Sonya Davis, Church of the Holy Spirit Director of Social Ministries, organized the training and said, "The more trained and informed we are, the more we can help one another during a disaster. We learned that we should take care of ourselves first - just like on an airline when they tell you to put your oxygen mask on first .... then we can help others. Preparedness is a best practice for the Catholic Diocese and CERT is a great beginning for us."

Churches and other faith-based organizations are invited to join the "Ready Sunday" challenge to get prepared. To find out more, please visit [www.readyshelby.us](http://www.readyshelby.us)

**Photo Caption:** Levell Blanchard, Office of Preparedness Deputy Director, far right, demonstrates how to strap down a water heater.

## Storm Shelter Registry

### Citizens Urged to Register Shelters

Many citizens are taking a proactive approach to having a "safe room" in their homes and businesses by purchasing a ready-made storm shelter.



Although these protective enclosures save lives during high winds and tornadoes, they may also pose a hazard after the storm has passed.

Bob Nations, Jr., Director of the Office of Preparedness, commented, "The increase in number of storm shelters installed in our county has presented us with a new problem - falling debris blocking the shelter doors. Citizens may become trapped in their own shelter. If we know ahead of time where these shelters are located, we can instigate rescue efforts much sooner. We are asking all citizens with a storm shelter to please register this information with our office. Emergency dispatchers will be able to use this database to notify rescuers of the location of trapped citizens."

Registry Information will be kept confidential and not shared.

To register your storm shelter, please visit [www.staysafeshelby.us](http://www.staysafeshelby.us) or call 901.515.2525.

## Volunteers Needed

### "Victims" Needed for Medical Drill

Volunteers are needed to be pretend victims in a large scale medical response drill on Wednesday November 9, 2011.



Volunteers must be 18 years of age and a member of the Shelby County Medical Reserve Corps to participate. Pre-registration is required.

To register go online to: <https://thanvolunteer.health.state.tn.us>

After registration, please contact Jennifer Price at [Jennifer.price@shelbycountyttn.gov](mailto:Jennifer.price@shelbycountyttn.gov) or call 901.379.7156.

Registration must be completed by November 1, 2011.

## Ready Neighborhoods!

### Office of Preparedness at Ready Neighborhood Summit

Staff and Reserves with the Shelby County Office of Preparedness HLS/EMA were on hand at the "Ready Neighborhood Summit" Saturday, October 8 at the University of



Memphis Holiday Inn.

Hundreds of civic-minded neighborhood leaders attended the event to learn more about preparing their community before the next disaster strikes.

A friendly competition is underway as neighborhoods compete for the "most prepared" in Shelby County.

To find out more about Ready Neighborhoods, please visit [www.readyshelby.us](http://www.readyshelby.us).

**Photo Caption:** Office of Preparedness Reserves hand out brochures and preparedness advice. Left to right, Reserves Ruth Watson, Jo Griffith and Willie Hollinger.

## Preparedness Resources

American Radio Relay League (ARRL) web site: [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)



Ready Shelby web site: [www.readyshelby.us](http://www.readyshelby.us)

Shelby County Government web site: [www.shelbycountyttn.gov](http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov)

Federal Emergency Management Agency web site: [www.fema.org](http://www.fema.org)

Ready America web site: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

National Weather Service web site: [www.nws.noaa.org](http://www.nws.noaa.org)

Department of Homeland Security web site: [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

ALERT FM web site: [www.alertfm.com](http://www.alertfm.com)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

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**Know Your Risks  
Get a Kit  
Make a Plan  
Stay Informed**

