

Having trouble reading this email? [View it on your browser.](#) Not interested anymore? [Unsubscribe Instantly.](#)



FEATURE

E-Newsletter Launched!

Bob Nations, Jr., Director

Welcome to the first edition of the Shelby County Office of Preparedness e-newsletter.

This on-line publication is intended to share information about our agency which includes the Homeland Security division and the Emergency Management Agency.

Earlier this year, our agency was in the midst of planning for a large-scale earthquake drill, a multi-agency exercise to test our emergency plans and commemorate the 200th anniversary of the New Madrid Earthquakes of 1811. Before we could execute that drill, Shelby County experienced a real natural disaster - the now historic "flood of the century." We continue to relearn the lessons of preparedness as we recover and rebuild from the spring floods.



Please take a moment to read about our ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of the citizens of Shelby County through the prevention of, protection from, response to, and recovery from all man-made and natural hazards.

Join us and let's prepare together!

IN THIS ISSUE

- [National Preparedness Month](#)
- [Spanish CERT](#)
- [Power Squadron Training](#)
- [Balloon Lights Aid in Disasters](#)
- [ALERT FM](#)

UNSUBSCRIBE

Click to instantly unsubscribe from this email

FORWARD

Click to forward this email to a friend

OTHER STORIES

National Preparedness Month

September 2011: A Time to Remember ... A Time to Prepare

September 2011 will be a memorable month for Shelby County and America.



We reflect on the ten year anniversary of the most horrific terrorist event in our nation's history.....the 9/11 "Attack on

America." A decade later, we honor the nearly 3,000 who lost their lives on September 11, 2001 during four coordinated suicide terrorist attacks. In the ten years since this tragedy, America, as well as Shelby County has strengthened its anti-terrorism efforts. The Memphis / Shelby County Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), a regional partnership of six counties, meets monthly to plan exercises and purchase equipment to protect our region against, respond to, and recover from threats or acts of terrorism. Past UASI purchases have included new interoperable communications equipment such as satellite radios and portable towers.

September also marks the eighth National Preparedness Month! Annually, federal, state, regional and local emergency agencies invite citizens, businesses, government agencies, and faith-based organizations to turn awareness of the threats and potential emergencies that will happen here into action - preparedness.

The Office of Preparedness strives to create an inclusive culture of emergency preparedness through training and exercises, our CERT program, and our speakers' bureau as we share the message of preparedness.

The agency extends an open invitation for citizens to join together to get prepared before the next disaster strikes.

There are four simple steps to preparedness:

1. Know your risks: Learn about the hazards faced living in Shelby County such as earthquake, flooding, fire, hazardous materials releases, terrorism, power outages, tornadoes, ice storms, and excessive heat. Know which carry a warning such as weather events, and which do not.

2. Get a kit: Create a disaster kit for home, work and auto to sustain you and your animals for at least seven days. Kits should include water, non-perishable food, tools, flashlight, batteries, medication, maps, sanitation, personal preparedness equipment, first-aid, keys, clothing, cash, copies of important papers (insurance, ID, medical, photos), pet supplies, and special needs supplies

3. Make a plan: Make a plan for every possible disaster to shelter-in-place or evacuate depending on the event. Have a communications plan to contact an out-of-state relative if separated. Program ICE or In Case of Emergency numbers in your cell phone. Decide where you will meet family members if separated.

4. Stay informed: Keep a battery-powered NOAA weather radio or ALERT FM with you at all times. Heed the watches and warnings from the Office of Preparedness and the National Weather Service to seek shelter during inclement weather. Listen for the outdoor warning sirens and take cover immediately.

Let us pause this September - to remember the victims of 9/11 and to prepare ourselves and those we care most about before the next unexpected event.

Spanish CERT

Estamos Preparados Para Desastres!



"Hola!" and "Buenos Dias!" were the cheery greetings students received from their instructors as they entered the classroom to attend disaster preparedness training - Community Emergency Response Team or CERT.

The class was lead by Cheryl Yarbro, Shelby County Office of Preparedness Interim Manager and Training Officer and Ivette Baldizon, Assistant to Shelby County Mayor on Multicultural and Hispanic Affairs.

After an introduction explaining hazards citizens face living in Shelby county, subjects discussed included disaster preparedness, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, fire suppression, medical triage, first aid, hazardous materials, and terrorism.

Students followed along a power point and read handouts translated into Spanish - learning what to do before, during and after a disaster. They were taught when to shelter-in-place or evacuate, depending on the type of emergency they faced.

The students dressed out in helmets, reflective vests, goggles, masks and gloves to participate in hands-on training. They formed a team to rescue a "victim" under rubble, bandaged wounds, learned how to turn off electricity, gas and water, and extinguished a contained fire.

Rodrigo Ramirez's family attended the class and remarked on this life-saving training, "We are very interested in preparedness, knowing what to do to help ourselves and others. We are now prepared for fires and earthquakes....and we are learning how to prepare for floods. The knowledge and skills we learned here today has made the difference."

After demonstrating their new found skills, the students proudly graduated with a certificate, a CERT ID card, and most of all the confidence that they will survive the next disaster.

Ivette Baldizon served as interpreter for the class and commented, "During the recent floods, the Hispanic community was most affected. Even though preparedness information in Spanish is available from FEMA , many Hispanics may not have a computer in the home or ready access to one. What has been most effective here is the hands-on training. They are so excited and want to use what they have learned! It is wonderful that we are reaching out to this community through CERT."

CERT is a Shelby County Citizen Corps initiative, available to all citizens. To find out more about CERT or register for a class, please email, citizencorps@shelbycountyttn.gov.

Photo Caption: CERT students demonstrate the blanket carry during light search and rescue. Left to right: Sebastian and Adriana Ramirez pull their father, Rodrigo Ramirez, to safety.

Power Squadron Training

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness hosted the local chapter of "Power Squadrons" for a training session at the Emergency Operations Center on August 18, 2011.

Cheryl Yarbro, Office of Preparedness Interim Manager of Operations / Training Officer, organized the sessions that included lectures and hands-on experience.

Office of Preparedness Reserves / CERT instructors, Kenneth Brown and Willie Hollinger, served as two of the instructors for the evening.



Fire suppression, fire extinguisher training, flare training and safety, and pyrotechnics were presented.

After the lecture, participants each demonstrated their expertise in the use of an ABC fire extinguisher to put out a large pan fire, followed by the techniques needed to overhaul a fire using a water extinguisher.

As the sun set on the fire field, Lanny Oaks, a Power Squadron member and flare instructor, demonstrated the safest method to launch a Marine-approved aerial flare, a smoke flare, as well as a hand-held flare. The best advice Oaks gave his students is to "hold the flare over the side of the boat downwind, and don't set one off unless you can see or hear another boat!".

Reese Austin, Post Commander and Educational Officer of this group, the Memphis Sail and Power Squadrons, and a member for 13 years, commented that there are nearly 40,000 power squadron members in the United States and its territories. The Memphis Squadron currently has 75 members, 21 of which participated in this training.

The groups' primary mission is to promote boating safety through education. This non-profit organization began in

1914. Their three main objectives remain: community service, continuing education and enjoying the fellowship of boating enthusiasts.

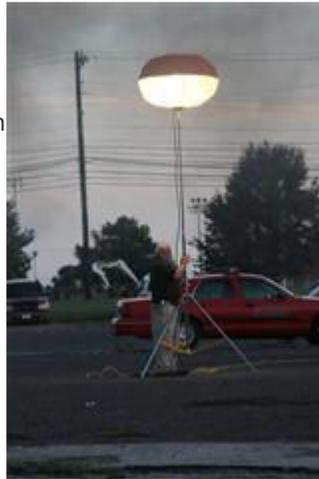
To find out more about the Memphis Sail and Power Squadrons and the United States Power Squadrons (USPS), please contact Reese Austin at raustin1@comcast.net or visit www.usps.org.

Photo Caption: Lannie Oaks, 2nd from left, leads flair training with Linda Wildman, 3rd from left, Kenneth Brown, Office of Preparedness Reserve / CERT Instructor, first from left, acts as safety.

Balloon Lights Aid in Disasters

The Shelby County Office of Preparedness has purchased six large portable halogen "balloon lights" to be utilized outdoors where there is no available lighting.

These towering round-shaped, glare-free lights are attached to an adjustable tripod. At their maximum height of 13.5 feet above the tripod they can be seen for 13,000 square feet.



These 2,000 watt lights can be assembled by one person in rugged terrain and inclement weather in a matter of minutes.

When not in use, the lights and tripod can easily fold up into a carrying case for easy transport.

The agency will have these lights on hand as needed during disasters when utilities have failed and at a disaster scene when illumination is needed.

Balloon lights have been used during night time local events such as Memphis in May and during evening training exercises at the Emergency Operations Center.

Photo Caption: Mike Brazzell from the Shelby County Office of Preparedness HLS/EMA erects a balloon light during night time training exercises at the Emergency Operations Center.

ALERT FM

Citizens now have a means to receive "real time" notifications directly from the Shelby County Office of



Preparedness with “ALERT FM.”

This radio-based messaging system is now being used to notify individuals, groups or mass notifications by existing FM radio towers via satellites. Messages are received through receivers or a USB drive portable receiver allowing the user to obtain messages on computers without internet connection. Messages will be sent by text or email to first responders, school officials, businesses and specific groups of citizens depending on their geographical location and groupings. Common messages include weather warnings, school closings, homeland security notices and evacuation instructions.

ALERT FM is the official emergency notification system used by the six counties of the Urban Area Securities Initiative (USAI), which includes Shelby, Tipton, Lauderdale and Fayette in Tennessee , Crittenden in Arkansas, and DeSoto in Mississippi .

ALERT FM is easily programmable, powered by AA batteries, and there are no fees after initial purchase. Available for purchase at: Tate Computer Systems, Inc., 6099 Mt. Moriah Rd., Ste. 10, Memphis, TN 38115-2667 or visit www.alertfm.com

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Shelby County Office of Preparedness HLS/EMA

Bob Nations, Jr., Director

Homeland Security - 901.379.7094

Emergency Management Agency - 901.515.2525

<http://www.staysafeshelby.us/>

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

