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Virginia's 2011 natural disasters remind all of need to prepare

Resolve to be ready for emergencies in 2012

RICHMOND, Va. – Major snowstorms, April tornadoes, an historic earthquake, Hurricane Irene and the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee all hit Virginia during 2011, causing loss of life and property and leaving millions of dollars in damage. As one of the most active years for disasters comes to a close, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management encourages all Virginians to Resolve to be Ready for emergencies in 2012.

“There have been more billion-dollar natural disasters in the U.S. during 2011 than any year on record, and we have seen our share of grief throughout Virginia,” said Michael Cline, state coordinator of emergency management. “All of these events remind us that disasters can happen anytime and anywhere. Make a new year’s resolution now that you and your family will take action to be prepared for emergencies in 2012.”

Information on how to prepare for emergencies can be found on www.ReadyVirginia.gov and www.ListoVirginia.gov, VDEM websites that are part of a public outreach effort in Virginia to provide simple steps that residents should take to be ready for expected and unexpected emergencies. Guidelines about how to put together an emergency supply kit, make an emergency plan and stay informed during emergencies are posted on these site. Free checklists, tip sheets and family emergency plan worksheets also are available.

Emergency preparedness information in 12 different languages spoken in Virginia is available on ReadyVirginia.gov as well.

Some printed materials are available free of charge from the VDEM Public Affairs Office. Call toll-free 1-866-782-3470 or write to pio@vdem.virginia.gov and ask for Ready Virginia brochures and emergency plan worksheets.

Resolve to be Ready in 2012 is a nationwide effort to increase awareness and encourage individuals, families, businesses and communities to take action and prepare for emergencies in the new year. This effort is led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in partnership with Citizen Corps and The Advertising Council. Follow the Ready Virginia campaign on Twitter using the hashtag #ReadyVA, and follow the national effort using #ready2012 and #resolve.