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For Immediate Release

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### National Emergency Preparedness Month

The Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA), Grand Traverse County Health Department (GTCHD), and Grand Traverse County Emergency Management (GTCEM) are acknowledging National Emergency Preparedness Month. Each September, we observe and raise awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and disasters.

“Emergencies can happen anytime, anywhere,” said GTCHD Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Cara Eule. “Having an emergency plan in place before it’s needed means that you’ll have one less thing to worry about when facing a stressful situation.”

Every community in the United States should be ready to respond to an infectious disease outbreak, chemical or radiological release, or a natural disaster.

Here are some easy steps you can follow to be prepared:

- Plan how you will communicate if you have communication needs.
- Gather food, water, and essentials for you and pets or service animals.
- Think about transportation if you need help evacuating.
- Have an emergency supply kit with items such as medicines, medical supplies, batteries, and chargers.
- Create a support network of family, friends, and others who can assist you during an emergency. Make an emergency plan and practice it with them.
- Make sure at least one person in your support network has an extra key to your home, knows where you keep your emergency supplies, and how to use lifesaving equipment.

To learn more about how you can be prepared, visit <https://www.ready.gov/be-informed>.

The 2023 National Preparedness Month theme is “Take Control in 1,2,3.” The campaign will focus on preparing older adults for disasters. We know that older adults can face greater risks during and after a disaster, especially if they are living alone, are low-income, have a disability, or live in rural areas.

“In Grand Traverse County, we take notice of our older adults and how they may be affected during a disaster,” said Gregg Bird, GTCEM Coordinator. “We work closely with Grand Traverse County Senior Services and the Area Agency on Aging, as well as other community partners to make sure we’re prepared to address their needs during a disaster or emergency incident.”

Bird encourages all residents to enroll in our Emergency Notification service, CodeRED at [www.GTCountyMI.gov/CodeRED](http://www.GTCountyMI.gov/CodeRED).

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