

John R. Gibb  
Director

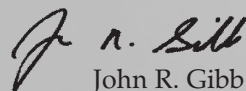
### A Message from the Director

Whenever New Yorkers are faced with the prospect of an imminent emergency, there is a simple question that is often asked with great importance: "What can I do?" And the answer is: *Be Prepared!*

The citizens of New York State are well aware of the challenges they may face whenever something happens that threatens their way of life. Whether it is a flood, winter storm, power outage or some other weather-related or man-made emergency, the men and women of the State's emergency management program continue to plan and train to respond quickly and effectively. The State's high level of preparedness is due to their determined efforts to address emergency issues before times of crisis are upon us.

However, every community's level of preparedness begins with the individual. Find out if there is an active Citizen Corps Council in your community and volunteer to help. Involve your loved ones and co-workers in the process of emergency planning. At home, at school, and in your place of business, take the time now to develop emergency plans . . . and practice them! Ensure that proper emergency supplies are readily available in your home and at work.

I hope that you, your family and your colleagues will find the information in this brochure useful as you become better prepared for the unexpected. Together, the steps we take now will ensure that New York and its citizens are ready for whatever the future holds.

  
John R. Gibb

## Be Prepared

**AN EMERGENCY** — be it a natural disaster such as a flood or winter storm, a power outage or a terrorist act — can occur quickly and without warning. Although we cannot prevent emergencies, there are some simple things that we can do now as individuals, families and organizations to be better prepared.

**Two actions** that you can take to become better prepared to protect yourself and your family are to *develop an emergency plan* and *prepare a portable cache of emergency supplies* that can be used at home or at work.

**Learn about the types of emergencies or hazards that may affect your community.** Also learn about your community's emergency plans that are in place and how you will be notified of an event. Emergencies may strike when you and your family members are away from home, so learn about plans at your workplace, school or anywhere else you and your family spend time.

**Remember the special needs of your family members.** Infants, the elderly, and persons with disabilities need the same planning as everyone else, and sometimes a little more, to be prepared for an emergency. Make plans now on what to do with your pet in the event you have to leave your home. Pets are not permitted in public shelters.

**Pay attention to the news.** Know your local radio and television stations that can provide you with up-to-date information during an emergency. Make sure you know which of your stations are part of the Emergency Alert System (EAS). These EAS stations are the primary outlets for official information on protective actions.

**Be aware of your surroundings.** Report any out of the ordinary occurrences to the appropriate local authorities or call the New York State Homeland Security Tips Hotline at 1-866-SAFE-NYS. Also, report suspicious packages, unattended luggage or briefcases or other unusual items to law enforcement authorities.

## Develop an Emergency Plan

**Steps to take to create a household emergency plan include the following:**

- Meet with your family members and discuss the dangers of possible emergency events including fire, severe weather, hazardous spills, and terrorism.
- Discuss how you and your family will respond to each possible emergency. Know how to contact all family members at all times. Think 24/7 and 365.
- Discuss what to do in case of power outages or personal injuries.
- Draw a floor plan of your home. If possible, mark two escape routes from each room.
- Select two places to meet: a spot outside your home for an emergency such as fire, and a place away from your neighborhood in case you cannot return home (a real possibility during the day when most adults are at work and children are at school).
- Identify an out-of-town friend or relative as your "emergency family check-in contact" for everyone to call if the family gets separated. Make sure all family members have that number. It is often easier to call out-of-town during an emergency than within the affected area.
- Post emergency contact numbers near all telephones. Include local police, fire and health departments, poison control, your children's schools, doctors, child/senior care providers and insurance agents.
- Make sure everyone knows how and when to call 9-1-1 or your local emergency medical services phone number.
- Install safety features in your home such as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Inspect your home for potential hazards — and correct them.
- Have your family learn basic safety and first aid measures.
- Keep family records in a waterproof and fireproof safe.
- Have emergency supplies on hand.
- Teach adults how to turn off the water, gas and electricity at main switches. If for any reason you do turn off natural gas service to your home, call your natural gas utility to restore service. DO NOT attempt to restore gas service yourself.
- **PRACTICE** the Plan!

## Emergency Supplies

Often during an emergency, electricity, water, heat, air conditioning or telephone service may not work. Identifying and collecting emergency supplies now can save you precious time in the event you must evacuate or go without electricity, heat or water for an extended period of time. You should consider including the following items:

- A portable battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries.
- Flashlight(s) and plenty of extra batteries.
- At least a 3-day supply of water (1 gallon per person per day). Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Replace every 6 months.
- A 3- to 5-day supply of emergency ready-to-eat non-perishable packaged or canned foods that do not require refrigeration. Have a manual can opener available. Also include peanut butter, crackers, granola bars and other high energy foods.
- A change of clothing, rain gear and sturdy shoes for each family member.
- Sleeping bags, bedding or blankets for each family member.
- One week's supply of essential prescription medicines (be sure to check the expiration dates).
- Emergency heating equipment (used properly with adequate ventilation), with an ample supply of fuel and a fire extinguisher.
- Special items for infants, the elderly or family members with special needs.
- An extra pair of glasses or contact lenses and solution (be sure to check the expiration dates).
- A list of family physicians, important medical information, and the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers.
- Identification, credit cards, cash and photocopies of important family documents including home insurance information.
- An extra set of car and house keys.
- Items such as screwdrivers, cutters, and scissors; duct tape; waterproof matches; flares; plastic storage containers; needle and thread; pen and paper; garbage bags; and regular household bleach (for disinfecting).

## Emergency First Aid Kit

**Have these supplies on hand:** First aid manual, assortment of sterile adhesive bandages, sterile gauze pads, over-the-counter drugs (aspirin, antidiarrheal medications, activated charcoal, and syrup of ipecac), antiseptic ointment, soap, latex gloves, thermometer, tweezers and needles, and tongue depressors.

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

**Keep an eye on your neighbors and be prepared to lend a helping hand.** If someone you know is elderly or dependent on life-sustaining or health-related equipment such as a ventilator, respirator or oxygen concentrator, you should make plans now to ensure their needs are met during severe winter weather, possible power outages or other emergencies. **Check on them, if possible, during and after the emergency.** Notify others who could provide help such as neighbors, relatives, nearby friends and local emergency responders such as the fire department.

## Statewide Homeland Security Tips Hotline

The most effective homeland security strategy begins with the individual. In these uncertain times, be aware of your surroundings with regard to terrorism. If you see something unusual or suspicious, please contact New York State's counter-terrorism tips hotline at:

**1-866-SAFE-NYS**

in New York City, call the NYPD at:

**1-888-NYC-SAFE**

## For more information

visit our website at: [www.semo.state.ny.us](http://www.semo.state.ny.us) and the following websites:

New York State Office of Homeland Security  
[www.security.state.ny.us](http://www.security.state.ny.us)

New York State Department of Health  
[www.health.state.ny.us](http://www.health.state.ny.us)

American Red Cross  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)



*Be Alert, Be Ready...*

**Be Prepared!**

A Guide to Individual Preparedness



New York State  
Emergency Management Office