



When an emergency hits ARE YOU READY?

Start planning now to keep you and your family safe

You never know when an emergency might strike and you need to react. Your house might be without power, roads could be blocked or, as we saw most recently, you could be without drinkable or running water for several days.

But are you ready? It's a question we all need to be asking ourselves after the recent water crisis Novi experienced in October. While the water main break wouldn't necessarily be deemed an emergency, it was still a valuable lesson in emergency preparedness for both the City and its residents.

"I think it absolutely opened some eyes and gave us as City officials the opportunity to reassess our position and make some corrections," said Marshall Johnson, Emergency Management Coordinator for the City of Novi.

Johnson, who has been working in

emergency management for 30-plus years, said he was impressed with the City's response, especially the communication aspect. Within hours of the water main break, Novi had Community Emergency Response Team volunteers activated, and portable restrooms, bottled water, and potable and non-potable water available for residents to use.

But what if they weren't able to do that? What if it was an emergency on a much larger scale and first responders were tied up in life-saving efforts or infrastructure preservation? Those are questions Johnson hopes residents are asking now.

"Since I have been in this business, it's almost like people don't think about a plan until it happens and that is unfortunate," he said. "Having a plan takes the stress away and gives you a sense of security

BUILD A KIT

Include enough food, water, and medical supplies for your needs in your emergency kit to last for at least 72 hours.



when you know everyone knows what to do in an emergency."

In the Novi area, the biggest disaster threat we could experience is weather related, followed by a hazardous materials spill or possible violent encounters. A severe enough storm this winter could knock out power, shut down roads and impact drinking water. Could you survive?

According to FEMA, each person should be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours in case public safety services are unable to get to you. You should have food, water, a first-aid kit, flashlight, battery-powered radio, necessary medications, and extra blankets and clothes at the ready. If you have pets, you need to be able to take care of them, too.

"Having a plan allows you to mobilize your family quickly and everyone knows what to do," Johnson said.

It doesn't have to be a major disaster,



either, for you to have a plan in place. Say you live in a two-story home, do you and your family know what to do if you are on the second floor and the fire is below you?

While Johnson would love for everyone to have preparedness kits and plans in place, he said just talking about where to go and what to do or occasionally practicing it is important.

"If something happens you aren't going to have a lot of time to react so you need to know what to do and where to go," he said.

Johnson said the best resource for emergency preparedness is the FEMA website ready.gov. It has detailed plans for all scenarios, ways people can stay informed and how you can take action.

Locally, residents are encouraged to join the Novi Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to learn about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster-response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. You can learn more at cityofnovi.org.

Residents should also sign up for Nixle alerts at nixle.com, a free text-messaging system Novi uses to report traffic issues, road closures and other public safety matters, and the



Emergency Notification System that is used to send important emergency notifications to resident's cell phones when they are away from home.

To learn more, visit cityofnovi.org and search "emergency preparedness."

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Sign up for Nixle alerts at nixle.com and search "Novi"
- Register for the Emergency Notification System on cityofnovi.org
- Visit ready.gov for additional information

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