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National Preparedness Month

By Amy Stanley

September is National Preparedness Month sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security's Ready Campaign. NAPO (National Association of Professional Organizers) is a proud participant. Right now we are in the midst of hurricane season and we hear warnings about being prepared for the storm. But being prepared can mean many things. Think of all the possible emergencies that can impact you and your family – fires, storms, car accidents, etc. But what about the smaller emergencies – computer crashes, car breakdowns, etc? Being organized can help in any catastrophe, small or large. Here are some tips:

- ✓ Have lists of what to pack. You can use your travel list as a basis for an emergency packing list, but do you know where to find it? If you had 20 minutes to pack, 8 hours to pack, 2 days to pack – do you know what things would be most important to pack during those situations?
- ✓ Have a back-up plan. If you know your car isn't reliable, but others rely on you to take them places or pick them up (children, parents, etc.), have a plan or someone as a back-up that you can call to help out in case of an emergency. What if you are in a meeting and can't get home to meet the repair man? Is there someone to call to help you out? If need be, keep a list of those neighbors, friends or family. Make sure you have those numbers programmed into your cell phone or at least with you at all times.
- ✓ Back-up your computer! I can't say this one enough. Think of all the information you have on your computer and how you would feel if you lost it all. That should motivate you enough to take a few minutes out of your day to back-up your computer.
- ✓ On a very simple, non-emergency prepared topic – are you prepared to be organized? You might think – what does THAT mean?
 - Most importantly – are you in the frame of mind to organize? NEVER tackle an organizing project if you aren't ready to be organized and your mind is not ready to tackle this. Of course, organizing can be a daunting task and not many of us look forward to it, but there is a line that divides us. If you would like to be organized and know it needs done, that is different than making excuses for your disorganization yet trying to tackle it. If you are making excuse after excuse for being disorganized and every time you try to tackle a project you don't make much progress and or the progress you make is canceled out in week and things are back to chaos, you aren't ready. It will be just another chore that not only will you not accomplish, but you will not keep up with. How badly do you want to be organized?
 - Don't tackle big projects or certain organizing projects when you have too much going on in your life – planning a wedding, the immediate death of someone, starting a new job, etc. The larger the organizing project, the more time and devotion you need. You can clean out a kitchen junk drawer in less than 20 minutes (usually!), but decluttering your basement could possibly take 12 weeks or longer depending upon the size and clutter. Think of the difference in the commitment you need for each.
 - Do you have the tools to be organized? Make sure you have containers, boxes, markers, etc. Look around your home. What are you not using that can assist you in your organizing project. You might need to go shopping to get the supplies. If it is a large project, don't start without having the organizing supplies you need.
 - Being organized also means knowing what you have and where it is. In an emergency, would you be able to give a home inventory list?

For more information in regards to National Preparedness Month, visit <http://www.ready.gov/america/npm08/intro.html>

Need help with getting prepared for organizing or emergencies, contact **ORGANIZING BY AMY** and check out our monthly special.

Readers Share Organizing Tips...

Monthly Question: **HOW HAVE YOU PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY – BIG OR SMALL?**

For those of you who send an email answering this question or sharing other organizing tips, we will post it in our next newsletter. You will also get 10% off any organizing service provided by **ORGANIZING BY AMY**.

Calendar – September 2008

Monday, September 1, 2008 – *Labor Day*

Sunday, September 7, 2008 – *Grandparents Day*. Call your Grandparents and ask them what they have been up to. If you don't have a Grandparent, contact someone special in your life to let them know you are thinking of them, especially someone older.

Sunday, September 7, 2008 – *Steelers 1st Regular Season game vs. Texans at 1 PM*

Sunday, September 7, 2008 – *Church Food Festival (St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Greensburg)*

Saturday & Sunday, September 13 & 14, 2008 – *Hempfield Fall Festival (Hempfield Park, Greensburg)*

Saturday, September 27, 2008 – *Schramm's Farm Festival Starts today*

<http://www.schrammfarms.com/home.php>

Saturday & Sunday, September 27 & 28, 2008 – *Westmoreland Sale for Kids (Consignment Sale)*

<http://www.saleforkids.com>

Sunday, September 28, 2008 – *6th Annual Sharing & Caring Event (Mt. View Inn, Greensburg)*

<http://www.scfwc.org>

Monthly Checklist – September

This section provides readers with a monthly reminder of things to do. There are so many things we have to remember. Some of those things can be done on a monthly and or yearly basis. Here is a reminder of what to do THIS month (each month will have a different list):

Yearly:

- Have a physical. When was the last time you went to the doctor? Do you only go when you are sick? When you meet with your doctor to have physical, they can schedule a base line list of blood tests (cholesterol, thyroid, sugar, etc.). This can help spot problems before major issues.
- See a dermatologist. Summer is over and our days out in the sun are limited. Now is a great time to have a dermatologist check you. They will look for suspicious moles, lesions, etc. Skin cancer is serious. For more information, visit <http://www.skincancer.org>
- Check your credit report. Everyone is entitled to one free credit check yearly. Visit <https://www.annualcreditreport.com>
- Video your house. Then put the video/DVD in a fire safe for "safe" keeping. This could be used in case of a home emergency. For \$35, **ORGANIZING BY AMY** is willing to do this for you – just contact us.
- Prepare for Halloween. Start looking for costumes.

Monthly:

- Women – SELF BREAST EXAM!
- Check smoke detectors and flashlights
- Download pictures from digital camera
- Back up computer

Monthly Special

National Preparedness Month has you thinking – am I prepared? Having a home inventory list, packing lists, etc. are imperative to being prepared in case of an emergency. Let **ORGANIZING BY AMY** work with you to set up for these things. For \$20, Amy will work with you to come up with your home inventory or any other preparedness list you feel would help you. For \$35, as mentioned in the Monthly Checklist, we will come and video tape your home for your safe keeping.

Product Highlights

Here we like to highlight products/ideas that you should check out... To coordinate with this month's theme – BEING PREPARED:

Pet First Aid Secrets. We should remember our pets in preparation for emergencies. Click here to see this product to help

<http://redhead6.pet1staid.hop.clickbank.net>

Act Now, Survive an Emergency Later! This will give you an overview on surviving in an emergency. It provides you with tips on what you can do now to prepare for a future disaster.

<http://redhead6.10615.hop.clickbank.net>

New Lifesaving Medical Program. Managing our health and history can literally save a life during an emergency. This is a program that can be stored on any USB enabled device (computers, etc.) with medical history and medical advice.

<http://redhead6.norman926.hop.clickbank.net>

Slow Computer Emergency Repair Kit Ebook. We talked about it! Take care of your computer to avoid a disaster.

<http://redhead6.norman926.hop.clickbank.net>

Visit ORGANIZING BY AMY. We have many product sites that can be helpful in giving balance to you and your life.

<http://www.organizingbyamy.com/products.html>

Announcements

There will be one more month (October) of **ORGANIZING BY AMY'S** Newsletter before I go on "maternity leave". The newsletter and business will pick back up mid-January – A new year to start your organization! Feel free to still visit our website or email us during this time although responses will be limited.

"You hit home runs not by chance but by preparation." – Roger Maris

Happy Organizing!

Amy Stanley

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