

SEPTEMBER IS PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS MONTH

Be Prepared in the Event of a Public Health Emergency



Public health emergencies can come in many natural forms such as floods, tornadoes, or even man-made threats such as bioterrorism. These public health emergencies may occur without any warning or very little warning which is why the Scott County Health Department encourages every resident of Scott County to do what they can to prepare for these emergencies before they occur.



The first thing to do is **develop a communications plan**. Many times family members may not be at the same location when an emergency occurs. Children may be at school and adults may be at work or other locations. It is important to designate a place to meet as well as a backup location. Also, a person should be designated as an emergency contact. This person should not live in the same neighborhood.

Next, **make an emergency supply kit**. There may not be time to search for supplies during or after an emergency and stores may not be open to buy the supplies you need. The kit should include the following supplies according to the Iowa Department of Public Health:

- Water—at least one gallon per person per day for at least 3 days, stored in a plastic container
- Food—at least a 3-day supply of nonperishable food
- First-Aid Kit
- Prescription Medications
- Battery-powered radio
- Flashlights
- Extra Batteries
- Can Opener
- Bedding for each person
- Personal hygiene items
- Dust mask or cotton T-shirt for each person to help filter the air
- A whistle to signal for help
- Waterproof container to store important documents

All family members should know where the emergency kit is stored.

Free Iowa Guide to Keeping You Safe

The Iowa Department of Public Health and the state wide emergency preparedness campaign, Protect Iowa Health, are pleased to offer a free guide that contains potentially lifesaving information including instructions for making a family emergency communication plan, as well as a checklist for developing an emergency supply kit. The guide is available in both English and Spanish and can be obtained by calling 1-866-339-7906 or by logging onto <http://www.protectioniowahealth.org>.



Public Health Preparedness in Scott County

The Scott County Health Department is dedicated to protecting the health of our community. The Public Health Preparedness division of the Scott County Health Department is responsible for all of the planning activities that allow for a safe and prepared community operating through a grant from the Iowa Department of Public Health. Staff develops plans and ideas to help protect the community against threats such as pandemic influenza, biological or chemical agent, and natural disasters. The staff also actively works with other community agencies to develop good communication and the sharing of resources.

The Scott County Health Department maintains a Public Health Preparedness link on our website, <http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health>, which contains updated resources in preparation for public health emergencies. There are checklists available for download to ensure that families, schools, churches, businesses, and organizations are all prepared for the Pandemic Flu, as well as links to local and national resources.

The Scott County Health Department has already begun planning with the community for what would happen in the event of a public health emergency. A community meeting was held on June 22nd where representatives for schools, businesses, government, and hospitals met to discuss preparation for public health emergencies. A bi-state meeting is scheduled in October to continue discussions.

Is the Quad Cities Prepared for a Flu Crisis?

The Quad Cities is working hard to prepare for public health emergencies such as a flu crisis. On August 1st, the Scott County Health Department organized a Public Health Preparedness Drill at the River Center in Davenport. The focus of this drill was to simulate a mass flu clinic. The drill involved staff from the Scott County Health Department, Rock Island County Health Department, Region 6, Genesis Visiting Nurse Association, Trinity Visiting Nurse Association, American Red Cross, Translations Unlimited, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Scott County Sheriff's Office, Hamilton Technical College, and numerous other volunteers. The purpose of the drills is to discover what works, what does not work, what is needed, and to use the agreements between agencies. Lessons are learned with each drill and the preparation that is being done now is essential to the success of an actual mass clinic.



What You Can Do if the Pandemic Flu Comes to the Quad Cities?

Follow these tips from the American Red Cross to keep yourself and others from getting and passing on the virus. These tips are helpful in staying well year round.

- Wash your hands often
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid putting your hands in your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home if you are sick

For more information, visit the American Red Cross' website at: <http://www.redcross.org/>.

If you would like to receive this newsletter and other Scott County Health Department press releases electronically, please add your name to our e-mail list on our website at: www.scottcountyiowa.com/health.