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Workshop Prepares Community For Disasters

"Residents Urged to Register for Free Event"

Oneida County will conduct a *Disaster Preparedness Workshop* designed to prepare county residents in the event a disaster were to impact our community, Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr. announced today.

"The tragic events of 9-11 and the catastrophic loss of life and property in the wakes of hurricanes Katrina and Irene have taught us that disaster can strike anywhere at anytime. Oneida County residents should be prepared to provide a measure of safety and security for themselves and their families should an emergency arise, natural or manmade, until such time that the appropriate agencies can respond to their needs," Picente said.

The workshop, conducted by the Oneida County Health Department, is being held on **Thursday July 19th from 4:30 to 7:30 pm** at the **Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL)** building in downtown Utica. The workshop is free and open to the public and will involve visiting various stations to learn about disaster risks facing our area and how best to respond to them. The interactive exercise takes about twenty minutes. Those wishing to participate must pre-register on the Oneida County Health Department's web site at www.ocgov.net/oneida/health.

In addition to learning what to do in special circumstances such as having children, a family member with special needs, or pets those taking part will receive instruction on how to build their own starter family emergency preparedness kit. The first 300 households will receive a free starter kit which includes a hand-crank weather radio, first-aid kit, water storage container, waterproof document holder and more. The kits are limited to one per household while supplies last. Light refreshments will also be available.

Support materials will be provided by the Utica and Rome Salvation Army, the American Red Cross, the Herkimer-Oneida Organizations Active in Disasters (HOOAD) and members of the County Health Emergency Response Plan (CHERP) committee who will also be in attendance.

"We each have a responsibility to be prepared should disaster strike or an emergency occur. Your Oneida County government is pleased to provide this informative workshop that will better equip us all to meet that responsibility," Picente added.

For more information or to register for the *Disaster Preparedness Workshop* visit our web site at www.ocgov.net/oneida/health.