

Online resources help with flood insurance awareness

Hurricane season begins June 1, and now is the time for Virginians to consider protecting their property with flood insurance – it takes 30 days for a new flood insurance policy to take effect. The National Flood Insurance Program has created materials that can help emergency managers with their outreach efforts.

- **Countdown Clock:** Residents cannot wait until a flood strikes to get protected. The “hurricane season countdown clock” is a widget you can include on your agency’s home page to remind your residents just how much time they have to get ready:
http://www.fema.gov/help/widgets/countdown_index.shtm.
- **Hurricane Flooding Fact Sheet:** Storm surge, heavy rains and inland flooding can cause significant flooding in areas not commonly considered to be at risk for hurricane damage. This fact sheet provides the reality of risks for hurricane season flooding:
http://www.hostingimagesemail.com/fema/2009/may/hurricane_season_floodseason.pdf.
- **30-Day Wait Fact Sheet:** These tips and messages help residents understand why they need to think ahead about flood preparations:
http://www.hostingimagesemail.com/fema/2009/may/30_days_fact_sheet.pdf.
- **Video Testimonial:** Sometimes the best way to learn is by example. Frank Billingsley of Houston will share his hurricane story and talk about the close call that convinced him to get covered by flood insurance:
http://www.fema.gov/medialibrary/media_records/365.

Virginia’s Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday

The Ready Virginia Web site now offers information about the annual sales tax holiday established by the General Assembly to ease the cost of creating an emergency supply kit. From May 25 through May 31, the purchase of certain items is exempt from the Commonwealth’s sales and use taxes. Customers may use manufacturer’s coupons to lower the price of an item so that it will qualify for the \$60 or \$1,000 price cap.

Items include bottled water, flashlights, battery-powered radios, batteries and first aid kits. Frequently asked questions, media kit and links to the Virginia Department of Taxation’s complete list of tax-exempt items are available at

http://www.readyvirginia.gov/stayinformed/sales_tax_holiday.cfm.

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Lutheran Family Services of Virginia provides loving temporary or permanent homes for children in foster care; helps families seeking to adopt through foster care, internationally or in the U.S.; and strengthens families through community-based services in six regions in Virginia. LFSVA also manages three schools in western Virginia that offer intensive educational, developmental and mental health services to young people ages 5 to 22. LFSVA partners with the Virginia Synod to help congregations manage conflict, offers grief services in the Shenandoah Valley, and is an affiliate of **Lutheran Disaster Response**.