



If Disaster Strikes, Will Your House of Worship Be Ready?

In recent years, Georgia has been hit by severe storms, extreme heat, a crippling freeze, deadly tornadoes and dangerous wildfires – resulting in the loss of property and even human life. Unfortunately, there are still many Georgians who are not prepared for the next disaster.

In times of crisis, many people look to faith-based organizations for guidance and support. As part of Praise & Preparedness – a new initiative launched by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security (GEMA) in partnership with your local emergency management agency – faith-based organizations statewide are encouraging their members to prepare before disaster strikes.

In addition, congregations often play an integral role in local readiness and recovery, providing shelter and supplies before and after disasters. The Praise & Preparedness Partnership Program offers three ways to build upon these traditional roles.

- **Facility Safety:** Conduct a facility safety assessment and complete or update the emergency plan for all the congregational buildings.
- **Congregant Safety:** Encourage members of the congregation to develop family emergency plans.
- **Expanded Ministries:** Explore new opportunities for the congregation to become involved in community emergency disaster relief efforts, feeding and sheltering programs.

We know that the next emergency is coming. We just don't know when or what kind it will be, so take simple steps now to protect yourself and your loved ones. For more preparedness tools, tips and resources, visit GEMA's *Ready Georgia* campaign at www.ready.ga.gov or download GEMA's free *Ready Georgia* mobile app for iPhone and Android for information on the go. For more information on specific risks in your community, contact your local emergency management agency.

