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**KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT**  
**Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**September 2, 2017**

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**Emergency Management Division Reminds Residents to Be Prepared!**  
**September is National Preparedness Month**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – The images coming out of Houston are heart-wrenching: people wading through flood waters, homes and businesses destroyed, pets left to fend for themselves. Kent County has seen tornadoes, flooding, blizzards and other severe weather over the years. While the devastation has not been as intense as what Hurricane Harvey left in Texas, damage can create a number of critical, life-threatening issues. During National Preparedness Month, the Kent County Emergency Management Division reminds you to create or update an emergency plan for you and your loved ones.

“How you respond to the conditions of disasters, whether it’s an act of nature or a terrorist attack, can make the difference in the outcomes for you, your family, and those you love,” said Jack Stewart, Emergency Management Coordinator for Kent County. “Create a plan, talk about it regularly, and share it with family or friends who may be able to help in times of crisis.”

You should always be sure to rotate your basic emergency kit to keep it fresh and up-to-date. A good way to prepare is to think about what you would need for camping at a rustic campground where there is no electricity. Keep up to fourteen days of water and non-perishable food for your household and pets, a first aid kit, an all-weather radio, a flashlight, extra batteries, a one week supply of medications and personal hygiene items in your home at all times. Make sure your vehicle emergency kit is updated as well. In addition, keep a list of your medications in case you need to leave home in a hurry, and remember to back up important documents and files and keep them where they can be accessed immediately if needed.

While thinking about your family, also remember to check on your neighbors and friends, especially those with special needs, such as those who are elderly or non-ambulatory. Pets should also be a part of your emergency plan; be sure to keep dog licenses updated, microchip all pets and have a place where they can stay if you can’t remain in your home.

Websites for more information on preparedness, including plan ideas and supply lists:

[www.AccessKent.com/GETREADY](http://www.AccessKent.com/GETREADY)

<http://www.getreadykent.org/>

[www.BeMittenReady.com](http://www.BeMittenReady.com)

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