

Supervisor's September Message - Taking Steps During National Preparedness Month Can Protect Your Family Year-Round

By: Brian Kulpa, Town of Amherst Supervisor

The Town recently celebrated the retirement of Jim Zymanek, longtime Director of Emergency Services and Safety, who gave 40 years of service to Amherst. Jim put in countless hours of work to create and solidify the Town's Emergency Services & Safety Department and led us through several emergencies during his tenure.

As we mark National Preparedness Month in September, I want to introduce Brandon Peters, the Town's new Director of Emergency Services and Safety. Brandon has decades of experience, having worked under Jim as our Emergency Services Coordinator, in addition to serving as Chief of Eggertsville Hose Company and previously working in Erie County's Homeland Security and Emergency Services.

During National Preparedness Month we remind residents of the steps to take to be prepared for an emergency. In our region, the most common natural disaster is still snowstorms, but we are seeing an increase in extreme weather events with heat index warnings becoming more common; several of our neighbors experienced tornados this past summer; and more. Going through a "supply checklist" is a great place to start. You can find a list, along with an outline on how to create an emergency plan, on the Town's website by [CLICKING HERE](#).

The Emergency Services & Safety Department also maintains an Emergency Response Database of specific needs of residents. If you or someone in your household has a disability or a special medical need, when you call for help in an emergency the responders need to know. Whether the emergency affects your entire community, your street, or just your home, seconds can make a life-or-death difference. That's why we encourage you to take a minute to fill out the form and return it to the Town of Amherst Office of Emergency Services & Safety. A link to the form is easily found by here: [Emergency Response Data Form](#) or scroll to the bottom of this message for a copy of the form. Some situations where this form is helpful is knowing if a patient is oxygen-dependent and where tanks are stored, or if a resident is unable to ambulate, then firefighters are aware of this on the way to a potential incident.

From each disaster and emergency, we learn how to better handle the next one. During the blizzard of 2022 we were reminded how critical communication is. Despite warnings of the severity of storm, we still dealt with stranded motorists that needed to be rescued. Fortunately, our responders from emergency services, police department, dispatch, fire companies, highway and others, were able to help numerous individuals in need. We ask residents to do your part and stay connected through announcements on our website, social media and news media outlets. And we need residents to heed warnings for their own safety and the safety of their neighbors and responders.

The Town's Emergency Services and Safety Department is available to meet with groups throughout the Town to help create preparedness plans. Please call (716) 631-7122 for information. Additionally, the Citizen Preparedness Corps through NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services is a great community partner, offering trainings throughout the year. Visit the calendar of events found here: [Citizen Preparedness Training Calendar](#).

It isn't a question of "if" the next emergency will strike, but "when." Take a few moments today during National Preparedness Month to better be prepared for a situation down the road.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE DATA FORM

Filing of this form is 100% Voluntary and Confidential

Town of Amherst Office of Emergency Management

Brandon Peters, Director

Daric Will, Coordinator

Everybody has needs ... Do the right people know what yours are?

IF you or someone in your household has a disability or a special medical need, the people whose job it is to respond when you call for help in an emergency need to know. Whether it affects your entire community, your street or just your home, seconds can make a life-or-death difference. That's why we encourage you to take a minute to fill out this form and return it to the address provided below. Having specific details about your special situation will significantly help us to help you. For more information contact (716) 631-7122.

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Date _____

Street Address _____ Apt. No. _____

Town / State / Zip _____

Type of Residence (please check one):

_____ Single Family Home _____ Assisted Living Facility _____ Senior Housing Complex / Facility

Phone # _____ How many live in the household? _____

Age _____ Date of Birth _____ Your language, if not English _____

Emergency contact for the above-listed resident:

Name _____ Relationship to resident _____

Primary phone # _____ Secondary phone # _____

(circle one)

yes no Are you confined to your bed?
yes no Are you on dialysis?
yes no Are you hard of hearing or deaf?
yes no Do you live alone?
yes no Do you use a wheelchair?
yes no Can you walk with assistance?
yes no Do you have an intellectual disability?

Please describe: _____

Are you on constant oxygen?
Are you visually impaired?
Are you on life support?
Do you have your own transportation?
Do you have a service animal?
Do you have mental health concerns?

(circle one)

yes no
yes no
yes no
yes no
yes no
yes no

Please return this form to:

Town of Amherst

Dept. of Emergency Management

4220 Bailey Ave, Amherst, NY 14226

This form can also be found online at www.amherst.ny.us. Use Keyword **NEEDS**.