



**United States Coast Guard**  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security



# **Emergency Preparedness Awareness Campaign Guide**

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## **About Ready Coast Guard**

True to our motto, *semper paratus*, the Coast Guard's unquestioned operational readiness enables us to save other individuals and families during disaster situations. We in the Coast Guard community are nevertheless subject to numerous emergencies, from natural and man-made hazards to pandemic influenza and potential terrorist attack. We must prepare our own families with the same diligence that we prepare to execute our missions. Knowing that our families are safe and secure will afford us the peace of mind we need so that we can focus on completing the mission at hand.

Emergency preparedness starts with awareness, but research tells us that most Americans do not prepare for a potential emergency because of factors like fear, denial, time, and cost. Research also shows that military families are no more prepared than the rest of the population. Overcoming this inertia requires a targeted campaign and quality outreach products. Coast Guard personnel deployed away from their families need to have confidence that their loved ones are safe so they can focus on their critical duties.

Ready Coast Guard is a proactive campaign to inform the Coast Guard community about relevant hazards and encourage them to have an emergency plan and kit. Through education and community awareness activities, the campaign encourages individuals and families to plan and prepare for all hazards.

## **Purpose of the Campaign Guide**

The purpose of this guide is to provide how-to information to the Work-Life staff and ombudsmen who will implement the Ready Coast Guard campaign at the local level, reaching out to Coast Guard personnel and their families.

## **Themes, Messages, and Methods**

The central themes of Ready Coast Guard are as follows:

- Emergency preparedness is everyone's responsibility.
- Individuals and families should prepare to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours after an emergency hits.
- Family readiness enables Coast Guard personnel to focus on their mission, confident that their families will be okay.

The Ready Coast Guard campaign is tied to the Ready.Gov national campaign sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). As with the Ready.Gov campaign, the key messages of Ready Coast Guard are as follows:

- Be Informed
- Make a Plan
- Build a Kit

Ready Coast Guard information is action-oriented:

- What individuals should do to be prepared
- What to do in the event of various emergencies
- Where to get more information

A community awareness campaign using Ready Coast Guard tools can be executed in many ways. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ALCOAST message about the Ready Coast Guard emergency preparedness community awareness campaign
- Regional and local dissemination of information—briefings, fact sheets, articles
- Special events and initiatives—open houses, fairs, school programs

The Ready Coast Guard community awareness campaign will require sustained efforts to have the desired enduring effects: to improve Coast Guard personnel and family emergency preparedness.

The rest of this guide provides ideas and suggestions for launching and sustaining the Ready Coast Guard campaign, explains how to use the provided tools and information, and suggests ways to evaluate and improve campaign efforts.

## **Campaign Responsibilities**

The organizations below have the following roles related to taking the Ready Coast Guard campaign forward.

- Health, Safety & Work-Life Directorate, Office of Work-Life—Encourage long-term sustainment of the Ready Coast Guard campaign by releasing an ALCOAST message, updating and refreshing general preparedness information and guidance to the Coast Guard community awareness website, providing information and outreach tools, sharing best practices in community awareness activities, and making appropriate program adjustments based on evaluations of campaign effectiveness.
- Regional and Unit Commanders—Promote emergency preparedness in Coast Guard personnel and their families through active support of the Ready Coast Guard campaign and those executing it.
- Work-Life Staff and Ombudsmen—Execute the local Ready Coast Guard campaign through the use of existing media and incorporation of awareness materials and activities in orientation meetings, programs, and special events. Explore opportunities to partner with other Coast Guard and community organizations advancing campaign themes and messages.

## Executing a Campaign at the Regional or Command Level

To sustain a Ready Coast Guard campaign, plan and schedule a mix of annual and ongoing activities, particularly in September during National Preparedness Month. When possible, plan activities to coincide with existing events and programs—it requires less effort to publicize and is likely to maximize participation.

### *Ideas for Sustainment*

- Secure command support and participation.
- Consider a highly visible event attended and endorsed by the applicable commander.
- Publish articles in online newsletters/newspapers and include the kids’ activity sheet insert.

### *Ideas for Annual Activities*

- Plan annual activities to coincide with National Preparedness Month in September.
- Cooperate with local corporate sponsors to donate giveaways (flashlight, first aid kit, etc.).
- Make presentations at schools and host a poster contest for children.
- Integrate preparedness information into holiday messages.

### *Ideas for Ongoing Activities*

- Include preparedness presentation and fact sheets in orientation activities and meetings, open houses, etc.
- Participate in speaking engagements or have a booth at scheduled events.
- Publish articles periodically in online newsletters/newspapers.
- Post local preparedness information on the Regional Work-Life web page (e.g., local hazards, mass warning systems, evacuation routes).
- Engage Coast Guard personnel, family members, and civilians as volunteers to help with outreach booths and speaking engagements. Red Cross representatives may help identify interested volunteers.

Research shows that an effective way to reach adults is through their children. In addition to using the kids’ activity sheet provided, check out the family-friendly materials available at [www.ready.gov/kids/index.html](http://www.ready.gov/kids/index.html).

A sample schedule for sustaining a command-level Ready Coast Guard campaign could use the following format:

<b>Task Description</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b># Reached</b>
Hold planning group meeting				
Publish article in newsletter/paper				
Hold open house with preparedness theme				
Have a booth at ACS bazaar				
Etc.				

## Campaign Tools

Ready Coast Guard tools and information designed for local use are available at <http://www.uscg.mil/hr/cg111/ready.asp>. The tools are available in ready-to-use format; however, some materials also are designed to be tailored with local information, such as contact numbers or specific procedures.

### ***Tailorable Briefing on Emergency Preparedness***

This PowerPoint presentation emphasizes the need to take personal responsibility to prepare yourself and your family for emergencies that could occur in the area. It teaches the basic steps each Coast Guard member and family should take.

The file should be tailored to local needs by featuring known local hazards and incorporating pertinent shelter and evacuation information as well as contact information for applicable authorities and sources of information and assistance.



The briefing includes notes pages to prompt the presentation delivery. It can be used in campaign kick-off events, orientation sessions, open houses, and similar occasions and can set the stage for handing out relevant fact and activity sheets.

### ***Fact and Activity Sheets***

A kids' activity sheet and more than 30 fact sheets are provided on topics ranging from making family emergency plans and kits to specific natural and man-made hazards, diseases, and terrorist threats. In a given climate or area, several of the fact sheets will be irrelevant, so the idea is not to use all of them. Instead, select sheets of highest interest and relevance to your audience to make a manageable packet.

These sheets can be reproduced on in-house color printers or taken as master copies or files to a commercial copier.



### ***Tips of the Month***

Tips of the Month are provided to use in local Coast Guard social media and e-mails to sustain attention to the preparedness campaign. Each tip of the month includes tips on preparing for several common hazards. These can be used as-is or tailored to heighten local interest.

### ***Hazard Information Package***

Pre-packaged, hazard-specific information is provided and can be tailored for postings on local ombudsman Facebook pages to further share the information as appropriate with the spouses in their units. Additionally, information is provided that can be e-mailed to the appropriate

individuals in the ombudsmen registry with the request that they pass it on to people in their units.

### ***Evaluation and Feedback***

At the headquarters level, the Office of Work-Life will perform evaluation activities to ensure that the reach, impact, and effectiveness of the Ready Coast Guard campaign are maximized, including surveys to measure the level of awareness of the dangers of an emergency situation and the level of preparedness among the targeted audiences. It also is important that local outreach efforts be documented and evaluated. Suggested methods include the following:

- Use the campaign schedule to track the activities and events where Ready Coast Guard is included and record the number of people reached.
- Document where Coast Guard preparedness information is released in regional or local media.
- Hold question-and-answer sessions after preparedness presentations. Based on the types of questions asked, make improvements in later presentations and pass feedback up the chain.

### **Questions/Comments**

Questions and comments regarding the implementation of the Ready Coast Guard campaign can be submitted by calling Commandant (CG-111), Office of Work-Life at 202-475-5140. To locate the regional Work-Life staff at your Health, Safety & Work-Life Field Office, call 1-800-872-4957.