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FEMA & FCC UNVEIL NEW TIP SHEET FOR CONSUMERS ON HOW TO COMMUNICATE DURING DISASTERS

Earthquakes, Hurricanes & Other Recent Emergencies Underscore Need to Empower the Public with Practical Information on Preparing for How to Communicate Before a Disaster Strikes – And How to Better Communicate During and After a Disaster

WASHINGTON, D.C. – September 21, 2011 – As part of National Preparedness Month, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today released new tips for consumers aimed at preparing them for major disasters when communications networks are more likely to be compromised or damaged. Nearly one month ago, a 5.8 magnitude earthquake and Hurricane Irene struck the East Coast. In the minutes and hours that followed, mobile networks experienced significant network congestion, temporarily making it harder for millions of people to reach loved ones and emergency services. This tip sheet aims to help prepare Americans about how to communicate with each other, and loved ones, in the event of another disaster.

“Between the East Coast earthquake, Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee, and wildfires in Texas and California, we have had a lot of powerful reminders lately that disasters can strike anytime, anywhere – and can often make it difficult for the public to communicate with friends, loved ones or emergency personnel,” **said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate**. “An important part of preparing for disasters includes getting ready for potential communications challenges, whether caused by power outages or heavy cell network congestion. These simple tips are easy for anyone to follow and could make a world of difference when it matters the most.”

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski said, “When disaster strikes, the ability to communicate is essential. However, power outages and other issues can interfere with the way people ordinarily communicate, making it harder to reach loved ones or emergency services. The FCC is committed to ensuring the public’s safety through the reliability of our nation’s communications networks. But there are also simple steps that consumers can take to prepare for a disaster as well as practical ways to better communicate during and after an event. I encourage all Americans to become familiar these tips and share them with friends and family.”

To read a joint blog post by FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski, click [HERE](#).

To read the Tip Sheet for How to Communicate During Disasters, check out www.ready.gov/tech OR www.fcc.gov

Consumers with questions about their particular mobile phone devices should contact their wireless provider or equipment manufacturer.

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