Disaster preparedness is everyone's responsibility

By CFAY Public Affairs

In order to be prepared for natural or man-made disasters and emergencies, Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) is urging all personnel to review their emergency family action plan, update family emergency kits and take other action to ensure they are prepared for all emergency situations.

Operation Prepare. As a resource, families are encouraged to go online and utilize "Operation Prepare," which is an emergency preparedness program initiated by Commander, Navy Installations Command for community members of Navy ashore installations.

The website has nearly 40 simple ready-to-use fact sheets, checklists, and forms on how to prepare for various natural and man-made disasters. Visit the website at www.cnic.navy.mil/ and click on the emergency management tab for more information.

Emergency Kit. According to Operation Prepare, you need enough supplies for every family member for at least three days, maybe longer. The main items to have in your kit include water, food, and first aid supplies.

Depending on your family, you may also need special items for babies, prescription medications, or supplies for your pets.

You may not be at home when disaster strikes, so make smaller emergency kits to keep at work and in your car. You also need a portable kit to take with you if you go to a shelter or evacuate.

Family Plan. Further, Operation Prepare states that when a disaster happens, your family may not be together in one place. You need to pick places to meet, have contact information for everyone, and discuss in advance what you will do during various types of emergencies.

Depending on the type of emergency, you may shelter in place, move to a shelter or safe haven, or evacuate. Formalizing your preparations in a written family plan is a good way to ensure everyone knows what to do when there is an emergency.

Your plan needs to take into account special concerns such as caring for very young and very old family members, protecting your property, retaining critical financial or insurance records, and caring for your pets.

If there is an emergency, families need to become active in seeking out information and instructions through multiple official sources which will include;

• CFAY Channel 15

• Eagle 810 AM Radio

• CFAY Website www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka

• City of Yokosuka disaster information e-mail service, register for updates in English by e-mailing di-yokosuka-t@ktaiwork.jp.

Emergencies can happen at any time, while at home, or work. The following are instructions on what to do in a few different scenarios. It is important to note that emergency responders can't help you, unless they know where you are.

Fleet Activities Yokosuka:

• Stay in your home or go to the nearest authorized base shelter.

• Initiate family emergency plan.

• Tune in for emergency instructions.

U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka personnel undergo mass casualties training as part of the commands disaster preparedness plan. CFAY urges all personnel to review their emergency family action plan, update family emergency kits and take other action to ensure they are prepared for all emergency situations.

Photo by Richard McManus

Negishi or Ikego housing detachments:

• Stay in your home or go to the nearest safe place. Do not leave the housing detachment unless instructed to do so by emergency responders.

• Initiate family emergency plan.

• Tune in for emergency instructions.

• In case of evacuation, muster at Club Takemiya (Ikego) and the Community Center (Negishi). Transportation to Yokosuka will be provided.

Off base:

• Go to the nearest safe place (home, shelter etc.) and contact your command. A Japanese evacuation shelter near your home is a safe place.

• If you attempt to move locations, tell someone or leave a clearly visible note for CFAY emergency responders. Ensure you can be found.

• CFAY will retrieve you once it is safe to do so.

• If you are near another U.S. military installation, go to the installation and check in with the installation emergency management personnel.

Service members encouraged to create Family Care Plans

From militaryonesource.com

Editors note: This is part one of a three part series.

If you were suddenly deployed, who would provide care for your children -- or for an older relative who depends on you for care? Even if you were only away for a short time, on temporary duty or training, who would take over for you? Nearly everyone in the military can benefit from a Family Care Plan that shows how your family is to be cared for in your absence, and in some cases you're required to create one. DoDI (Department of Defense Instruction) 1342.19 addresses when a Family Care Plan is required, and each service branch has a corresponding directive that explains that service branch's guidelines.

Your commander or supervisor can tell you the resources that are available to help you create a Family Care Plan that meets your service branch's specific requirements. These resources include your installation's Family Support Center and Legal Assistance Office.

The information below can help you understand the basics before you begin.

What is a Family Care Plan?

A Family Care Plan is a "blueprint" that shows how your family will be cared for in your absence -- whether you are deployed, on temporary duty, or otherwise unavailable because of military obligations. It allows for a smooth transition of responsibilities to a caregiver when a service member must leave for short or long periods of time, demonstrating to the commander that unit members will be ready to accomplish the mission of the unit.

The plan is made up of instructions that you write and certain legal documents, such as a power of attorney.

Who must have a Family Care Plan?

Within all active and reserve components and the DoD Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW), certain service members are required to have a Family Care Plan. These people include:

• Single parents with custody of children under 19 years of age.

• Dual military couples with custody of children under 19 years of age. (They're required to develop a single Family Care Plan that both members sign.)

Married service members who have custody or joint custody of a child whose non-custodial biological or adoptive parent is not the current spouse of the service member.

Service members who are solely responsible for the care of children under the age of 19 or adult family members unable to care for themselves in the service member's absence. This category includes (but isn't limited to) situations where a service member's spouse is injured, chronically sick, or otherwise unable to care for family members or other dependents; and service members who are sole caregivers for elderly, disabled, or chronically sick family members.

Service members who, for any other reasons, are primarily responsible for dependent family members. This category includes service members with spouses who speak little or no English or are unable to drive or otherwise gain access to basic resources such as medical care and food. A service member with an Exceptional Family Member (regardless of age) may also be required to complete a Family Care Plan.

Service members and their spouses who don't fit into any of these categories may also want to develop a Family Care Plan together. If the service member is deployed and the spouse becomes incapacitated, they'll have plans already in place for the proper care of their children.

When should you make a Family Care Plan?

Service members should notify their supervisor or commander about creating a Family Care Plan as soon as they enter any of the categories described above. Active-duty service members have up to 60 days to submit the final Family Care Plan. Reserve component service members are required to submit their final Family Care Plan within 90 days of alert notification.

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