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Plan Ahead to Be Part of Upcoming Family Preparedness Fair

Helena -- Lewis and Clark County and the Elkhorn Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) will hold a fun and educational Family Preparedness Fair Sept. 14 at the Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds. Organizations interested in exhibiting at the event are invited to apply by Sept. 1.

The free fair, scheduled during National Preparedness Month, will include activities for the entire family, food, exhibit booths, a silent auction, and a raffle. Proceeds from the auction and raffle will be donated to the Elkhorn COAD, a coalition of local, nonprofit service organizations that offer relief and comfort during times of disaster.

For more information, including an exhibitor application, visit www.lccountymt.gov/preparedness-fair. Exhibitor applications are due by Sept. 1.

“The recent earthquakes in California and the tropical storm in the Gulf are just the latest reminders of how important it is to be personally prepared for disasters and emergencies,” said Brett Lloyd, emergency preparedness specialist with Lewis and Clark Public Health. “We hope the fair will help families begin or continue the process of preparing for floods, wildfires, earthquakes, disease outbreaks and other disasters.”

Lloyd noted the importance of having a family emergency plan that addresses such things as how you’ll contact one another and where you might meet up if separated. A family disaster kit can make it easier to evacuate quickly, as in the case of an approaching wildfire. The fair will include a silent auction of family disaster kits.
The Elkhorn COAD serves Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, and Jefferson counties. Members include the Salvation Army, United Way, American Red Cross, LDS Charities, Montana Conservation Corps, Helena Food Share, HOPE Dogs and the Montana Radio Network.

“The purpose of the COAD is to work together with county officials to coordinate resources and provide a unified response during disasters,” said Elkhorn COAD Chair Joe Wojton. “We’re working to stretch our resources to benefit the most people and are really excited about the preparedness fair and the outreach.”

Wojton said the coalition is “always looking for more member organizations and to continued efforts to share what we’re doing.”