

Resolve to be Ready in 2007

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WASHINGTON — As the world counts down to a new year, nearly half of all adults in this country will make at least one New Year's resolution. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is urging Americans to make a resolution that is both important and easy to keep – to prepare themselves, their families and their businesses for emergencies

“We want 2007 to be a year when our nation's families and businesses take steps to prepare for emergencies,” said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. “Setting a clear goal to be prepared in 2007 is an easy way for all Americans to be as ready as possible if an emergency occurs. The *Ready* Campaign Web site at www.ready.gov provides individuals, families and businesses with a variety of tools and check lists to help them get started.”

A recent national survey conducted by The Advertising Council found that 91 percent of individuals agreed that it is important for all Americans to be prepared for emergencies, but only 55 percent said that they had taken any steps to prepare. A survey of small businesses found more than 90 percent recognized the importance of business emergency preparedness, but less than 40 percent said their company had an emergency plan in place.

Through its *Ready* Campaign and Citizen Corps program, DHS educates and empowers Americans to prepare for all types of emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. Last month, the department and the Ad Council released new television, radio, print, outdoor and Internet public service advertisements (PSAs) for the *Ready* Campaign. The PSAs highlight the fact that many families have not yet taken the steps needed to prepare, including getting an emergency supply kit, making a family emergency plan and learning more about different emergencies and their appropriate responses.

Citizen Corps, a DHS grassroots initiative, brings the preparedness message alive at the local level by providing information, training and opportunities to get engaged in community preparedness. Nearly 2,100 Citizen Corps Councils across the country bring together local governments and emergency responder groups with non-government organizations to plan, train and exercise together.

By visiting www.ready.gov or calling 1-800-BE-READY, Americans can learn how to prepare themselves, their families, homes and businesses for emergencies. Individuals can also get involved in preparing their communities by visiting www.citizencorps.gov and contacting their nearest Citizen Corps Council. Through these resources individuals can access free materials that will help them make a New Year's resolution that will bring peace of mind.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) promotes individual emergency preparedness through the *Ready* Campaign and Citizen Corps as part of a broader national effort conducted by the Department's Directorate for Preparedness. *Ready* is a national public service advertising campaign produced by The Advertising Council in partnership with DHS. The *Ready* Campaign is designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies, including natural disasters and potential terrorist attacks. Individuals interested in more information about family and business preparedness can visit www.ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY to receive free materials. Citizen Corps, DHS' grassroots effort, localizes preparedness messages and provides opportunities for citizens to get emergency response training; participate in community exercises; and volunteer to support local first responders. To learn more and to get involved, contact your nearest Citizen Corps Council by visiting www.citizencorps.gov.