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## PRESS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

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**Editor's Note:** Local media may paste the following at their web site. The URL identified in the email tag line below is <http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>.

The OEM Facebook site (<https://www.facebook.com/SBCountyOEM>) contains videos in both English and Spanish regarding disaster preparedness. Use of the videos is allowed with appropriate credit.

(Santa Barbara, CA) – Recent disasters such as Hurricane Sandy on the east coast, remind us of the need to be prepared. According to emergency managers, after a major disaster, such as an earthquake, residents should expect to be on their own for several days. Emergency agencies, utility companies and other service providers will be immediately overwhelmed. Simple things go a long way in helping us survive on our own after a major emergency.

The following are steps toward helping in your preparedness:

1. Have one gallon of water, per person, per day, for about five days.

Water is the most important aspect of preparedness. With water, people have been known to survive for weeks. Without water, survival becomes much more difficult and serious medical complications can result.

2. Have a hand-crank radio.

Several days after a major disaster, resources from the state and federal governments, as well as though from national organizations such as the American Red Cross, will begin to arrive. Emergency managers will work with local media to broadcast shelter information, feeding stations, disaster assistance centers and other critical information.

3. Have food.

Non-perishable, easy to rotate food stocks are needed. Extra canned food and other food with long shelf lives are easy to replace. Buying a little extra of something until you have about five days worth becomes an easy habit to maintain.

4. Have a Plan.

After a major emergency, families often haven't discussed what their next steps are, where they are going to meet or who they contact out of state so everybody knows they are OK.

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To build a kit, go to <http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>.

This month, as a reminder to build a kit, local emergency officials, their partners in the emergency preparedness and other community leaders, will be using the following email tag line:



*Are you prepared with a disaster kit?*

The Ready logo goes to the [Ready.gov/Build-a-kit](http://Ready.gov/Build-a-kit) web site.

According to Michael Harris, Chief of Emergency Management for Santa Barbara County, “When – not if – the next emergency occurs, people need to understand that local emergency resources are immediately overwhelmed. Residents must show their self-reliance for several days.” Harris went on to say, “We have seen time and time again, that help from outside the devastated area is not instantaneous. If we here in Santa Barbara County are only one part of the disaster, along with rest of Southern California, national resources are going to have a tough time in meeting the need.”

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