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ANNUAL REVIEW OF YOUR PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

We are at years end, and almost halfway through the Scouting year. How about spending a few moments and evaluating where you are on preparedness?

Scouting's motto, **BE PREPARED**, is a motto that we can and should apply throughout our entire life, and not be limited to Pack, Troop, or Crew meetings. We should apply this to all levels of our life:

Unit Meetings-have we looked at the agenda for the next meeting so that we know what to expect? Is the SPL doing a follow up on ensuring that the boys are bringing the right equipment to the meeting, that the 'right' speaker has been invited (have the leaders filed any necessary paperwork for a speaker to appear at your COR's facility?), that all youth protection policies appear to be followed, and that the boys know what is expected of them at the meeting?

Unit Activities-are you following a checklist? Do you have permission to be on someone else's land? If you are canoeing, did you get permission (hopefully in writing <ever try to convince a police officer to wake up a landowner at 3 AM?> for you to camp on their property, along the river? Do you have an alligator plan? Who brought the five, three, and one day forecast? Have you evaluated the flood plain of the river you are canoeing in? Are there any possible, unexpected water falls? How about during a thunderstorm that catches you on the river? Who is carrying your unit's medical records, and who is protecting those records, and how are they protecting them? Do you have any Scouts or leaders with food allergies; if so, what has your unit done to avoid those foods?

When was the last time you used your unit telephone pyramid? I hope you have not abandoned this device in favor of 100 percent email! After all, email is asynchronous communication, and telephones are synchronous (immediate) communication. Does your unit have a weather emergency response plan? Who activates it?

Families-Do you have a written current family emergency plan. If you have to abandon your home, what animal shelter will you take your pets to, and what shelter will you go to? What veterinary and medical records will you need? Have you given the school written permission to release your children to another adult (uncles, aunts, grandparents) in emergencies? What is your pre-planned evacuation route, and when was the last time you check on it? How can you access a prescription for your child, yourself, or your parent during a weather/shelter emergency?

You-Have you designated someone to be your health care surrogate and finished a Will, and a Living Will? Are you troop and family medical records up to date? How can you access your bank account, obtain cash, etc. when there is a weather emergency and all the banks are closed, and all communication has stopped.

Planning to always be prepared is a continuing process; are you Prepared?