



## All Ready Activity Update

### *FAN Fair*

More than 100 first responders and disaster volunteers attended the All Ready and American Red Cross inaugural FAN (Functional and Access Needs) Fair, an interactive learning workshop held on Saturday, November 2. During the [workshop](#), participants were able to meet one-on-one with St. Louis organizations serving the 225,000 St. Louis area residents living with functional and access needs to learn about ensuring independence, communication, transportation, supervision and medical care during emergency situations.

Upon arrival at the event, participants were given a "passport" to be stamped at 15 educational stations throughout the

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venue. At one station, an interactive obstacle course challenged participants to navigate the unexpected obstacles facing those living with a physical disability during an emergency situation. As volunteers migrated through the stations they collected an average of 10 passport stamps per person. A few of the most popular and useful stations included "[C.H.A.M.P.S Support Dogs](#)," "[Rehab Services for the Blind](#)" and "[Disaster Mental Health](#)."

For emergency volunteers, the two-hour instructional FAN Fair demonstrated the additional considerations those living with functional and access needs must make during emergency situations. After completing the course, 18 of 45 respondents felt an increased confidence in knowledge of functional and access needs and 16 respondents felt an increased confidence in their ability to relate to people with functional and access needs. The first ever FAN fair evoked awareness and understanding of functional and access needs and we look forward to an exciting and beneficial event next year!

### *Train the Trainer*

As part of the All Ready campaign, the St. Louis Area Red Cross has partnered with disability experts to develop the [Train the Trainer preparedness program](#). This free program assists organizations serving those with disabilities by teaching them to incorporate preparedness topics into regular conversations with their clients. The training teaches staff how to encourage clients to take personal action and address the individual needs of those living with disabilities. By completing the course, trainers are provided with the necessary tools to help their clients get more prepared focusing on any unique considerations they may have.

The Train the Trainer program appreciates that teaching methods differ according to how each organization interacts with its clients. Therefore, when enrolling in the Train the Trainer program, a point of contact from the organization is asked to meet with a Red Cross preparedness expert to create and develop a customized training strategy. Once "trainers" are identified within each organization, they will follow through with this training strategy, which will always provide them with information and materials to teach a customized preparedness training that meets the specialized needs of their clients.

Some pieces that could be in your organization's training strategy include:

- A formal training that provides the materials and tools needed to be a confident presenter and educator.
- An informal training that teaches individuals to relay preparedness information through continued relationship-building and dialogue.
- A brainstorming session with employees to create a map for how they will incorporate preparedness topics into their client and caregiver interactions.
- A mock conversation session to allow employees to pitch preparedness to each other and learn best practices for effective communication.

For more information or to begin your organization's Train the Trainer program, contact

Teresa Lange at (314) 516-2753 or [Teresa.Lange2@redcross.org](mailto:Teresa.Lange2@redcross.org).

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## Spread Holiday Cheer with a Safe New Year

As we shift our focus to buying gifts, cooking for loved ones and decorating our homes with lights and wreathes, we need to remember that the holiday season's good tidings should be accompanied by valuable safety habits. Remembering the importance of safety can ensure a relaxing and safe start to the new year.

### *Play It Safe When You Decorate*

This time of year a lighted tree, freshly baked cookies and beautiful ornaments bring the spirit of the holidays into our homes. However, cooking preparations and holiday decorations can cause serious harm to your home and loved ones if not handled correctly. While baking and hanging festive garnishing and trimmings, keep in mind these helpful safety hints to minimize the risk of fire and other catastrophic disasters.

- Never use [lighted candles](#) near trees, boughs, curtains or any potentially flammable item.
- Wear gloves while decorating with spun glass "angel hair." It can irritate your eyes and skin. A common substitute is non-flammable cotton.
- Use no more than three light sets on any one extension cord. Extension cords should be placed against the wall to avoid tripping.
- Avoid placing breakable tree ornaments or items with small, detachable parts on lower branches where small children or pets can reach them.
- Turn off all lights on trees and decorations when you go to bed or leave the house. Unplug extension cords when not in use.
- If you have to use a step ladder near a doorway, lock or barricade the door and post signs so no one will open it and knock you off the ladder.
- Never [defrost food](#) at room temperature. Thaw it in the refrigerator, in cold water or in the microwave.
- Avoid cleaning kitchen surfaces with wet dishcloths or sponges. They easily harbor bacteria and promote bacteria growth. Use clean paper towels instead.
- When reheating leftovers, bring the temperature up to at least 165°F to eliminate any bacterial growth.
- Being a smart host or guest should include being sensible about alcoholic drinks. More than half of all traffic fatalities are alcohol-related. Use designated drivers after attending or hosting holiday parties.

The holiday season can be one of the most hectic and demanding times of the year. While stress is unavoidable, following the safety precautions listed above will provide you and your loved ones with peace of mind during the holiday festivities.

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## In the Holiday Spirit, Lend a Helping Hand

The best preparation that can be made for emergencies is to make plans to help your neighbors, particularly those with functional and access needs. During this season of giving, here are just a few ways that residents can work together to ensure a safe and happy holiday.

### *Watch Your Step When It's Wet*

St. Louis is known for its unpredictable snowfall, from "snowmagedden" to freezing rain, the variety of holiday weather presents a challenge for those living with disabilities as they travel. For those living with physical disabilities, make a plan with neighbors in the event of winter weather for assistance in clearing snow or transportation.

Helping to clear the sidewalks and driveways of snow? Before you grab that shovel, you may want to reconsider if you fall into any of these categories:

- Those with a prior heart attack
- Those with known heart disease
- Those with high blood pressure or high cholesterol
- Smokers

Shoveling (even pushing a heavy snow blower) can cause a sudden increase in blood pressure and heart rate. Simultaneously, the blood vessels may become constricted by the cold air and decrease oxygen to the heart. This dangerous combination may trigger a potentially fatal heart attack.

Whether you have a cardiovascular issue or need assistance walking, don't be afraid to talk to your neighbors this holiday season to ask for help clearing the slick sleet and snow during the winter. And for those that can safely take this strenuous task, think of spending just a little more time clearing your neighbor's way in this season of giving.

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### *Give the Gift of Preparedness*

Still struggling with what to get loved ones this holiday? Consider an emergency preparedness kit. It can be one for their home, their car or work - the three locations it is recommended to store these potential life-saving materials.

Emergency kits are available online from a variety of retailers in a range of price points, as well as through our partners at the [American Red Cross](#). This simple gift idea will mean the most when it's needed the most - when an emergency strikes.



### **All Ready**

All Ready is an emergency preparedness initiative designed to help the St. Louis region better anticipate and prepare for emergencies through the individual preparedness efforts of residents. This effort combines resources from emergency preparedness experts around the region and nation in a single place to make preparing for emergencies simple. Through All Ready, residents can learn about and implement the three simple steps to emergency preparedness: 1) Make a plan. 2) Get a kit. 3) Be informed. Learn more at [AllReadySTL.com](http://AllReadySTL.com).

Not on our mailing list? Contact us at [allreadySTL@gmail.com](mailto:allreadySTL@gmail.com) to subscribe.

Want to share All Ready updates with family and friends? Feel free to forward by clicking the link below to share updates on emergency preparedness information and activities in the St. Louis area.

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