

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Commander advises: Get a kit, make a plan, be informed

By Col. Kevin Brown
GARRISON COMMANDER

A strong storm came through the Fort Riley area in August.

Not much damage was seen on post, but in Manhattan, high winds knocked branches down across the city. Other than that storm, we've had a pretty gentle spring and summer in the Central Flint Hills Region. That doesn't mean we should let our guard down.

Fall is upon us and with it comes an increased chance for severe weather. September is National Preparedness Month, and at Fort Riley, we'll observe Ready Army Week from Sept. 13 to 17. Use this month to prepare – get a kit, make a plan, be informed.

One important way to stay informed is to sign up to receive emergency notifications through Fort Riley's AtHoc Notification System.

This system allows post officials to alert community members about severe weather and other emergencies which may occur at Fort Riley, using computer desktop pop-ups, e-mail messages, telephone notification and text messages.

Five locations are available for Family members to sign up without a Common Access Card.

The five locations are: The

1st Replacement Company, Building 208, Soldier Inprocessing Facility, Building 210, or the ID Card Center, Building 212, all on Main Post; and Army Community Service, Building 7264, or Soldier Readiness Processing, Building 7673, both on Custer Hill.

Additionally, Family members can sign up at their unit's Family Readiness Group offices or at their sponsor's unit on any local area network computer.

A CAC cardholder can sign up a spouse or dependent by clicking on the purple globe at the bottom right-hand side of his or her computer screen, on any computer connected to the local area network.

While we like to think the worst won't happen to us, we need to be ready if it does. Think about what your Family would do in case of an emergency.

What if your house is struck by a tornado? Do all of your Family members know where to go for safety? If you are separated, do you have a plan in place spelling out how you'll meet up or get a hold of each other?

When you set aside time to check the items in your



Col. Brown

What if there's a fire? Where will you meet? If the house is on fire, do your children know they shouldn't hide from firefighters?

What if you lose power? Do you have a battery-powered weather radio? Do you have a car charger for your cell phone?

While we may think we have everything covered, it never hurts to revisit our plans.

In the Army, we are constantly training. When the real mission occurs, everyone knows their place and what they should do. Implementing the same methods for your Family when it comes to disaster preparedness can save lives.

Check out the Ready Army booth at the Fall Apple Day Festival Sept. 18 on Artillery Parade Field. The Ready Army coordinators will have lists and information on hand to help you prepare your home, car, work and portable emergency kits.

Being prepared includes more than just keeping extra water on hand.

Once you have your kits assembled, make sure your Family has a plan in place to use them. It's important to practice your plan and make sure each Family member knows what to do. And don't just practice once.

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READY ARMY HOME KIT

Ready Army suggests the following items for a home kit:

- Water—at least one gallon per person per day for at least five days
- Food—nonperishable food for at least three days (select items that require no preparation, refrigeration or cooking such as high energy foods and ready-to-eat canned meat, vegetables, fruit)
- Manual can opener (if the food is canned), preferably on a multi-tool
- Reusable plates, cups, utensils, saucerpan (note, a metal bowl can double as a cup or plate)
- First aid kit
- Prescription medications and medical equipment/care aids
- N95- or N100-rated dust masks
- Personal sanitation supplies, such as moist towelettes, garbage bags and

kit, have the kids help and go over why they might need each item.

Circle the first day of each season on your calendar and talk with your Family about the types of natural disasters associated with that season.

plastic ties

- Hand-crank or battery operated flashlight
- Hand-crank radio or battery operated cell phone charger
- All-hazards NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather radio
- Extra batteries at the size required
- Brightly colored plastic poncho (can be used as shelter, clothing or a marker)
- Weather appropriate clothing to keep your family warm and dry
- Cash in the local currency
- Any tools needed for turning off utilities
- Local maps and your family emergency plan
- Your command reporting information – know the Army Disaster Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (ADDAAS)
- Important documents, including will, medical and

financial power of attorney, property documents, medical instructions

• Emergency preparedness handbook

Additional considerations:

- Infant formula and diapers if you have young children
- Pets supplies, including food, water, medication, leash, travel case and documents
- Disinfectant
- Matches or flint in a water-proof container
- Sleeping bag or other weather-appropriate bedding for each person
- Coats, jackets and rain gear
- Fire extinguisher
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles, toys and other activities for children
- Any items necessary for a specific type of disaster

No matter how your Family decides to practice, this is a critical component for keeping everyone safe.

Visit www.ready.army.mil for more information on emergency kits, activities for children and other resources to

help us stay prepared for whatever comes our way.

If you would like to comment on this article or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, e-mail rile.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil.

On-post residents offered opportunity to provide feedback

By Valerie Covarrubias
PICERNE MILITARY HOUSING

Each year, across Army installations in the U.S., Families living in on-post housing receive a Department of the Army Annual Housing Survey by mail.

This is the opportunity for Army Families to provide feedback to the Army and to their housing partner about their

on-post living experience.

This survey was initially mailed to all on-post residents at Fort Riley in May. About 25 percent of you have already mailed your survey back in, which is great.

Every resident will be receiving a reminder card along with another copy of the survey in the next two weeks. If you haven't already filled one out, please do so as soon as you

receive it.

All survey responses are strictly confidential. Personal data is not tabulated and the survey does not identify the resident in any way. The information helps guide improvements to services and housing.

Both the Army and Picerne Military Housing urge all residents to take the time to complete the annual Army housing satisfaction survey. Residents

should complete, seal and return the survey in the prepaid envelope by either bringing it by the neighborhood office or mailing it back directly.

Picerne will host survey prize drawings, and all residents who bring their completed, sealed survey to their neighborhood office will be given an entry form to fill out for a chance to win a prize. Picerne will mail all sealed sur-

veys received at the end of each business day.

Locally, at Fort Riley, some Families receive an additional survey: the quarterly Residential Communities Initiative survey.

This is mailed out four times a year to a different 25 percent of Fort Riley on-post Families and is much shorter. It should take about 10 minutes to complete. Along with this

survey, you also will receive a postage-paid envelope and a prize drawing registration card. The envelope will have a Fort Riley RCI mailing address on it. You may receive this survey in September.

Both surveys offer our Fort Riley Families the opportunity to help shape the future of Family housing on post, so please take the time to fill out the surveys.