September is National Preparedness Month, and the Department of Homeland Security urges all Americans to take three key steps to prepare for emergencies:

1. **Assemble an emergency kit with:**
   - Food and water including a gallon of water per person per day and canned and dried foods.
   - A change of clothes and sleeping bags.
   - Basic emergency supplies including a flashlight, a battery-powered radio, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, prescription medicines, and toilet articles.

2. **Make a family communication plan:**
   - Your family may not be together at home when a disaster strikes. Make sure everyone knows contact numbers and how to get in touch.
   - It may be wise to have everyone call an out-of-state friend or relative.
   - Keep a list of emergency numbers near the phone.
   - Select a "safe-room" where everyone can gather. The best choice is an interior room above ground with few windows and doors.

3. **Learn more about readiness now:**
   - Take a first-aid and CPR class.
   - Review insurance policies to reduce the economic impact of a potential disaster.
   - Remember to make accommodations for elderly family members and neighbors with special needs.
   - Make arrangements for pets not allowed in public shelters.

ANGER = (D)ANGER

Ever notice that the word "anger" is only one letter away from the word "danger"? Anger and safety don't mix. If you get riled up on the job, take a minute to cool down before you get back to work.

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**Safety and Drug Abuse**

Alcohol and drugs are hazardous at work

September is National Alcohol and Drug Recovery Month. Remember these facts:

Substance abuse negatively affects job performance, because it impairs a user’s:
- Concentration
- Thinking ability
- Judgment
- Coordination
- Reflexes and reaction times
- Decision-making ability

Working under the influence, therefore, increases the chances of:
- Accidents
- Mistakes
- Unreliable or erratic performance
- Reckless or violent behavior

A co-worker under the influence of drugs could, for example:
- Fail to recognize or report a safety hazard
- Skip an important step in a safety procedure
- Injure you and other employees through carelessness or inattention

And people working under the influence of drugs or alcohol may not realize that they are impaired, which makes them even more dangerous. Remember, too, that substance abuse has a devastating effect on the user’s personal life. It:
- Damages physical health
- Causes emotional problems
- Creates financial and legal problems
- May lead to addiction, overdose, and death

Don’t be an enabler. Help co-workers who abuse drugs or alcohol face their problem and get help. Their safety—and yours—depends on it.

WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

If you or a co-worker do not know where to turn for help, please seek assistance through the State of Delaware's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP may be contacted by calling 1-800-343-2186 or online at [www.hmsincorp.com](http://www.hmsincorp.com). Your contact is strictly confidential and is covered under the Privacy Act.

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**Substance Abuse Facts**

- 32.3 million drive under the influence of alcohol.
- 3.1 million Americans use marijuana on a daily or almost-daily basis.
- Mixing cocaine and alcohol is the most common two substance combination that results in drug-related death.
- More than 10 million people aged 12 or older have tried ecstasy at least once, and more than 2 million have used the drug in the past year.
- About 3.7 million Americans aged 12 or older have used heroin.

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**Riddle of the Month**

It's been around for millions of years, but it's no more than a month old. What is it? (See Safety Bits & Pieces next page for the answer)
Drive Defensively

Aggressive driving kills

Motor vehicle accidents are the most common cause of accidental death in the United States. They are also the most common cause of workplace deaths, representing about one in four fatal work injuries. Every 12 minutes someone dies in a crash, every 10 seconds an injury occurs, and every 5 seconds a crash occurs. Many of these accidents occur during the workday or during the commute to and from work.

One of the reasons for all these accidents is the fact that many drivers are becoming increasingly aggressive on the road. Follow these tips from the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS):

- **Pay attention** to your own driving. Don’t provoke other drivers.
- **Take deep breaths** in traffic, listen to some soothing music, and don’t get irritated or take other drivers’ actions personally.
- **Allow enough time** to get where you’re going safely. Check traffic reports and avoid congested areas.
- **Don’t challenge aggressive drivers.** Move out of their way, avoid eye contact, and don’t respond to rude gestures.
- **Report aggressive driving** to the police. Provide a vehicle description, license number, location, and the direction of travel.

CARRYING TOOLS

Many hand tool injuries occur when tools are being carried or when they’re left somewhere. Remember these rules:

- Carry pointed tools such as screwdrivers with pointed edges away from your body.
- Use a toolbox or belt if you are carrying several tools.
- Haul tools up a ladder in a bucket or bag and bring them down the same way.
- Keep track of your tools and don’t leave any lying around, especially if you’re working above ground level.
- Always hand, don’t throw, tools to co-workers. Pass them handle first. Be extra careful when passing sharp or pointed tools to a co-worker.

KEEP A GOOD HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS

If you ride a motorcycle, or know someone who does, you need to know that a rider without a helmet is three times more likely to be killed in an accident. Helmets reduce the risk of head and neck injuries - especially serious ones.

SAFETY TIDBITS

- **Dirty money:** 18% of U.S. coins are contaminated with the E.coli bacteria. To prevent the spread of this bacteria it is recommended that you wash your hands with hot water and soap as soon as possible after handling money.
- **Loud noise,** aspirin, caffeine and quinine can all cause tinnitus (ringing of the ears).