

# Planning for Emergencies

By Mayor Mike Barhorst

In an emergency, every second counts- that's why it's crucial to have a well thought out and rehearsed game plan. In Sidney, weather-related events, including power outages, the flooding of the Great Miami River and damage caused by severe winds, can happen with little or no warning.

The key is being prepared and communicating your emergency plan with your family. September is National Preparedness Month, and as a part of the observance of the month, I'd like to suggest that local residents develop a family game plan.

There are many information-packed websites to help you develop your family game plan. Websites include [www.ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan), [www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/plan](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/plan), [www.disastercenter.com/guide/family.htm](http://www.disastercenter.com/guide/family.htm), and [www.ci.northfield.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/648](http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/648), among others. These websites offer tips for all types of emergencies.

In addition, to help residents be more informed as local emergency events develop, the City of Sidney has several methods of emergency communication available to assist residents. First, the City's official website ([www.sidneyoh.com](http://www.sidneyoh.com)) has a scrolling news and events feature that is updated with important notices, including flood advisory information. In addition, the City has an official Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/cityofsidneyoh](http://www.facebook.com/cityofsidneyoh)) and Twitter account ([twitter.com/CityofSidneyOH](https://twitter.com/CityofSidneyOH)) that are also updated frequently.

The Shelby County Emergency Management Agency also has a very active Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/ShelbyCoEMA](http://www.facebook.com/ShelbyCoEMA)). This page is used to provide alerts as well. Be sure to "like" these Facebook pages before an emergency strikes and follow the Twitter account to get current news.

Lastly, I would like to urge residents to add their telephone numbers to the Emergency Notification System (Hyper-Reach) which harnesses the power of instant communication to alert residents of local emergencies. These alerts are sent by phone, text or email.

The registration form for this free service is available on the City's website. Simply click on the Emergency Notification System sign up link located on the right-hand side of the page. Then enter the requested information.

For those residents who do not have access to the Internet, the Amos Public Library does have computers available for public use. Residents may also have family members, friends or neighbors enroll them in this free notification service. If you have questions about Hyper-Reach enrollment or need assistance, you may contact City Clerk Kari Egbert by phone (937.498.8100). She will be happy to assist you.

Protecting yourself today means having sources for information, preparing your home, developing an emergency communications plan, and knowing what to do when an emergency occurs. Taking action today before an emergency happens can save both property and lives.