SITREP

The Monthly Newsletter of the County Emergency Management Agency

Warren

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On the Home Front

NEWS ABOUT INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY PREPAREDNESS

We all know that sinking feeling: only 5% of our phone's battery life remains, and not a charger in sight. Normally that's just inconvenient, but imagine yourself trying to contact your family members in the wake of an emergency or disaster – to check on them, to let them know how you are - what will you do when that charge runs out? Sure, you might be able to borrow someone else's phone, but what about the information in yours?

Many people store emergency contact information in their phones and nowhere else, which works well as long as you *always* have your phone on your person and it *always* has power. What happens if the phone dies, or gets lost or damaged? Unless you have those numbers written down and accessible to you, nothing happens: no calls or texts letting you know someone is OK, no way for your family to check on you, no way to receive emergency information, nothing . . .
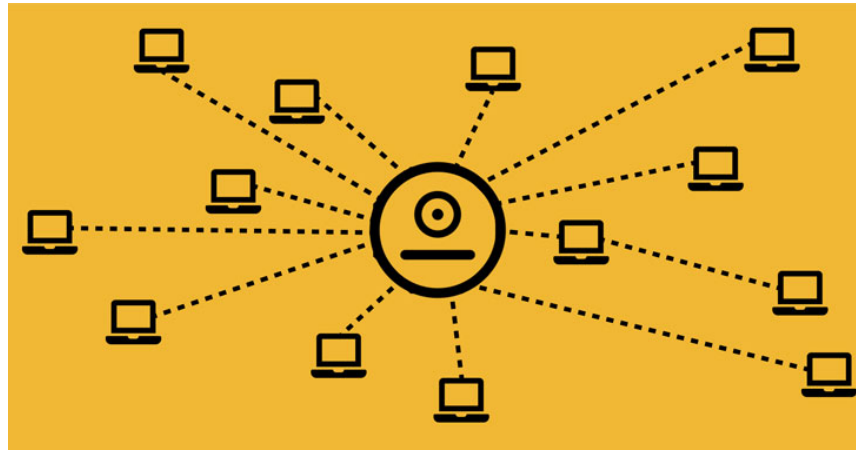
Create a family emergency contact list: family members, school/work numbers, doctors, service providers – every family is different and you are the expert on yours. Write it down and make sure everyone keeps a copy. Technology works wonders, as long as it's working . . .

Staying in the Game

RANSOMWARE REMAINS A SIGNIFICANT THREAT

Today (May 31st, 2022) is the 151st day of the year. And up to this day there have been a total of 22 ransomware attacks this year (that we know of) targeting state or local government entities in the United States. That averages out to about one such attack per week.

One ransomware attack per week . . .

And those are just ransomware attacks, and just the ones we know about, and just those targeting state or local government entities. It's a frightening number, but it is a number that would be far higher if it accounted for other types of cyberattacks, other targets or victim organizations, and those attacks that are never reported.

Do you still think you're "too small" to be a target . . . ?

Cyber Crime Awareness

THINGS THAT DO NOT EXIST

- The grandchild who needs $10,000.00 wired to them for bail because they got thrown in jail in Mexico on Spring Break.

- The Ukrainian military officer who, while digging a fighting position, found a stash of Nazi gold hidden since World War II and wants to send some of it to you so that you can help him and his family escape the war.

- The banker in an impoverished, war-torn West African country whose customer has just died (leaving no next of kin) and who wants to discuss giving that client's money to you because, miraculously, you and the "client" share the same last name.

- The terminally ill widow in Southeast Asia who, having no children of her own, has picked you from among the 7 billion people on Earth as the inheritor of her life savings so that you can donate it to charity.

Don't get hooked by a phishing email!

EMA Update

"People make the system."

Training is a continuous commitment for our agency, and May of 2022 was a particularly busy month in that regard. The Warren County Emergency Operations and Training Center hosted a "Recovery from Disaster: Local Community Roles" course conducted by the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency, and Director Sharp delivered Warren County EMA's new "Social Engineering 101" cybersecurity presentation for the City of Warrenton, the Wright City Area Chamber of Commerce, and Oak Pointe of Warrenton Assisted Living. One of the very best parts of this job is getting out and interacting face-to-face with the public we serve.

It's a tornado that forms from the ground up! Landspout . . .

The World Around Us

IF A WATERSPOUT IS A TORNADO OVER A BODY OF WATER, WHAT'S A LANDSPOUT?

If you answered something like, "It's a tornado over land," you'd be technically correct. But a tornado over land is, well a tornado, right? It's sort of a trick question . . .

The difference is in how each phenomenon forms. A "traditional" tornado forms when a rotation within the storm is dragged by a downdraft towards the ground (P.S. – it's not a tornado until it comes into contact with the ground; before that it's just a funnel cloud). A "landspout tornado" forms when a vortex at ground level gets dragged upward by a storm developing overhead.

It's not a dust devil – dust devils aren't attached to any storm.

Back to School

SUMMER SCHOOL . . .

Don't ask me how I know, but when I was a kid, Summer School was remedial, period. If you did not have the credits necessary to move on to the next grade, you either got them during Summer School or you repeated the grade.

That's not the case today. For many districts, Summer School is a regular part of the academic year, with faculty and students from throughout the district being consolidated into just one or a few buildings. Teachers and students who may be very familiar with the emergency procedures in their "regular" buildings may not be as familiar with things like emergency exits, emergency communications, severe weather shelter areas, etc. in building they have never worked or attended class in previously.

At the beginning of Summer School, an emergency procedures orientation is necessary for staff and the students entrusted to their care.

Thank you!

I hope you've enjoyed the May, 2022 issue of *SitRep* – the monthly newsletter of the Warren County Emergency Management Agency. More to the point, I hope you've found information that is of value to you.

If you would like to see a particular issue or topic addressed, please feel free to contact me, and of course I value your feedback. Thanks very much!

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