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**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Prepare Fair in Des Moines**

**Free event organized by Safeguard Iowa Partnership, includes children's' activities, emergency vehicle road show and prizes**

DES MOINES, Iowa – July 24, 2013 – Be prepared for potential natural and man-made disasters. Attend this free event hosted by local emergency responders, businesses and other nonprofit organizations around the Des Moines metro area.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Prepare Fair will be held August 3 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Merle Hay Mall, 3800 Merle Hay Road in Des Moines. More than 30 indoor and outdoor exhibitors will showcase the various tools and knowledge needed during emergency situations. Local emergency crews will provide a hands-on tour of their equipment and vehicles, including fire trucks, police cars, emergency equipment and the UnityPoint Life Flight helicopter.

“The recent increased rainfalls and flooding in Iowa and manmade events around the country demonstrates how important it is to have a family emergency plan in case of a disaster,” said Jami Haberl, executive director, Safeguard Iowa Partnership.

“We want to bring awareness to the ways people can protect themselves and their families from unexpected events. It’s essential to be prepared in order to survive on your own for the first 72 hours following a disaster.”

The Prepare Fair encourages the whole family to attend. Children are invited to meet local mascots, such as: Iowa One Call’s Gabby the Ground Hog, MidAmerican Energy Company’s Louie the Lightning Bug and Saxby the Preparedness Squirrel. Blank Children’s Hospital’s severe weather simulator and the Altoona Fire Department Fire House offer a fun hands-on learning experience for all ages.

Featured activities:

- **Free ID kit.** The first 70 families will receive a free identification kit from MidAmerican Energy Company. Each kit includes an inkless fingerprint kit, wallet card and DNA collection swabs that can be used to provide valuable identification information in the event that a child becomes missing.
- **Watch the dogs.** Rescue K-9s from the Paws of Life Foundation will showcase the skills they utilize in rescue operations.

- **Gather important information.** Learn how to program personal weather radios to properly receive local information and warnings when severe weather is in the area.
- **Get the kids involved.** Children can participate in various activities including preparedness mascots, firehouse and severe weather simulators, emergency responder vehicles, and Life Flight.

Participating organizations and businesses will include the Altoona Fire Department, American Red Cross, Animal Rescue League, Animal Lifeline of Iowa, Blank Children's Hospital, Des Moines Fire Department, Des Moines Water Works, Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging, Iowa Association of Public Works, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council, Iowa Highway Patrol, Iowa Immunization Collation, Iowa National Guard, Iowa One Call, Johnston Fire Department, Johnston Police Department, Merle Hay Mall, MidAmerican Energy Company, Polk County Emergency Management Agency, Polk County Public Health, Polk County Sheriff's Office, Safeguard Iowa Partnership, Salvation Army, Paws of Life Foundation, Saxby the Preparedness Squirrel, United Way 211, UnityPoint Health, Urbandale Fire Department, Urbandale Police Department and West Des Moines Emergency Services.

The Safeguard Iowa Partnership is a voluntary coalition of the state's business and government leaders, who share a commitment to strengthen the state to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters through public-private collaboration.

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