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Media Contact: **Julia B. Hillegass**
*Public Information & Community
Affairs Administrator*
(757) 420-8300
jhillegass@hrpdcva.gov

General Information: **Jenny Redick**
Regional Special Needs Planner
757-420-8300
specialneeds@hrpdcva.gov
TTY: 757-390-2578

Hampton Roads launches emergency planning tools for special medical needs community

A new website (www.hrspecialneeds.org) can help those who have special medical needs plan for emergencies. The site also houses the voluntary Medical Needs Registry for residents in the Hampton Roads area. The website and registry were developed by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission's Regional Emergency Management Technical Advisory Committee (REMTAC).

Information collected through the registry will help local officials develop alerting systems, shelter services and transportation solutions. Those who register will be mailed a free information packet about personal emergency preparedness (registry information is completely confidential and will be used only for emergency management planning). A printed form for submitting information to the registry is available upon request through the website.

In addition to the website and registry, REMTAC has also released:

- A *Get Prepared* video in English and Spanish, which explains how three families who have medical and functional needs have created emergency plans, is available at www.hrspecialneeds.org. An American Sign Language version of the *Get Prepared* video will also be available shortly.
- A *Get Prepared* iPhone application, which provides tips and checklists for taking basic steps to preparedness: get a kit, make a plan and stay informed. The application also explains how best to shelter, evacuate and prepare families and support systems. This free iPhone app can be found at the Apple Store or www.hrspecialneeds.org.

The website and iPhone application provide contact information for local emergency management offices, as well as helpful resource websites. The registry is specifically designed to help residents and emergency officials in the Hampton Roads region plan for emergencies. The sixteen participating localities are cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg, and the counties of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Southampton, Surry and York.

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The Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), one of 21 Planning District Commissions in the Commonwealth of Virginia, is a regional organization providing a forum for the sixteen local governments in southeastern Virginia to address emergency preparedness, economic analysis, comprehensive planning and regulatory compliance in a cooperative fashion.

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