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N e w s R e l e a s e

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Sheriff Champagne advises readiness for 2011 hurricane season May 22-28 National Hurricane Preparedness Week

While you may not want to think about it, hurricane season officially starts June 1 and ends November 30. Hurricane expert Dr. William Gray, Professor of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University, and his colleague Phillip J. Klotzbach, have predicted an active 2011 season, but not as active as last year.

This is an early forecast, but they are predicting 16 named storms with nine becoming hurricanes and five possibly becoming major hurricanes.

Based on the latest predictions, Sheriff Champagne advises parish residents, "As always, the hurricane season in Louisiana is a time for vigilance, but with notice of an active season, we all need to take even more precautions.

"Preparation and planning are key elements in protecting lives and staying safe. So start now and avoid the rush at home supply stores, supermarkets, and other businesses that get crowded as hurricane watches and warnings are issued. Don't wait until the last minute."

The week of **May 22-28, 2011** has been declared **Hurricane Preparedness Week** by the National Hurricane Center. Sheriff Champagne joins the National Hurricane Center in urging Louisiana residents to make hurricane emergency preparedness a priority this hurricane season.

"The Atlantic Hurricane Season officially begins June 1 and continues through November 30. With the 2011 hurricane season upon us, the most important thing to do is to get you, your family, and your home 'hurricane ready.' Start early. Start now."

Sheriff Champagne says yet another reason to get ready now is because the 2011 Louisiana Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday takes place on Saturday, May 28 and Sunday, May 29. During these two days, shoppers can get ready for hurricane season by purchasing emergency supplies such as flashlights, radios, batteries, generators etc. free from the four-percent state sales tax.

Prepare yourself and your family for any situation by assembling and maintaining a Disaster Supply Kit. Your Disaster Supply Kit should include:

- **Can Opener**
- **Three Day Supply of Non-Perishable Food**

- **Bedding or Sleeping Bags**
- **Fire Extinguisher (small canister ABC type)**
- **Bleach (no lemon or other additives)**
- **Mosquito Repellent**
- **First Aid Kit**
- **Water (One gallon per person per day)**
- **Eating Utensils**
- **Tarp, Rope, and Duct Tape**
- **Toiletries**
- **Toilet Paper**
- **Battery-Operated Radio**
- **Flashlights**
- **Extra Batteries**
- **Extra Keys**
- **Sunglasses**
- **Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person**

Special Items--Remember family members with special needs such as infants, elderly and disabled persons, and pets.

For Baby —Formula, diapers, wipes bottles, powdered milk and medications.

For Adults —Heart and high blood pressure medication, Insulin, prescription drugs, denture needs, contact lenses and supplies and extra eye glasses.

For Pets—ID tag, photo of pet for identification purposes, weeks supply of food, medications, veterinarian's phone number. Do not leave your pet behind. Transport pets in secure pet carriers and keep pets on leashes. Most emergency shelters do not admit pets. Check with hotels in safe locations and ask if you can bring your pet. Call family, friends and boarding kennels in a safe location to arrange care if you and your pet cannot stay together.

Entertainment —Books for adult readers and for children, board games and/or other games that do not require batteries or electricity.

Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container:

- Inventory of valuable household goods and important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)
- Important Papers including Insurance, Account Numbers, Money, Checks or Credit Cards
- Name, Address and Telephone Number of your selected Out-of-Area Contact Person

Finally, Sheriff Champagne said, "Time is on your side right now. Take advantage of it. Get 'hurricane ready.' Call the Sheriff's Office if you need further information. We're here to help you. Don't get caught unprepared in the rush of a hurricane warning. Act now; you'll be glad you did."