



KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT
Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff

701 Ball Avenue, N.E. • Grand Rapids • Michigan • 49503



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 15, 2013

Contact: Lisa LaPlante – 616.632.7182

**Emergency Management Urges Residents to
“Be Mitten Ready”**

GRAND RAPIDS – Planning for disaster – whether it’s natural or man-made – is critical for all of West Michigan. The Kent County Emergency Management Program is excited to announce the BeMittenReady.com campaign, an effort by the Region 6 Homeland Security Planning Board.

“This effort will help our residents in Kent County get ready for disaster,” said Jack Stewart, Emergency Management Coordinator for Kent County. We want everyone throughout the region to know how they can be prepared in case of an emergency, and how they can help in times of need.” Region 6 has over 1.4 million residents, and also includes Clare, Ionia, Isabella, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola and Ottawa Counties.

The campaign includes a :30 Public Service Announcement, which can be found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mbnzcfyWWI&feature=player_embedded. The ad directs viewers to the BeMittenReady.com splash page. At this site, there are resources based on the county where you live, tips for preparedness, information for training and volunteer activities, and what to have in your emergency kit.

“We know people want to mobilize during times of disaster. We saw hundreds of volunteers in April working to help people deal with flooding damage,” said Stewart. “If faced with an extended response or large-scale disaster, we need people who are trained to respond.” The site has links to a number of agencies like the United Way and American Red Cross, as well as Citizen Corps, a grassroots effort to “*involve citizens in all-hazards emergency preparedness and resilience.*” Citizen Corps includes five programs that can be activated to respond during a disaster or emergency:

- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)
- Fire Corps (FC)
- Neighborhood Watch (NW)
- Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS)

Funding for the PSA and website comes from the State of Michigan Homeland Security Grant Program.

###