

MANDATORY SERVICE TALK FROM THE NORTHEAST AREA VICE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: You are part of an essential service

In recent years, the Northeast Area has seen it all: hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, fires, flooding, tornadoes and even cars that drive right into post offices. When disasters strike, postal managers use Continuity of Operation Plans, or COOPs, to deliver a safe workplace for our impacted employees and provide service to our communities.

Right now, a handful of our post offices are using those plans in communities where government buildings or malls have closed, making access to the post office inside impossible for now. The guidelines in a COOP make it easier for us to adapt to urgent changes in our workplace and to keep our focus on serving our customers.

Just as these critical events hit our postal facilities, they hit us at home too. Does your family have a COOP?

I have seen USPS preparedness and COOPs in action. Other federal agencies cannot top your best efforts to restore the sense of normalcy that comes with regular mail service after a catastrophic local event or a national crisis.

Make no mistake about it: **The Postal Service is an essential service and you are essential to keeping our service on track.**

I have also seen the impact of disasters upon families. Personal preparedness can provide an essential cushion to help your family continue operations as well.

Simple measures have immeasurable impacts. Some are easy: Storing a few days of nonperishable food and water. Keeping some cash and coins on hand. Putting together some games or reading supplies. Pet supplies, activities for the kids and even cleaning supplies all are great to have at the ready.

Some take a little effort: Refreshing a first aid kit and refilling prescriptions. Updating contact information at work. Adding the EMERGNC hotline to a personal phone. Putting the EAP bookmark on your home computer for reference. Having your badge ready in the event of curfews or travel restrictions during your commute times.

Preparedness can ease your days during an emergency. Take a moment to assess your family's preparedness. Consider your personal COOP.

At this time, be assured your hard work and continued support of postal operations is greatly appreciated by customers around the nation. I am very proud to work with you and will keep you informed as we work through this national event together. Thank you for all that you do.

Eric D. Chavez
Vice President, Northeast Area Operations
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