

Volunteer Appreciation Month



April is Volunteer Appreciation Month. The Portage County Health Department would like to thank **YOU** for volunteering your time and services to provide for our community. The preparedness training and public health services that you provide are much appreciated!

New Volunteers

The PC MRC would like to welcome our newest MRC volunteers:



Ali Mitchell
Braden Hensley

Emily Frantz
Mary McDaniel

Tornado Awareness Month



Did you know...

In 2014, Ohio had 20 confirmed tornados? 3 of those occurred right here in Portage County! Although we do not live in "tornado alley", tornados can and DO occur here in Ohio.

Before A Tornado

Tornados can happen quickly, and often with little

warning. Look for the following weather signs indicative that a tornado may be approaching:

- A dark or green colored sky
- A large, dark, low-lying cloud
- Large hail
- A loud roar that sounds like a fright train

If you know that severe weather is approaching, stay tuned to local radio and TV stations or an NOAA weather radio.

Consider building a safe room. Ohio is in zone IV of the wind zone map, meaning that we are in a region that has experienced the greatest number of and the strongest tornados. FEMA offers a great brochure for more information about safe rooms: "[Taking Shelter from the Storm.](#)"



During a tornado

Know where to seek shelter. The best option is to go to an underground shelter, basement or safe room. If you do not have access to one of these rooms, you should find a small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building.

Mobile Home:

DO NOT stay in a mobile home during a tornado. Go to the nearest building, preferably one with a basement.

If You Are Outside or In a Vehicle:

If you have time, drive to a safe building and seek shelter. If a tornado is quickly approaching and you do not have time to drive to a safe shelter, get out of your vehicle and lie flat in a surface lower than the roadway such as a ditch or ravine. Cover your head with your hands and arms.

DO NOT seek shelter under a highway underpass. Mistakenly, many people believe that underpasses are safe during a tornado, however, they are actually one of the worst places to seek shelter. Debris from a tornado's high winds are blown into and channeled into highway overpasses increasing the risk of injury and death.

Tornado Preparedness Failings of "The Wizard of Oz"



We all know the beloved movie classic, "The Wizard of Oz". What you may not have known, is that the movie actually teaches us the importance of being disaster ready. Don't find yourself lost in Emerald City, clicking your heels, and saying "There's no place like home"...

Here are some preparedness failings from The Wizard of Oz that we can all learn from.:

1. Had Dorothy had proper disaster training, she would have known to stay away from the window, therefore, she would not have been knocked unconscious.
2. Uncle Henry and Auntie Em should have consulted their NOAA weather radio to monitor weather conditions and storm warnings.

3. If Dorothy had a 72 hour emergency preparedness kit, she would have been better equipped for her trip down the yellow brick road. Toto should have had a pet emergency kit as well.

PC Health Department Open House

**OPEN
HOUSE**

Please join the Portage County Combined General Health District for our 3rd annual Open House on **Tuesday April 7th, from 3:00pm-6:00pm**. Come and meet your health department staff and learn about the services that we provide to the county. We will offer blood pressure and glucose checks, environmental demonstrations, and health education activities. There will also be refreshments and an emergency preparedness kit raffle! Don't miss out on the fun! We are located at 705 Oakwood Street, 2nd Floor, Ravenna, Ohio 44266.

Announcement

March 27th, 2015 will be my last day with the Portage County Health Department. I have accepted a position with the Holmes and Tuscarawas County Health Departments as their combined Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. It has been a pleasure to work with the PC MRC and to meet you all. I have enjoyed my time here immensely, but I am very excited about this new and challenging opportunity. I do plan to stay involved with the PC MRC as a volunteer, as Portage County is my home. I wish you all the best of luck. Thank you for your services and all that you do to support the Portage Community!

Please contact Marianne Kitakis for any questions or inquiries regarding the PC MRC at (330) 296-9919 ext 117 or mkitakis@portageco.com.

We would love your feedback! Please let us know if you have any suggestions or comments!

Jennifer McCoy, MPH

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<http://www.co.portage.oh.us/mrc/>

